

Public Document Pack



Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

Monday, 22 January 2024 at 6.30 p.m.
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

S. Young

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Geoffrey Logan (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Carol Plumpton Walsh (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor Sandra Baker	Labour
Councillor Victoria Begg	Labour
Councillor Louise Goodall	Labour
Councillor Eddie Jones	Labour
Councillor Peter Lloyd Jones	Labour
Councillor Tony McDermott	Labour
Councillor Christopher Rowe	Liberal Democrats
Councillor Mike Ryan	Labour
Councillor Aimee Skinner	Labour

*Please contact Ann Jones on 0151 511 8276 or e-mail ann.jones@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is to be confirmed.*

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Part I

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Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 13 November 2023 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

Present: Councillors Logan (Chair), C. Plumpton Walsh (Vice-Chair), Baker, Begg, Goodall, Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, McDermott, Rowe, Ryan and Skinner

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: J. Farrell, A. Jones, B. Holmes, G. Vaughan-Hodkinson and J. Gallagher

Also in attendance: None

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

	<i>Action</i>
<p>CYP16 MINUTES</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
<p>CYP17 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</p> <p>It was confirmed that no public questions were received.</p>	
<p>CYP18 THE BIG CONVERSATION UPDATE</p> <p>The Board received a report of the Chief Executive's Delivery Unit, which provided an update on 'The Big Conversation'.</p> <p>The Big Conversation was about engaging with the public so that they understood the challenges that the Council was facing. It was an approach between the Council and those who lived or worked in Halton to work together to create an improved Borough in all aspects of everyday life. A stakeholder analysis and a Communications Plan was developed in order to generate</p>	

and establish as many opportunities as possible to involve all stakeholders in many different ways.

Members were advised that to date, a total of 1012 responses had been received; a breakdown of these by source was provided. The report outlined the promotion, consultation and engagement carried out in the community so far. The themes emerging from the consultation were also presented and any gaps in responses were highlighted, as well as the actions required to fill these.

It was noted that the consultation ends on 30 November 2023, after which an analysis would be undertaken to identify the key priorities. January and February 2024 would see final consultation with stakeholders via drop-in sessions and community engagement, prior to the Corporate Plan being finalised in March, ready for its launch in April 2024.

The following details were provided following Members questions:

- In order to address the low number of respondents from the 16-24 age group staff had attended Riverside College and the Family Hubs in Windmill Hill and Kingsway to encourage people to complete the survey; suggestions on places to visit were still welcomed, as it was agreed that more responses were needed from this age group;
- The Operational Director for Education, Provision and Inclusion offered to share the survey again with education stakeholders;
- It was suggested to visit other colleges such as Priestly in Warrington and Sir John Deane in Northwich, as some students attended these from the Borough – this had been done;
- Following concerns regarding Windmill Hill residents being lost in the figures for Norton North, staff had been out to the local shops to approach people to complete the survey;
- One Member suggested a bespoke survey for Councillors – this was considered impractical as the survey covered a range of priorities for all people to respond to as residents of the Borough;
- Councillors were invited to complete the survey in the same way as HBC staff and other groups, through the various methods discussed;
- Ditton Ward did have a low number of responses so an 'i-walker' was sent in the community on 4 November;

- The purpose of the survey was clarified as being able to prioritise and spend money where the residents of Halton had identified and prioritised;
- It was important not to raise expectations and this was clear from the onset of the project;
- The determining of priorities would be decided following the analysis of data after the survey was closed. The information would then be presented to Executive Board for agreement and inclusion in the Corporate Plan; and
- A suggestion was made to contact 'Power in Partnership' with the survey.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the report; and
- 2) continue to endorse the approach to facilitate 'The Big Conversation'.

Corporate
Director - Chief
Executive's
Delivery Unit

CYP19 SUFFICIENCY DUTY REPORT 2023-2024 (PREVIOUSLY KNOWN AS THE CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT REVIEW (CSA))

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director – Children's Services, which provided a summary of the revised Sufficiency Duty Report (SDR) – this document was appended to the report *Childcare Sufficiency Duty Report 2023-24 Review*.

It was reported that the SDR detailed information on Halton's childcare sector and outlined the projected supply and estimated demand for childcare places over the next 12 months. It also highlighted any gaps in provision and how these were being addressed.

The report also gave information on the expansion of the early years entitlements, due to launch in April 2024, and the initial estimates on how the demand for new places would impact upon the childcare market in Halton. Information was also shared on other factors affecting childcare and sustainability, at both local and national level, such as the impact of Covid 19, cost of living, and challenges with the recruitment and retention of staff. It was noted however, that despite the challenges faced by the Early Years sector, the childcare market in Halton continued to be secure and sustainable.

The following responses were provided to questions raised by Members:

- The data around 5-10 year old holiday provision did not include figures from groups, such as short breaks and activities funded through the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme. Future mapping and supply of demand, regarding the Wraparound Programme in Halton, would consider the needs of children with SEND and how best to facilitate this;
- A range of Early Years provision is required in order to give residents greater flexibility and choice so they can return to work and childminders formed part of this – there were 59 in Halton;
- The impacts that childminder settings can have on neighbourhoods (such as noise, parking problems, garden noise) was recognised, but complaints were few as most childminders had small numbers of children. Any complaints were dealt with according to legislation;
- The difference between a childminder and a nursery was that a childminder has a domestic premises ie, their home, and a nursery was in a non-domestic setting. A childminder also had a cap on the number of children they could take, whereas a nursery could take bigger numbers;
- A comment was made by one Member regarding funding – nurseries relied on Government funding and a childminder is a private business and exempt from paying business rates;
- Despite data showing a deficit of 51 places in Windmill Hill there were vacancies in settings in the area – this was explained as an anomaly with the data recording. Members were reassured that there were no issues with the availability of places at any of the nurseries in Windmill Hill;
- Three new Speech and Language programmes were about to launch in Halton – *Tots Talking* (for children aged between 0-3), *Early Talk Boost* (3-4 year olds) and *Talk Boost* (5-7 year olds), adding to the existing Speech and Language services currently available; and
- Recruitment and retention of staff in Early Years was raising concerns. It was noted that the requirement for certain qualifications had been introduced in recent years which may be affecting recruitment along with poor pay. Also, staff were leaving and the reasons for this were varied, eg. retirement, poor pay, legacy of Covid-19. Different routes into the profession were being explored, as was on the job training.

RESOLVED: That the revised Sufficiency Duty

Report (previously known as the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment) be noted.

CYP20 VIRTUAL SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT

The Board received a report of the Executive Director – Children’s Services, which presented *Halton’s Virtual School Annual Report for 2022-23*, this was appended to the report.

The Report, compiled by the Headteacher of the Virtual School, included information on the educational outcomes and achievements for Halton’s Children in Care, and the School’s wider work across children’s services.

The work of the Virtual School had continued throughout the academic year and the full annual report provided detailed analysis of how Halton’s Children in Care had performed against each of the individual key performance indicators. It also included a summary of the School’s progress towards its identified key priorities for the academic year 2022-23, and outlined the priorities for the Virtual School in 2023-24.

The following additional information was provided following Members’ questions:

- In relation to school moves, the 4 young people who had periods of time not on a school roll was due to the personal circumstances of the individuals and the involvement of Social Services;
- The DfE has provided a grant to support the work of the Virtual School in its work with the Post 16 cohort. It is hoped that this would continue to support the improvement of Post 16 PEPs, including for Unaccompanied Asylum seeking Children;
- The drop in the results for Key Stage 4 was discussed – Officers advised there were specifics to the backgrounds of each of the 20 people concerned;
- Children in Care (CIC) were given priority when allocating schools to them – the children were listened to in respect of their school preferences;
- The Virtual School continues to track the onward journey of its cohort, including those who go to university. The Team has grown in recent years, which has enabled them to work more closely with this age range;
- No CIC has ever been permanently excluded in Halton, but when a child was at risk of this then officers would work with the school to avoid it;

- The Local Authority worked in collaboration with secondary schools to prevent exclusions; and
- The Head of the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) was currently working on an alternative provision model for students who were permanently excluded.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the information provided; and
- 2) accept the Headteacher of the Virtual School's Annual Report as an accurate account of the performance on the education outcomes and achievements of Halton's Children in Care.

Meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.

REPORT TO: Children, Young People and Families Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 22 January 2024

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Standing Order 34(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-

- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
- (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
- (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
- (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
- (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;
 - Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or

- Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chair will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

Please bear in mind that public question time lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes. To help in making the most of this opportunity to speak:-

- Please keep your questions as concise as possible.
- Please do not repeat or make statements on earlier questions as this reduces the time available for other issues to be raised.
- Please note public question time is not intended for debate – issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton** - none.

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton** - none.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal** – none.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None identified.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

9.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	22 January 2024
REPORTING OFFICER:	Corporate Director, Chief Executive's Delivery Unit
PORTFOLIO:	Leader
SUBJECT:	The Corporate Plan - The Big Conversation Analysis and the way forward
WARD(S)	Borough Wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To share with the Board an analysis of 'The Big Conversation', which is integral to formulating a new Council Corporate Plan, and to outline the next steps to ensure that this will take effect from April 2024.

2.0 **RECOMMENDED: That**

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) that Board continues to endorse the approach to facilitate the implementation of a new Corporate Plan.

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 **Background**

The Big Conversation was about engaging with the public to share the challenges that the Council is facing and to establish what is important to people in the Borough.

It was an approach between the Council and those who live or work in Halton to work together in order to create an improved borough in all aspects of everyday life.

A Stakeholder Analysis together with a Communications Plan was developed in order to generate and establish as many opportunities as possible to involve all our stakeholders in many different and varied ways.

The Big Conversation consultation opened on July 28th 2023 and closed on November 30th 2023, what follows is an analysis of the feedback.

3.2 Promotion, Consultation & Engagement:

3.2.1 Breakdown of responses by source:

Total Number of responses: 1076

This was the second biggest response ever to a Halton Borough Council survey.

Comms Meta Advert	223
HBC Staff	222
Comms Carers Centre	136
Comms Organic Facebook	124
Comms Media	64
No Reply	41
Inside Halton	39
Comms Flyer	34
Comms Partner	30
Comms HBC (Home page)	27
Comms Short URL	18
Comms Organic LinkedIn	16
Comms Community	14
Comms Linnets	13
Comms School Crossing Patrol	12
Comms Hale Village Coffee Morning	12
Active Ageing	11
Comms Organic X	9
Comms iWalkers	7
Comms Visually Impaired Group	6
Comms Halton Voices	5
Comms Colleges	3
Comms Vikings	3
Comms Dementia Group	3
Comms Schools	2
Comms Organic Threads	1
Comms TUC	1
Total Number of Responses	1076

3.2.2 Response by Age Group:

Age Group	Response Rate: Number / Percentage %
16 - 19 years	14 / 1%

20 - 24 years	11 / 1%
25 – 34 years	79 / 8%
35 – 49 years	266 / 26%
50 – 64 years	387 / 37%
65 – 74 years	191 / 19%
75 – 84 years	55 / 5%
85 years or over	15 / 1%
Prefer not to say	17 / 2%
No Reply	41
Total	1076

Census 2021 (by comparison):

Data	Percentage %
16 – 19 years	4.3
20 – 24 years	5.2
25 – 34 years	12.8
35 – 49 years	9.4
50 – 64 years	20.6
65 – 74 years	11.2
75 – 84 years	5.6
85 years and over	1.9

3.2.3 Response by Area:

Runcorn: 55%

Widnes: 45%

3.2.4 **Consultation Success:**

862: Direct (Speaking directly to stakeholders and listening)

11,840: Indirect (Social media, partner`s newsletters and flyers)

Specific Forums and Venues attended:

General Public:

- Halton Trades Union Congress
- Visually Impaired Group
- Friends of Hale Village Coffee Morning
- Eat at the Heath Community event
- Windmill Hill Shops
- Women`s Institute
- Fellowship Centre

- Women's Group (St John Fisher Club)
- i-Walkers
- Kingsway Leisure Centre
- Catalyst Museum

Print & Social Media:

- Inside Halton Magazine
- LinkedIn
- X
- Thread
- Facebook
- HBC Homepage

HBC Workforce:

- Emails to staff
- Video message

Adult's Services:

- Healthy & Active Ageing events
- Partners in Prevention event
- Dementia Group meeting
- Care Home visit (Millbrow)
- Flyer distribution by Adult Social Work Services Teams
- Feature in Young Carers & Adult Carers newsletters

Children's Services:

- Primary School Heads
- Children's Provider Network Meeting
- Halton Youth Cabinet
- Family Hub Centres
- Riverside College
- School & College newsletters
- Flyers distributed by Children's Services Teams

Partners:

- Halton Patient Participation Group
- Cheshire Constabulary
- Halton & St Helens Voluntary Community Action
- Health Improvement Team
- Citizens Advice Bureau
- Public Health Vaccination Team

Businesses:

- Halton Chamber of Commerce Network Meeting
- Halton & Warrington Business Fair
- Halton Chamber of Commerce
- Business Improvement & Growth
- Sci-Tech Daresbury Business Breakfast

3.3

3.3.1 **Emerging Themes:**

The 5 themes in order of response priority were:

- Improving health, promoting wellbeing and supporting greater independence: 93%
- Building a strong, sustainable local economy: 91%
- Supporting children, young people and families: 89%
- Tackling inequality, helping those who are most in need: 84%
- Working towards a greener future: 78%

3.3.2

Level of agreement to all of the 5 suggested themes was very high.

Identifying other potential corporate plan themes, the top 3 identified by our stakeholders were:

- Environment / Open spaces / Litter / Overgrowth / Maintain green spaces / Keep street free of litter and weeds.
- Regeneration / Business / Economy / Support growth and town centres
- Housing / Affordability / Increase supported living / protect green spaces / Improved infrastructure

3.3.3

It is proposed that we recognise this level of engagement with our

stakeholders and form a 6th priority, which encompasses all of the above, under the title '**Place and Community**'.

When asked how the Council can support these themes, the top 3 responses were:

- 'Provide opportunities for young people to engage with their local community and do things that interest them, keep them safe and make them happy'.
 - 'Create vibrant town centres for everyone to enjoy across the Borough'
 - 'Continue to ensure local people are able to enjoy the Borough's parks and green spaces'
- 3.3.4

In terms of the ways our stakeholders can support the 5 popular themes, these were as follows:

- 'Spending money with local shops and businesses'
- 'Doing our best to stay healthy and active'
- 'Being a good neighbour'

3.4 **Timeline:**

- November 30th 2023: Consultation ended
- December 2023: Analysis undertaken
- January 2024: Key priorities identified and agreed / summary developed / shared with stakeholders via drop-in sessions within council buildings and open engagement at community spaces
- February - March 2024: Corporate Plan finalised and approved at key forums
- April 2024: the New Corporate Plan is launched

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no specific policy implications at this stage, however the output of this process will be a new contemporary and relevant Halton Borough Council Corporate Plan. This will form the basis of the Council's Corporate Policy framework in the immediate term.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None. The development of the new Corporate Plan is being delivered within existing budget and resource provision.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 The Corporate Plan is Halton Borough Council's key strategic document. This plan sets out the main vision, themes and values of the Council.

'The Big Conversation' has helped to determine the Council's new set of priorities, which will be translated into the plan.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 If the Council had continued with the same priorities that were in place in previous years, given the socio-demographic and economic changes that have taken place over the last few years, there was a significant risk that the current Corporate Plan would lose its relevance.

7.2 That would lead to the Council failing to maintain engagement with the people of Halton, and its workforce, around where resources are best targeted in the contemporary environment.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Equality and Diversity will be an integral part of the new Corporate Plan priority under the Big Conversation banner of 'Tackling inequality, helping those who are most in need.'

8.2 The Big Conversation consultation process was fully inclusive in terms of consulting a wide and varied range of stakeholders, which covered the 9 protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.

8.3 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken as part of the plan development process.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 At this stage it is evident that there will be a specific priority around climate change, with the theme receiving full support under the Big Conversation banner of 'Working towards a greener future'.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	22 January 2024
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director – Children
PORTFOLIO:	Children & Young People
SUBJECT:	Summary of Children and Young Peoples Mental Health and Wellbeing update
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a presentation summarising key work taking place locally and at a regional level to support children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing. Including overview of preventative work that aims to keep children and young people mentally well and services that provide direct interventions and support when children and young people are struggling. The presentation won’t address services which directly support children and young people with Special Educational Needs, although services discussed will provide support to this cohort.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) **Members receive the presentation; and**
- (2) **Members are aware of key work and services contributing to the positive mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

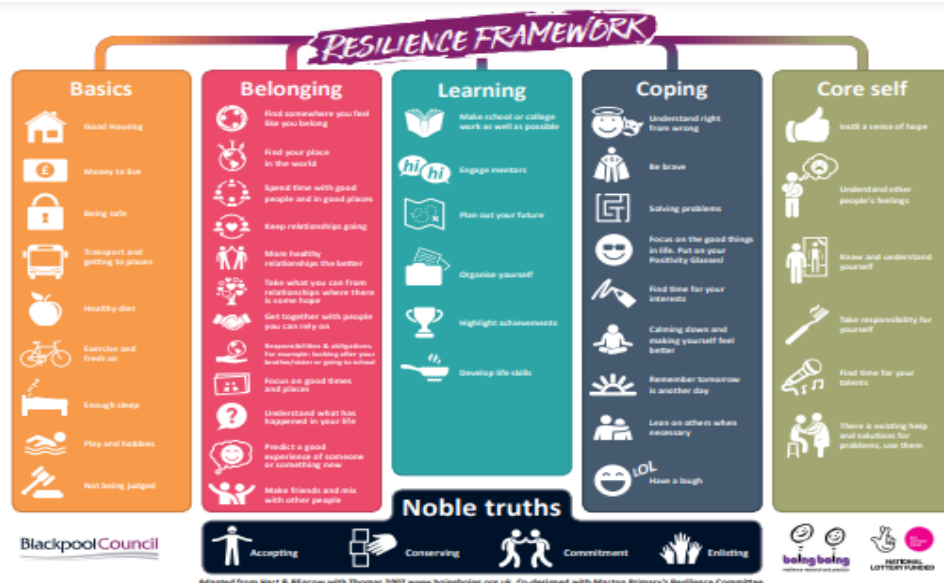
This presentation provides an overview of work taking place in Halton by a variety of organisations and teams.

3.1 What do children and young people need to be mentally healthy?

Diagram 1 provides an easy read overview of The Resilience Framework which is a set of ideas and practices that promote resilience. More details on the framework are available to be viewed via <https://www.boingboing.org.uk/>. The framework is based on a body of research and practice development called Resilient Therapy (RT). This was originally developed by Angie Hart and Derek Blincow, with help from Helen Thomas and a group of parents and practitioners. The resilience framework demonstrates evidence-

based ideas that can be used to support a child or young person to improve their resilience. The framework helps us to understand what children and young people need to be resilient shifting the narrative from ‘what is wrong with the child’ to ‘what does this child need’. The framework can also be used to help us to understand how a wide variety of services contribute to good mental health.

Diagram 1 –Resilience framework, (Children and Young People)
 Oct 2012 – *Boingboing*, adapted from *Hart and Blincow with Thomas 2007*.



3.2 Overview of Core services

Table 1- Overview of core/statutory services available and lead organisation/team responsible

Lead Organisation	Services funded
Local Authority	Educational Psychology Educational Psychology Service
	Specialist support for Children in Care (Banardos-Moving on 2gether) Moving on 2gether
	Nurture Halton's Nurturing Approach
Public Health	Mental Health and Wellbeing prevention agenda for educational settings *for a detailed overview of this offer please email Katie.bazley@halton.gov.uk
NHS Cheshire and Merseyside- Halton Place	Child and Adolescent Mental health Services (CAMHS)

	Mental health Teams in Schools
	Baby Infant Bonding Service
	Eating disorder service
	REACH 24 hour text support
Mersey Care NHS foundation trust	24 Hour Crisis Line

Table 1 provides an overview of core and statutory services funded locally in Halton. Please be aware this isn't a definitive list of what is available to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. There are many services which have a positive impact on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing without this being their sole focus such as: iCART, Early Help, Drugs and Alcohol substance misuse support, Children centres, Holiday Activity and food provision, Active Halton, Youth Provision and 0-19 health services (family Nurse Partnership, Health Visiting and School Health). There is also a significant amount of support available from the Voluntary Sector. Details of support available locally can be found via Halton's local [Mental Health Info Point](#)

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no new Policy implications because of this report.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 There is an economic cost to poor mental health. Work to improve children and young people's mental health and wellbeing mitigates against this economic cost.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Services and projects discussed aim to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in the borough.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

Children and Young People who have their mental health needs met are more likely to be ready to learn impacting their future employment, learning and skills.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Services and projects discussed aim to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in the borough.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Services and projects discussed aim to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in the borough subsequently contributing to the reduced risk of suicide.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 None

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 None

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 No climate change implications identified at this time.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

10.1 No papers identified under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Children, Young People and Families Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	22 January 2024
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director – Children
PORTFOLIO:	Children & Young People
SUBJECT:	Halton Family Hubs
WARD(S)	Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To present an update of the progress of Halton Family Hubs and next steps.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION:

For the board to note the presentation and feedback any Questions.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Government's 2019 Manifesto pledged to champion Family Hubs across England. In December 2020 the Minister for Children, Vicky Ford, outlined plans to create a National Centre of Excellence for Family Hubs, funded by the Department for Education (DfE).

The Best Start for Life Review: A Vision for the 1,001 Critical Days outlined a programme of work to ensure the best support during those crucial first 1001 days, setting babies up to maximise their potential for lifelong emotional and physical wellbeing.

The DfE and DHSC announced in April 2022 the 75 local authorities who would become pilot areas for the Family Hubs and best start in life scheme.

Halton was part of this selection and since December 22 we have been working hard to develop the family hub Model.

The presentation will give an outline of the journey so far in this development looking at the achievements and challenges of the past year.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The family hub model works alongside National Policies such as the

Children's social care data and digital strategy, Children's Social Care: Stable Homes, Built on Love, Children's Social Care Independent Review, Supporting families agenda, Reducing Parental Conflict, Best Start for Life, a vision for 1001 critical days and the Healthy Child Programme 0-19.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The money is DfE allocated and is 2.4 million over a 2.5 year period.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

The model will contribute and complement to all existing strategies and aims and objectives in improving outcomes for all children and young people and families in Halton.

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

None identified.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 None identified.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None identified.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None identified.

10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	22 January 2024
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director – Children
PORTFOLIO:	Children & Young People
SUBJECT:	Summary of Validated Halton Educational Performance, summer 2023 (outcomes published outcomes by DFE, December 2023)
WARD(S)	Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To receive a summary report on the validated outcomes for Halton's Children and Young People educational performance from summer 2023 in comparison to Validated National, regional and statistical neighbour data.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- (1) Members receive the report; and
- (2) Members ask any questions about the educational performance across Halton and implications of these results

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Children's, Young people and Families Policy and Performance Board have an overview and scrutiny role for children's services across Halton.
- 3.2 The Operational Director for Education will provide a summary of the validated educational performance and results across Halton in summer 2023-see Paper One. This includes attainment and progress outcomes from the summer 2023 statutory assessment and exam period for all pupils; cohorts of children and young people with SEND and cohorts of children and young people who are eligible for Free School Meals. The performance measures include Early Years Foundation Stage Good Level of Development (GLD);Phonics outcomes; end of Key Stage One outcomes; end of Key Stage Two outcomes and End of Key Stage Four (GCSE English and Maths outcomes).
- 3.3 The EYFS Framework changed from 1st September 2021 (2022

published outcomes) and so no prior comparisons can be made. The EYFS profile indicator is the Good Level of Development (GLD) indicator which is achieved when pupils achieve the expected standard in the prime early learning goals communication and language; physical development and personal social and emotional development and also the expected standard in the literacy and mathematics early learning goals.

- 3.4 Halton's GLD is improving but is still below national and is a key priority for the region, with communication and language, reading and writing and maths being key areas of development. These areas are being prioritised as part of the Priority Education Investment Area work (PEIA) which are overseen by a Strategic Board Chaired by DFE. The four key strands of development within PEIA are EY's, English, Maths and attendance, with a focus on inclusion throughout all pillars (Details will be shared following all performance updates).
- 3.5 It is pleasing to note improvements in GLD and it is evident that tracking key cohorts and specific groups through the Ready for Reception tracking tool and GLD tracking tool are enabling schools and settings to target children in specific areas of delay and thus intervene early to build on next steps. This is particularly evident in GLD outcomes for those with an EHCP; boys and GLD and those eligible for Free school meals and identified as 'disadvantaged.' These young people have achieved better than their peers across Liverpool City region, North West and statistical neighbour regions with year on year rises in all measures from 2022 to 2023.
- 3.6 In relation to phonics performance at the end of Year One, all Halton pupils perform in line with national and this cohort have improved on 2022 cohort outcomes, by 6%. In relation to SEND support pupils there has been a 10% increase on 2022 outcomes; boys performance increased by 5% from 2022 to 76% achieving the expected standard (in line with national) and 69% of disadvantaged pupils achieved the expected standard against a national average of 66% for this measure. Phonics work across schools is a strength of Halton due to quality first teaching and a range of early intervention programmes used successfully.
- 3.7 Key Stage One is historically an area where outcomes in Halton have been lower than national. This has been partly attributable to some low starting points and whilst strong progress is made in schools this does not always have sufficient time for pupils to make the rapid progress required to reach the expected standard by the end of Year Two. However, the strong foundations developed during this time pay dividend as pupils progress through primary school and historically outcomes by the end of Key Stage Two narrow the gap to national. As a region, we are ambitious for our young people and are working together as a system using skills from across the sector; working with Teaching School Hubs and acting on evidenced

based programmes backed up with action research such as EEF programmes, in order to improve outcomes further and build on progress made. For summer 2023 all pupils cohort, reading, writing and maths outcomes were slightly down on 2022 cohort, but broadly in line with performance across the Liverpool City region. Children and young people at SEND support did demonstrate improvements on 2022 performance in all reading, writing and maths indicators, with the highest increase seen in maths with 36.1% achieving expected in comparison to national 36.7% for this cohort. Pupils eligible for free school meals achieved above national in reading 55.1% (national 53.7%); above national in writing 45.5% (national 44.4%) and improved on 2022 maths outcomes with 55.1% achieving the expected standard.

- 3.8 Results at Key Stage Two in 2023 demonstrated that whilst there was a decline for all pupil cohort in reading from 2022, (this was true nationally and all comparator areas) and Halton had 73.3% of children achieving the expected standard, in line with national and above that of the North West and Liverpool City Region. Similarly, writing performance was strong and our key area to develop being maths which is evident throughout all key stages. The performance of maths did improve by 2.3% from 2022 to 72.3% achieving the expected standard. Children with SEND both at SEND support and EHCP made year on year improvements from 2019 and in KS2 Reading, children with an EHCP performed higher than national both at the expected standard and the higher standard. Also important to note is the strong performance of Key Stage Two children who were eligible for Free School Meals whom outperformed the national average in reading at the expected and higher standard.

Progress from Key Stage One to Two was ahead of national in reading and writing progress for all pupils; SEND support pupils and those eligible for free school meals. This further evidences the strong progress from starting points made during a child's educational journey in Halton. Maths remains the key area of focus to prioritise.

- 3.9 Key Stage Four must only be compared with great caution from previous years due to GCSE exam protective features, centre assessed and teacher assessed grades used during and post pandemic. Whilst exams did resume to a more typical pre covid experience in 2022, several of the grade boundary protections were removed and therefore this is the first year that can truly be compared with pre pandemic typical GCSE exam sessions of 2019. Whilst DFE measures GCSE performance in basics (English and Maths combined), results are collected for individual Maths and English GCSE's. Performance in English is stronger than maths with 70.6% pupils achieving 9-4 standard in English and 53.6% 9-5; whilst maths had 65% achieving grades 9-4 and 44.4% achieving

grades 9-5 in maths. This summer young people with SEND achieved well and Halton appears in the top 6% of young people with an EHCP achieving grades 9-5 in basics. Progress for disadvantaged young people was above that of statistical neighbours, Liverpool City Region and North West Region.

4.0 **What are our priorities?**

Our key educational performance priorities are to continue to improve outcomes in Early Years GLD, English (both Reading, Writing) and Maths across all Key Stages. We currently have robust data and tracking systems which is shared with our schools through specialist analysis, advice and support from an educational data analyst and applied to school improvement practices through challenge and support from our Associate School Improvement Advisors (ASIA's). These services from 1st April 2024 will now all need to be funded moving forwards through a service level agreement, due to the removal of the School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering (SIMB) Grant by Central Government. There is a potential risk that if schools elect not to buy into these service level agreements, then schools may not receive the robust analysis, local intelligence and contextual knowledge of the region and collective working across the region. Plans are in place to try to mitigate such risks including the work of the PEIA supporting the above identified priorities and schools establishing a Local Area Cluster network arrangement to build capacity across the system and sharing of effective practice. However, this will require all schools to participate and work together collectively and may not receive the borough wide overview and analysis if not all schools opt in.

In relation to the 4 priority areas, the Early Years aspects will include the roll out of Wellcomm screening used across all primary schools to continue the work already undertaken across the PVI sector through the TALK Halton initiative and support transition through into school age. This will also include TALK Boost programmes carried out across Family Hubs. Additionally, there will be specific training for teachers and TA's to deliver specific English and Maths interventions. English work will be led by Childer Thornton Literacy Hub and The Literacy Company in Wirral and Maths priority work will be led by Cheshire and Wirral Maths Hub. This includes sharing subject specialist knowledge; developing curriculum leader skill, knowledge and capacity to lead a subject across a school/department and will support collaboration and effective transitions. English work will include EEF recommended programmes such as Embedding Formative Assessment and also support teacher development and monitor professionals undertaking Leading Literacy National Professional Qualifications. (NPQ's).

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 Educational outcomes inform priorities within Children & Young People's Plan; Education, Inclusion and Provision Priorities and Starting Well Strategy.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None for the council, although removal of School Improvement monitoring and Brokering Grant is having a financial impact on schools who will need to purchase support and advice moving forwards.

6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton** – Educational Outcomes for Children & Young People impact on future independence, happiness and well-being

6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**-Positive educational outcomes impact on employability and progression into employment, education and training

6.3 **A Healthy Halton**-Achieving well improves mental health and wellbeing

6.4 **A Safer Halton** -None

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**-None

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Reduced support from the local authority educational and data colleagues will occur if schools do not purchase a service level agreement due to removal of SIMB grant. This could result in less local and contextual knowledge to support the local community and education sector, if schools elect not to buy in. Risks are being mitigated by close consultation with the sector; offering a range of offers and price options and identifying the gaps that may occur and sharing with the sector. This is being monitored closely.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

Equality of opportunity is offered for all and considered in all educational planning and analysis.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

None

- 10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**
- 10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

ALL PUPILS:

Early Years Foundations Stage Profile: Good Level of Development (GLD)

ALL Pupils	% GLD			% CLL			% All 17 ELGs		
	2022	2023	Diff	2022	2023	Diff	2022	2023	Diff
Halton	60.6	62.9	2.3	61.5	64.2	2.7	58.4	61.2	2.8
England	65.2	67.2	2.0	67.1	68.8	1.7	63.4	65.6	2.2
NWR	61.7	64.3	2.6	63.6	65.8	2.2	59.7	62.4	2.7
LCR	60.2	63.4	3.2	62.1	64.7	2.6	58.2	61.6	3.4
SN10	63.8	66.2	2.4	65.3	67.4	2.1	61.9	64.3	2.4

- Framework changed from 1st September 2021 (2022 published outcomes) and so no prior comparisons can be made

- % achieving a good level of development (GLD) improved from 2022 and improvement was above national improvement rate
- % achieving the expected standard in communication and language ELG made the most improvement in Halton over comparison regions, but remains a focus for Halton
- **Performance across the Early Learning Goals (ELGs)**

2023 All % Expected	Listening, attention and understanding	Speaking	Self-regulation	Managing self	Building relationships	Gross motor skills	Fine motor skills	Comprehension	Word reading	Writing	Number	Numerical patterns	Past and present	People, culture and communities	The natural world	Creating with materials	Being imaginative and expressive
Halton	79.4	79.6	83.6	85.6	88.1	92.0	83.1	77.7	72.1	66.2	74.8	73.0	78.6	77.8	81.4	84.3	84.2
England	82.2	82.8	85.1	87.2	88.4	92.1	86.0	80.6	76.2	71.0	78.9	78.3	82.1	81.8	85.4	87.5	87.0
NWR	79.7	80.6	83.2	85.6	86.9	90.5	84.0	77.9	73.3	68.1	76.1	75.4	79.6	79.2	82.7	85.0	84.5
LCR	78.8	80.1	82.2	85.2	86.1	90.4	83.3	76.7	71.8	66.5	75.2	74.3	78.6	78.2	82.2	84.3	83.7
SN10	79.7	81.0	83.0	85.0	86.3	89.8	83.5	78.3	73.3	69.0	76.2	75.6	79.9	79.5	83.3	84.8	84.0

- Looking at the colour gradients across the ELGs, it is evident that, in 2023, performance across the goals was similar across each of the comparison areas, with Writing being the lowest performance goal and Gross Motor Skills the highest

Early Years Foundation Stage, GLD Outcomes for SEND PUPILS:

For the following data tables, **light green** indicates performance is ahead of national and **light yellow** indicates performance behind national.

- In summer 2023; 55 children had an EHCP plan in this cohort and a further 165 children were identified as SEND support.

GLD outcomes for EHCP Cohort:

% Good level of development				% all 17 early learning goals (ELGs)			
EHC Plan	2022	2023	% Diff	EHC Plan	2022	2023	% Diff
Halton	4.9	3.6	-1.3	Halton	4.9	3.6	-1.3
England	3.6	3.8	0.2	England	3.4	3.5	0.1
NWR	2.8	2.6	-0.2	NWR	2.6	2.5	-0.1
LCR	2.9	1.7	-1.2	LCR	2.9	1.2	-1.7
SN10	3.6	2.2	-1.4	SN10	3.6	2	-1.6

The performance of CYP with an EHCP is 0.2% less than national, but above the performance of Liverpool City Region and Statistical Neighbours. Halton also achieved above national in the percentage of children with an EHCP achieving above the expected standard in all Early Learning Goals in 2023.

DISADVANTAGED/FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM) Eligible Pupils:

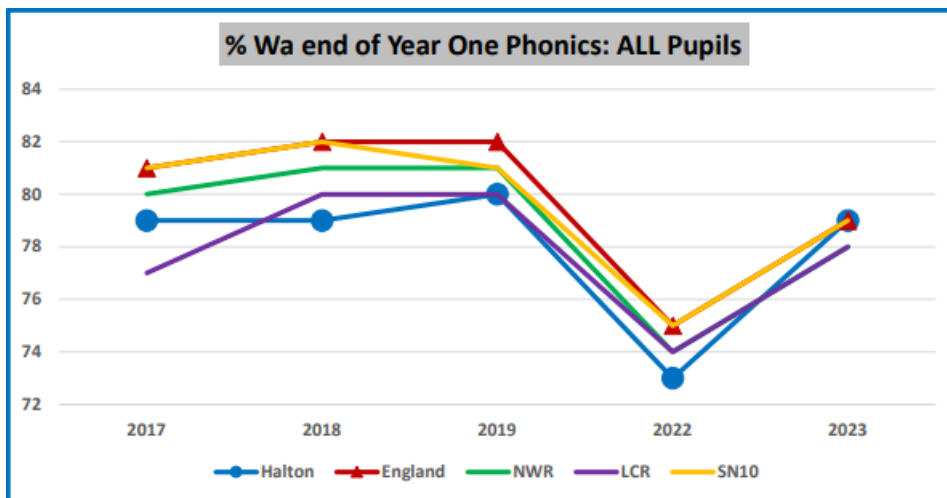
Early Years Foundations Stage Profile:

% Good level of development				% Comm., Lang. and Lit. (CLL)				% all 17 early learning goals (ELGs)			
FSM	2022	2023	% Diff	FSM	2022	2023	% Diff	FSM	2022	2023	% Diff
Halton	49.8	54.3	4.5	Halton	50.4	55.7	5.3	Halton	47.6	52.4	4.8
England	49.1	51.6	2.5	England	50.9	53.1	2.2	England	47.1	49.7	2.6
NWR	46.2	49.7	3.5	NWR	47.9	50.9	3.0	NWR	43.9	47.5	3.6
LCR	45.5	48.7	3.2	LCR	47.1	49.8	2.7	LCR	43.3	46.7	3.4
SN10	49.5	52.6	3.1	SN10	50.8	53.8	3.0	SN10	47.4	50.2	2.8

- Pupils known to be eligible for Free School meals in Halton performed better than their peers across all comparison areas in all of the EYFSP measures in 2023, with year-on-year rises in all measures from 2022

Phonics: ALL Pupils, End of Year One: (Percentage achieving expected standard)

Halton Pupils	1520	1565	1584	1488	1444		
ALL Pupils	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22-23	Diff 19-23
Halton	79	79	80	73	79	6	-1
England	81	82	82	75	79	4	-3
NWR	80	81	81	74	78	4	-3
LCR	77	80	80	74	78	4	-2
SN10	81	82	81	75	79	4	-2



- Percentage of all pupils working at the expected standard in phonics at the end of year one increased by 6% from 2022 and was ahead of national growth and meeting national average in 2023 with 79% achieving the expected standard.

Phonics: SEND pupils (end of Key Stage One)

Phonics Performance- SEND support cohort:

Halton Pupils	243	245	281	261	285		
SEN SUPPORT	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22-23	Diff 19-23
Halton	67	71	66	59	69	10	3
England	69	70	69	61	66	5	-3
NWR	67	67	68	59	66	7	-2
LCR	66	66	67	60	68	8	1
SN10	70	68	69	60	63	3	-6

- The proportion of SEN Support children working at expected standard in Phonics by the end of KS1 increased by 10% in 2023, from 59% in 2022. This performance was also ahead of their peers across all of the comparison areas in 2023.

Phonics: FSM eligibility/Disadvantaged (End of Year One)

End of Year One:

Halton Pupils	383	447	507	559	522		
FSM	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22-23	Diff 19-23
Halton	70	66	71	66	69	3	-2
England	68	70	70	62	66	4	-4
NWR	67	70	70	62	66	4	-4
LCR	65	68	70	62	67	5	-3
SN10	69	71	71	63	69	6	-2

- The proportion of children eligible for free school meals, working at expected standard in Phonics, rose year-on-year and was ahead of their peers across all comparison areas in 2023.

Key Stage One: (Percentage of All pupils achieving the expected standard)

Reading EXS+	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22-23	Diff 19-23
Halton	66	73	71.6	66.4	65.3	-1.1	-6.3
England	75.5	75.4	74.9	66.8	68.2	1.4	-6.7
NWR	73.3	73.6	73.2	64.6	66.7	2.1	-6.5
LCR	70.2	71.8	71.7	63.9	65.7	1.8	-6.0
SN10	74.7	74.2	74.1	65.3	67.7	2.4	-6.4

Writing EXS+	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22-23	Diff 19-23
Halton	57.9	66.8	65.9	57.8	57.5	-0.3	-8.4
England	68.2	69.9	69.2	57.6	60.1	2.5	-9.1
NWR	65.8	68.1	67.4	54.9	58.2	3.3	-9.2
LCR	62	66.5	65.8	54.4	57.1	2.7	-8.7
SN10	69.1	70	69.7	57.2	60.8	3.6	-8.9

Maths EXS+	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22-23	Diff 19-23
Halton	65.1	73.7	71.5	66.9	66.7	-0.2	-4.8
England	75.1	76	75.6	67.6	70.4	2.8	-5.2
NWR	73.2	74.6	74.1	65.8	69.2	3.4	-4.9
LCR	70	73.5	72.8	65	67.9	2.9	-4.9
SN10	75.4	75.5	75.4	66.8	70.4	3.6	-5.0

- Performance of all pupils in 2023 for all pupils was down from the performance of 2022 in the core subjects, however the % difference to pre-pandemic in 2019, is narrower than any of the comparison areas in all subjects.
- This is the final, formally-reported KS1 data and will be the last data used for KS1 to KS2 progress measures

SEND PUPILS: Key Stage One, (Percentage of SEND support cohort achieving expected standard):

SEN Support EXS+	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22-23	SEN Support EXS+	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22-23
Halton	22.7	29.4	27	28.2	29.1	0.9	Halton	14	21	22.1	19.8	20.4	0.6
England	33.6	33.5	33.3	29.6	32	2.4	England	23.1	24.6	24.5	19.7	21.7	2.0
NWR	29.4	29.8	30.4	26.8	30.3	3.5	NWR	19	21	22.1	17.2	19.7	2.5
LCR	28.7	29	31.9	29.3	33.3	4.0	LCR	18.4	21.1	24.3	19.9	21.4	1.5
SN10	32.1	29.7	30.6	27.4	29.8	2.4	SN10	22	22.2	23	18.9	21	2.1

Reading(Above)

SEN Support EXS+	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22-23
Halton	23.1	29	34.9	32.4	36.1	3.7
England	35.3	36.3	36.5	33.2	36.7	3.5
NWR	31.4	33.2	34.2	30.8	35	4.2
LCR	30.4	32	36.2	33.2	37	3.8
SN10	35.6	33.6	34.4	30.8	34.4	3.6

Writing (Above):

Maths (Above)

- The proportion of SEN Support children achieving expected standard increased year-on-year in each of the core subjects in 2023 in KS1

KEY STAGE ONE: DISADVANTAGED/FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM) Eligible Pupils (Percentage achieving expected standard)

Reading

Writing

FSM EXS+	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22-23	FSM EXS+	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22-23
Halton	50	60.2	56.5	55.6	55.1	-0.5	Halton	41.7	50.5	47.4	44.9	45.5	0.6
England	60.6	60.1	60.4	51.2	53.7	2.5	England	51.8	53	53.5	41	44.4	3.4
NWR	58.4	58.7	59.2	50.1	53.2	3.1	NWR	49.7	51.9	52.2	39.6	43.5	3.9
LCR	55.1	57.4	56.8	49.9	52.2	2.3	LCR	46.8	51.1	49.8	39.7	42.5	2.8
SN10	61.2	60.2	60.4	51.3	54.8	3.5	SN10	54.8	54.7	55.6	42.2	47.2	5.0

Maths:

FSM EXS+	2017	2018	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22-23
Halton	50	60	54.8	54.4	55.1	0.7
England	60	60.6	61	51.8	55.7	3.9
NWR	58.4	60.6	59.8	50.8	55.3	4.5
LCR	55.4	59.5	58.3	50.8	54.4	3.6
SN10	62.1	61.1	62.8	53.1	58.1	5.0

- The proportion of pupils in Halton, known to be eligible for free school meals (FSM), who achieved expected standard in Reading and Writing at KS1 was higher than their peers across all comparison areas in 2023.

Key Stage Two: ALL Pupils (Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths)

ALL	% EXS in Reading, Writing and Maths				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	59.7	58.4	58.2	-0.2	-1.5
England	65.4	59.0	59.8	0.8	-5.6
NWR	64.6	57.6	58.8	1.2	-5.8
LCR	62.3	55.5	57.3	1.8	-5.0
SN10	66.0	59.3	60.7	1.4	-5.3

- Revised Key Stage Two (KS2) data only provided for 2019, 2022 and 2023.
- Percentage of all children achieving expected standard (EXS) or better in Reading and Writing and Maths combined measure, is broadly similar to 2022 and is ahead of the Liverpool City Region average (LCR).
- Halton's difference to pre-pandemic 2019 being the lowest across the comparison areas at just -1.5%, compared to -5.6% nationally.

ALL	% EXS in READ				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	69.9	75.8	73.3	-2.5	3.4
England	73.8	75.0	73.3	-1.7	-0.5
NWR	73.2	74.7	72.7	-2.0	-0.5
LCR	71.8	73.3	71.6	-1.7	-0.2
SN10	73.8	74.4	73.3	-1.1	-0.5

ALL	% EXS in WRITE				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	75.7	70.3	71.0	0.7	-4.7
England	78.9	69.7	71.7	2.0	-7.2
NWR	78.1	68.1	70.8	2.7	-7.3
LCR	76.2	66.8	69.7	2.9	-6.5
SN10	79.7	70.2	72.9	2.7	-6.8

ALL	% EXS in MATH				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	75.2	69.2	70.3	1.1	-4.9
England	79.1	71.8	73.3	1.5	-5.8
NWR	78.9	70.8	72.9	2.1	-6.0
LCR	76.8	67.3	69.7	2.4	-7.1
SN10	80.3	71.8	73.5	1.7	-6.8

- Although performance in Reading declined from 2022 (true across all comparison areas), the percentage of all children achieving EXS or better in reading was the highest across all comparison areas in 2023 and was 3.4% higher than the pre-pandemic performance in 2019

- The performance of all children in Writing improved from 2022 and was within a percentage point of national in 2023. In Writing, the difference to pre-pandemic 2019 was the lowest across all comparison areas
- The performance of all children in Mathematics improved from 2022. In Maths, the difference to pre-pandemic 2019 was the lowest across all comparison areas

ALL	% EXS in GPS				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	74.7	70.0	72.3	2.3	-2.4
England	78.5	72.8	72.8	0.0	-5.7
NWR	78.9	72.6	73.0	0.4	-5.9
LCR	76.5	68.9	69.8	0.9	-6.7
SN10	78.5	71.2	72.3	1.1	-6.2

- The performance of all children achieving EXS in the Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling test improved by over 2% from 2022 and was within half a percentage point of the national performance in this measure.

SEND PUPILS: (Percentage of this cohort achieving expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths)

Key Stage Two:

EHC Plan	% EXS in Reading, Writing and Maths				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	3.6	3.2	7.6	4.4	4.0
England	9.1	7.0	8.2	1.2	-0.9
NWR	8.8	6.5	8.0	1.5	-0.8
LCR	4.2	5.0	7.8	2.8	3.6
SN10	10.8	6.5	8.2	1.7	-2.6

SEN Support	% EXS in Reading, Writing and Maths				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	18.1	18.4	21.9	3.5	3.8
England	25.4	21.2	23.6	2.4	-1.8
NWR	23.8	20.3	23.1	2.8	-0.7
LCR	23.3	23.2	25.9	2.7	2.6
SN10	25.4	22.1	25.5	3.4	0.1

- Children with SEND in Halton, whether EHC Plan or SEN Support, made year-on-year improvement when considering the proportion achieving expected standard in the combined Reading, Writing and Mathematics measure at KS2
- The same children made improvements from the pre-pandemic 2019 performance in this measure

EHC Plan	% EXS in READ				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	10.7	15.9	19.0	3.1	8.3
England	16.4	16.2	18.2	2.0	1.8
NWR	15.8	16.3	19.4	3.1	3.6
LCR	11.5	15.5	19.9	4.4	8.4
SN10	18.9	15.2	17.2	2.0	-1.7

EHC Plan	% Higher in READ				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	0.0	1.6	7.6	6.0	7.6
England	4.1	3.6	4.9	1.3	0.8
NWR	3.9	3.3	4.7	1.4	0.8
LCR	3.1	2.2	5.4	3.2	2.3
SN10	4.5	2.7	5.0	2.3	0.5

EHC Plan	Avg READ Progress Score		
	2019	2022	2023
Halton	0.32	-2.45	-2.69
England	-3.62	-4.50	-4.36
NWR	-2.95	-3.67	-3.88
LCR	-2.79	-3.96	-3.40
SN10	-1.99	-4.23	-3.95

- In KS2 Reading, children with EHC Plans in Halton performed better than their peers nationally in 2023, when looking at the expected standard, higher standard and average progress score measures

SEN Support	% EXS in READ				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	35.8	41.6	46.7	5.1	10.9
England	41.0	43.9	45.0	1.1	4.0
NWR	39.8	43.4	46.0	2.6	6.2
LCR	40.9	45.5	49.0	3.5	8.1
SN10	40.9	43.9	45.3	1.4	4.4

SEN Support	Avg READ Progress Score		
	2019	2022	2023
Halton	-0.70	-0.81	0.37
England	-1.01	-1.17	-0.58
NWR	-0.58	-0.65	-0.07
LCR	-0.66	-0.56	0.15
SN10	-0.45	-0.95	-0.30

- Children identified as SEN Support in Halton performed better than their peers nationally in 2023, when considering expected standard and average progress score measures
- The proportion of SEN Support children in Halton achieving expected standard in Reading KS2 was almost 11% more in 2023 than the same pupil group in pre-pandemic 2019
- SEN Support children in 2023 achieved a positive average progress score in 2023, ahead of the performance of this group in both 2022 and pre-pandemic 2019

EHC Plan	% EXS in GPS				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	7.1	18.8	19.0	0.2	11.9
England	17.4	15.1	16.2	1.1	-1.2
NWR	16.5	15.1	16.6	1.5	0.1
LCR	10.5	13.4	15.8	2.4	5.3
SN10	18.9	13.7	15.8	2.1	-3.1

SEN Support	% EXS in GPS				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	32.9	32.6	39.2	6.6	6.3
England	41.2	36.4	37.9	1.5	-3.3
NWR	41.4	36.0	38.8	2.8	-2.6
LCR	40.0	36.0	39.7	3.7	-0.3
SN10	41.6	35.3	37.7	2.4	-3.9

- In KS2 Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling (GPS), both EHC Plan and SEN Support children groups in Halton performed better than their peers nationally in 2023, making improvements year-on-year and from pre-pandemic 2019
- **DISADVANTAGED/FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM) Eligible Pupils: Key Stage Two:**

Disadvantaged	% EXS in Reading, Writing and Maths				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	47.5	44.7	45.1	0.4	-2.4
England	51.5	42.7	44.2	1.5	-7.3
NWR	51.0	41.9	43.4	1.5	-7.6
LCR	49.6	40.9	42.6	1.7	-7.0
SN10	53.5	45.1	48.3	3.2	-5.2

- Disadvantaged children in Halton performed better in the RWM combined measure at KS2 than their peers nationally, in the NWR and the LCR

Disadvantaged	% EXS in READ				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	60.8	66.6	64.0	-2.6	3.2
England	62.3	62.5	60.6	-1.9	-1.7
NWR	62.2	62.8	60.7	-2.1	-1.5
LCR	62.0	62.0	60.6	-1.4	-1.4
SN10	63.8	63.1	63.2	0.1	-0.6

Disadvantaged	% Higher in READ				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	15.8	16.2	21.6	5.4	5.8
England	17.0	17.4	17.6	0.2	0.6
NWR	16.3	17.0	17.2	0.2	0.9
LCR	16.1	15.3	17.3	2.0	1.2
SN10	16.0	17.2	17.5	0.3	1.5

Disadvantaged	Avg READ Progress Score		
	2019	2022	2023
Halton	-0.20	-0.22	0.33
England	-0.62	-0.83	-0.85
NWR	-0.27	-0.42	-0.49
LCR	-0.29	-0.52	-0.29
SN10	-0.16	-0.71	-0.72

- In KS2 Reading 2023, disadvantaged pupils in Halton performed better than their peers, across all comparison areas, in the expected and higher standard measures, and in the average progress score measure

Disadvantaged	% EXS in GPS				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	66.4	59.4	61.3	1.9	-5.1
England	67.5	58.9	59.3	0.4	-8.2
NWR	68.6	59.5	59.8	0.3	-8.8
LCR	66.2	55.9	56.9	1.0	-9.3
SN10	68.9	58.6	61.0	2.4	-7.9

Disadvantaged	% Higher in GPS				
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23
Halton	19.6	13.5	18.6	5.1	-1.0
England	24.5	17.0	18.6	1.6	-5.9
NWR	23.8	16.1	18.2	2.1	-5.6
LCR	21.0	13.3	15.9	2.6	-5.1
SN10	22.6	15.2	18.1	2.9	-4.5

- In GPS KS2 2023, disadvantaged pupils in Halton performed better than their peers across all comparison areas, in the expected and higher standard measures, and had the lowest variances in both measures to pre-pandemic 2019 performance.

Key Stage Two (KS2) progress made from Key Stage One (KS1): ALL Pupils

ALL	Avg READ Progress Score		
	2019	2022	2023
Halton	-0.12	0.27	0.50
England	0.03	0.04	0.04
NWR	0.23	0.30	0.17
LCR	0.01	0.22	0.22
SN10	0.24	-0.14	-0.17

ALL	Avg WRITE Progress Score		
	2019	2022	2023
Halton	0.45	0.59	0.42
England	0.03	0.05	0.04
NWR	0.15	0.05	0.12
LCR	-0.14	0.15	0.19
SN10	0.66	0.13	0.28

ALL	Avg MATH Progress Score		
	2019	2022	2023
Halton	-0.33	-0.07	-0.17
England	0.03	0.04	0.04
NWR	0.29	0.13	0.17
LCR	-0.03	-0.19	-0.19
SN10	0.53	-0.08	-0.11

- Average KS2 progress scores from KS1, for all children, were ahead of national and all other comparison areas in both Reading and Writing at KS2 in 2023. The average progress score in Maths was behind national and 2022's performance, however it has improved from pre-pandemic 2019's performance
- SEND PUPILS: Key Stage One to Two Progress:**

EHC Plan	Avg WRITE Progress Score		
	2019	2022	2023
Halton	-3.29	-2.22	-3.37
England	-4.30	-4.11	-4.41
NWR	-4.30	-3.70	-4.25
LCR	-4.66	-3.90	-4.00
SN10	-3.37	-3.69	-3.92

SEN Support	Avg WRITE Progress Score		
	2019	2022	2023
Halton	-1.16	-0.67	-0.92
England	-1.73	-1.55	-1.53
NWR	-1.52	-1.30	-1.30
LCR	-1.65	-0.98	-1.06
SN10	-0.83	-1.16	-0.88

- In KS2 Writing 2023, children with EHC Plans and SEN Support children groups in Halton performed better than their peers nationally, and for the third reporting year in a row, with children with EHC Plans having the best average progress score across all comparison areas

DISADVANTAGED/FREE SCHOOL MEALS (FSM) Eligible Pupils: Key Stage One to Two Progress made:

Avg MATH Progress Score			
Disadvantaged	2019	2022	2023
Halton	-0.87	-0.70	-0.90
England	-0.71	-1.15	-1.04
NWR	-0.35	-0.88	-0.74
LCR	-0.54	-1.07	-1.01
SN10	0.09	-0.73	-0.74

- Halton’s disadvantaged pupils had a better average progress score than their peers nationally for the second year in a row, in 2023.

Disadvantaged	% EXS in WRITE					Disadvantaged	% Higher in WRITE					Disadvantaged	Avg WRITE Progress Score		
	2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23		2019	2022	2023	Diff 22 to 23	Diff 19 to 23		2019	2022	2023
Halton	66.8	58.7	59.2	0.5	-7.6	Halton	11.3	6.1	6.9	0.8	-4.4	Halton	0.07	0.18	0.07
England	67.9	55.3	58.1	2.8	-9.8	England	11.4	6.1	6.6	0.5	-4.8	England	-0.50	-0.76	-0.69
NWR	67.0	53.9	57.0	3.1	-10.0	NWR	10.6	4.8	5.7	0.9	-4.9	NWR	-0.34	-0.72	-0.54
LCR	65.6	53.5	56.2	2.7	-9.4	LCR	9.8	5.2	5.4	0.2	-4.4	LCR	-0.57	-0.51	-0.41
SN10	69.8	57.3	62.1	4.8	-7.7	SN10	12.2	6.4	7.2	0.8	-5.0	SN10	0.22	-0.44	-0.19

- In Writing KS2 2023, disadvantaged children in Halton performed better than their peers nationally in the expected and higher standard measures, and in the average progress score measure
- Disadvantaged children in Halton had a better than national average progress score than their peers for the third reporting year in a row, and the best average progress score across all of the comparison areas in 2023

Key Stage Four: Attainment All Pupils % Achieving Grades 9-5 and % Achieving Grades 9-4

Grades 9-5 in English and Maths

TOTAL	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Halton	36.1	41.8	41.6	44.3	37.8
England	43.4	49.9	51.9	50.0	45.3
NWR	41.1	47.4	49.6	46.8	41.5
LCR	38.5	45.5	47.2	44.7	38.5
SN10	36.7	44.8	46.5	42.3	38.5

Grades 9-4 in English and Maths

TOTAL	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Halton	56.8	64.1	63.5	63.1	58.3
England	64.9	71.2	72.2	69.0	65.1
NWR	62.9	69.3	70.3	66.2	62.1
LCR	60.3	67.8	68.6	63.6	58.3
SN10	59.0	66.0	68.3	62.5	59.1

- Performance in basics (English and Mathematics) dipped in 2023, similar to all other comparison areas, with the performance gap to national widening slightly in 2023. Performance was in-line/broadly in-line with the Liverpool City Region (LCR) and our close statistical neighbour LAs (SN10)
- 2023 performance in both measures was above pre-pandemic 2019 results in Halton
- Data from 2020, 2021 and 2022 may be higher due to pandemic adjustments being applied to measures, and therefore caution should be used when comparing to these dates

Average Attainment 8 score

TOTAL	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Halton	45.4	47.6	47.2	46.1	42.6
England	46.8	50.2	50.9	48.9	46.3
NWR	45.5	49.0	49.6	47.2	44.5
LCR	45.0	48.6	49.0	46.4	42.8
SN10	43.2	46.8	47.6	45.0	42.9

Average Progress 8 score

TOTAL	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Halton	-0.14	-	-	-0.15	-0.30
England	-0.03	-	-	-0.03	-0.03
NWR	-0.18	-	-	-0.16	-0.20
LCR	-0.22	-	-	-0.22	-0.34
SN10	-0.29	-	-	-0.37	-0.35

- The average Progress 8 score for all children in Halton was ahead of LCR and SN10 areas in 2023

Key Stage Four: SEND cohorts % achieving grades 9-5 and % achieving Grades 9-4

Largest cohort of children with EHC Plans during the five-year reporting period, with 59 children registered as having an EHC Plan in 2023

9-5 in English and Maths

EHCP	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Halton	5.4	7.8	8.8	6.9	11.9
England	5.5	6.5	7.8	7.0	6.8
NWR	5.1	5.6	7.0	5.5	6.3
LCR	3.8	4.6	5.8	4.2	4.5
SN10	2.2	4.7	6.9	4.1	5.6

9-4 in English and Maths

EHCP	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Halton	5.4	9.8	22.8	13.8	16.9
England	11.1	14.1	15.8	13.5	12.9
NWR	10.3	11.9	14.5	11.8	12.5
LCR	8.2	8.3	13.0	9.7	9.8
SN10	6.3	11.8	13.7	9.3	11.0

- Children with EHC Plans in Halton outperformed their peers across all comparison areas when considering the proportion achieving 9-5 and 9-4 in the basics at Key Stage Four (KS4). Provisional data shows Halton as being in the top 6% of LAs nationally for these children, when considering the proportion achieving 9-5 in Basi

Key Stage Four: FSM Eligibility/Disadvantaged Cohort % achieving Grades 9-5 and % achieving Grades 9-4

9-5 in English and Maths

Disadv.	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Halton	19.8	23.8	21.5	24.9	22.6
England	24.8	30.4	31.7	29.7	25.2
NWR	22.2	26.8	28.8	26.6	21.7
LCR	20.0	25.9	27.5	24.9	18.7
SN10	21.1	27.7	27.9	24.3	20.6

Average Progress 8 score

Disadv.	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Halton	-0.48	-	-	-0.53	-0.68
England	-0.45	-	-	-0.55	-0.57
NWR	-0.63	-	-	-0.69	-0.75
LCR	-0.66	-	-	-0.71	-0.90
SN10	-0.65	-	-	-0.81	-0.85

- The proportion of disadvantaged children in Halton achieving 9-5 in Basics at KS4 was higher than the North West Region (NWR), LCR and SN10 comparison areas in 2023, and the difference to pre-pandemic 2019 was 2.8%, compared to 0.4% nationally, for this cohort of children
- The average Progress 8 score for disadvantaged children in Halton was better than that of their peers in the NWR, LCR and SN10 comparison areas in 2023

REPORT TO:	Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	22 January 2024
REPORTING OFFICER:	Executive Director - Children
PORTFOLIO:	Children and Young People
SUBJECT:	Performance Management Report for Quarter 2 2023/24
WARD(S)	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider, and to raise any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the first quarter period 01 July 2023 to 30th September 2023.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2023/24 were agreed by Members and included in the Business Plan, for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
 - Education, Inclusion, Provision Services
 - Children and Families Services

The report details progress made against objectives and milestones and performance targets and provides information relating to key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- 1) Receive the first quarter's performance management report;**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and**
- 3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Board.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Departmental objectives provide a clear statement on what services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. Such information is central to the Council's performance management arrangements and the Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Have a strong and robust framework for identifying and responding across all agencies is key to supporting children and young people, and partners are clear about their responsibilities and role in working together.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Having a strong and robust framework to ensure that children, young people and families are supported in their learning and future employment and skills development.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Children and young people whose health needs and level of development is potentially compromised are identified early and multi- agency support is in place to support them.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Children and young people whose health needs and level of development is potentially compromised are identified early and multi- agency support is in place to support them.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not applicable.

10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

10.1 None within the meaning of the Act.

Children and Young People Priority Based PPB Report

Reporting Period: Quarter 2 2023-24

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress that have occurred during the period of the report towards the priority of Children and Young People (CYP). The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress is explained within Appendix 1 (section 6).
- 1.2 Please note names have been provided to indicate which officer is responsible for the commentary to aid Members, as requested by the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board. A key is provided in Appendix 1 (section 6).

2.0 Key Developments

- 2.1 **Priority Education Investment Area (PEIA) Funding:** PEIA funding has been determined and commissioning of services and providers has been completed for 3 of the strands (Improving outcomes at EYFS, KS2 and KS4). All schools have been informed of their selection to be involved in all activities and launched events have now been held. Over 90% of identified schools have now confirmed their engagement with other schools requesting involvement if spaces become available due to the strength of the offer. The attendance strand has now been finalised, with the appointment of attendance support offices and a data analyst approved. The appointment process is now underway with an anticipated start date in January 2024. All work is expected to conclude by March 2025.
- 2.2 **School Attendance:** Since the last report (Q1) an Attendance Framework document has been developed with schools, the local authority's Department for Education Attendance Adviser, Children's Social Care, and other key partners key in helping to improve school attendance in Halton. This has been issued to all schools and sets out a three-stage graduated approach to helping to improve attendance at Halton's schools. In addition, officers took a proposal to the Department for Education's Priority Education Investment Area Board (PEIA) on 29th September 2023 to bid for additional resources to support children, young people, families, schools and the local authority in tackling persistent absence in school. This was approved in principle by the PEIA Board, and it is anticipated that the DfE will fund 5 x School Attendance Support Officers who will work with families and schools to help improve the attendance of those children and young people who are persistently absent, 2 x 0.5 FTE Assistant Educational Psychologists to support families and school staff, 1 x 0.6 FTE Data/Performance Officer to provide attendance data to ensure support is targeted appropriately and that DfE receive update reports on progress, together with an Administrative Officer to support the function. These posts will be recruited to during the autumn term 2023 for a January 2024 start, and will run until 31st March 2025, and will sit within the Education Welfare Service.
- 2.3 **Team Around the School:** This project successfully launched earlier this year with visits to all secondary schools within the authority- we are now on the second round of visits. These multi-agency meetings include a wide variety of professionals including the school improvement service, educational psychologists, Virtual School, early help, mental health support, specialist teachers and education welfare who visit each school to discuss and support children and young people, who are at risk of exclusion, as well as offering support to schools to improve practice. We also ask for external support from Cheshire Police and the Youth Justice Service, if they are involved with the young people spoken about. These meetings will continue

throughout the academic year. They have evolved to also discuss children with extreme persistent absence and emotional based school non-attendance. Throughout the year, we will look to enhance this offer further to clusters of primary schools, although we have set a date to support one particular Primary already.

- 2.4 **Virtual School Annual Report:** The Virtual School annual report has been published and highlights the key areas of focus for the new academic year including increasing the number of care leavers in education, employment and training and the development of an 'engagement hub' to provide bespoke support, challenge and guidance for all vulnerable children including those with a Social Worker.
- 2.5 **SEND Assessments: Improvements to EHCPs-** Significant work has been undertaken in 2023 to improve both the timeliness and the quality of EHCPs. Timeliness of EHCPs had been declining steadily from the autumn term 2022 and in April 2023, had reached a low of 12.9%. This was due to staffing inconsistencies in the SEND assessment team, impacting upon the capacity of the team and absences impacting adversely. A robust staffing recovery plan was devised and implemented and from Spring onwards, the added management supervision and added staff capacity began to impact positively on timeliness performance. Improved performance reporting systems were implemented, and weekly monitoring of timeliness introduced. This demonstrated week on week performance, and an overall improvement trajectory which as of October 2023, indicates that timeliness has improved to a much healthier 58.3%. The wider application process for considering and processing requests for statutory assessment has been reviewed and improved, ensuring it is a more robust and consistent process, resulting in over 40% of requests for assessment being declined- meaning that we are only assessing those children who genuinely require assessment. A comprehensive Quality Assurance process has now been implementing using the reviewed framework and QA tool for EHCPs. The multi-agency QA group have met 4 times and audited cases from all age ranges, sectors and types of need. The finding from these audits have been fed back to contributors and the impact noted in the later QA audit sessions, where newer plans were considered to be of a much higher standard. Themes for improvement were identified across Education, health and social care, and fed back to Education and Health colleagues. These findings are also being shared with social care.
- 2.6 **SEND Sufficiency-** Resource Bases, Free School for SEMH and added Specialist Places within borough. Phase one of the SEND Sufficiency Strategy is now in implementation stage and this academic year almost 100 additional resource base places have been added across both primary and secondary settings, creating specialist provision for learners with SEMH, ASC, SLCN and complex needs. We anticipate that this added capacity and expertise will take pressure off both the mainstream and specialist sector and reduce the requirement to seek out of borough placements for our most vulnerable learners. In addition, we anticipate the opening of a Free School for SEMH Secondary learners from September 2024. This will ultimately create up to 35 places in this area, over a two year phased period, again reducing the requirement for Out of Borough placements. Further to this, we have completed scoping exercise with Ashley School and Brookfields School, with a view to adding to their cohort of learners, from September 2025 onwards.
- 2.7 **Delivering Better Value (DBV).** The Department for Education's DBV in SEND programme aims to support local authorities and their partners to improve delivery of SEND services for children and young people whilst working towards financial sustainability. Halton is one of 55 Local Authorities in this programme, which is intended to provide dedicated technical support and funding to the local areas which have opted to participate. We have worked extensively with colleagues from Newton Europe, the DfE and CIPFA to complete a range of diagnostic

tasks, also conducting a number of key sessions with representatives from all key stakeholder agencies and parents/ carers. During November 2023 a grant application to bid for up to £1 million funding will be submitted and we will learn about the success of this bid during March 2024. Ultimately the intention is to identify opportunities to support children with SEND earlier with the right support, at the right time. It also will mitigate risks to offer and enable the system to work collectively with greater efficiency, developing long term changes to systems, which will allow timely and cost effective interventions to be delivered quickly.

- 2.8 **Halton's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment:** This report has been reviewed for 2023-24. It shows that Halton continues to provide a sufficient, flexible and high-quality early years and childcare market. Despite the challenges being faced by the early years sector, new provisions are opening up and parents and carers continue to have a wide choice of high quality and affordable childcare services. However, the Early Years sector have identified that there are continuing concerns around recruitment and retention of staff, the high numbers of children coming into settings with SEND and the reduction of numbers of children. There are also concerns around the increasing costs of fuel and overheads, which are not reflected in the funding figures. Given the changes to childcare coming into effect from 2024 with childcare being offered from 9 months of age and an expansion of offer for two year olds this may pose some challenges both nationally and locally. Officers are working closely with the sector to forecast and monitor demand and ongoing sufficiency of the new expansion of offer.
- 2.9 **Wellcomm Screening:** Wellcomm screening is currently in process of being rolled out into all primary schools in Halton by the end of March 2025. This academic year 25 schools are currently engaging in the project through the Priority Education Investment Area work. Talk Boost training is due to commence in November 2023.
- 2.10 **The Halton Lea 'Right to Succeed' Project:** This project is part of the Steve Morgan foundation and working with Liverpool city region. Halton Lea was the ward that was identified 18 months ago to work in to improve outcomes for children and families. A hub model approach will be delivered and aligned with Halton's family Hub model. The programme has completed the discovery phase and has now moved into dedicated steering groups looking at education and wider services. The Right to Succeed education strand continues to make good progress, with services and activities commissioned and agreed with all schools and delivery successfully underway in 100% of identified schools within the region.
- 2.11 **Family hubs:** Halton has launched first Family Hub with Kingsway Family Hub which was launched in July! Excitingly Halton is one of 75 local authorities to be eligible for Family Hub funding to transform existing provision into family hubs model and framework. Early help leads coordinate the hub offer and working closely with all partners to deliver the new model. A steering group has been set up and will progress the different work streams and feed into the group. Year one funding has been rolled over. Branding is now in place which was coproduced with children and families Governance structure of accountability has been suggested and ready for management sign off. The vision is that an Early Help Partnership board will offer scrutiny, challenge and support to many streams of work within early help and prevention including family hubs, supporting families, right to succeed, early help assessments, reducing parental conflict and parenting. Runcorn family Hubs will be launched on 25th October. There will be an open/fun day held at Brookvale children centre and throughout the other centres on the 26th and 27th October 2023.

2.12 **Pause:** Pause in Halton is now well established, and the first graduation took place on 20th January. The programme works with women who have previously had 2 or more children removed from their care. In September the annual event and celebration was held with huge success. The project has already made significant impact on the women and really made a difference to their lives. Evidence already shows positive outcomes including women moving into adult education and gaining employment. After a sustainability report and constant persistence funding was finally secured in March 23 for another 12 months for the programme. Currently being funding 50/50 by LA and ICB. Divisional Manager for early help and PAUSE practice lead are meeting with partners over the next few months for further sustainability.



3.0 Emerging Issues


- 3.1 **Post 16 Provision:** Variety of choice in types of Post 16 providers and Post 16 provision that can be accessed mid-year is limited in Halton. The sector is made more vulnerable because two Post 16 providers in Halton operate on subcontracts from FE Colleges. During 2022/23 academic year both providers experienced a loss of their subcontracted provision with very limited notice. Both providers secured new contracts, with support from the Local Authority, although for one provider the contract is only initially until December 2023 and for the other the contract limits numbers. We anticipate this second provider will not be able to take any more learners soon. The ongoing issue has been raised with the Combined Authority, who are facilitating a city region wide discussion with a view to progressing the issue to Government level, seeking more localised influence in Post 16 provision commissioning.
- 3.2 **Halton's Childcare Sufficiency:** Whilst Halton's Sufficiency Duty Report shows that Halton continues to provide a sufficient, flexible and high-quality early years and childcare market, there continue to be concerns around the recruitment and retention of staff. The Early Years team are working closely with other LA's within the Liverpool City Region to address this issue. A marketing campaign aimed at attracting Childminders into the profession is also being developed to commence January 2024.
- 3.3 **Governor recruitment and retention:** Taking on the role of a school governor is a key strategic role with increasing demands and accountabilities placed upon the governing board. Due to increasing demands; demographic profile of governors, more people are stepping down from the role leaving vacancies. Recruitment of governors is ongoing with the Chief Executive sharing the importance, value and benefits of being a school governor on social media. Work is ongoing with local businesses, community members and partners to recruit and attract new governors but is a local and national challenge.
- 3.4 **School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant:** The School Improvement Service has historically been funded by the 'School Improvement, Monitoring and Brokering Grant', which has enabled Local Authorities to risk assess, quality assure and provide educational, curriculum and leadership support and challenge to all our maintained schools. This also funded provision for training, briefings and cluster networks for school staff, led by Associate School Improvement Advisors (ASIA) colleagues. Sadly, this grant has been ceased and we therefore need to move towards the service becoming funded through a service level agreement with all schools. This presents risks in engaging all schools and ensuring support is purchased back at a sufficient level to enable them to receive the necessary support, challenge and guidance. The SLA and course and network meeting charges have now been shared with school leaders and goes live for purchasing from Q3. Halton have offered such key services for free and are one of the last authorities to move to a charging system. There are potential benefits that this enables colleagues to work with all schools including academy partners if school leaders wish to commission the function from Halton Local Authority, through a service level agreement.
- 3.5 **Alternative Provision:** Like many areas, Halton have seen an increase in the number of permanent exclusions and an increase in demand for alternative provision. This has placed pressure on particularly Key Stage Three provision at our pupil referral unit and limited options available across Halton or local neighbour regions. We are working with our school partners and wider teams to identify solutions to resolving this pressure and increasing a preventative offer too, with the aim of reducing the need to permanently exclude and meet needs earlier.



4.0 Performance Overview

The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorate. It should be noted that given the significant and unrelenting downward financial pressures faced by the Council there is a requirement for Departments to make continuous in-year adjustments to the allocation of resources in order to ensure that the Council maintains a balanced budget. Whilst every effort continues to be made to minimise any negative impact of such arrangements upon service delivery, they may inevitably result in a delay in the delivery of some of the objectives and targets contained within this report.









Objective: Improve outcomes for children and young people through effective multi-agency early intervention (PED01)











Ref	Measure	22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
PED01 01	Increase the number of early help assessments (MAP/PRE-MAP) health/education and other partners are leading on	613 MAP 263 PRE-MAP	N/A	400 MAP 49 PRE-MAP	 Q2 22-23 323 (All)	N/A
<p>Supporting Commentary: Val Armor <i>Work is continuing with regards to the roll out programme for training health and education in accessing the system and taking the lead professional role. Runcorn Locality manager is the lead officer in driving this forward however we are yet to see the impact of this on number of health and schools in the lead professional role. We are also going to develop a team around the school approach in collaboration with education colleagues. This will focus on increasing attendance but will also help to support school colleagues with MAP's. Support clinics and weekly working together meetings will oversee the increase in partnership uptake in the borough.</i></p>						
PED01 02	Improve overall attendance at schools: Primary –Pri PRU – PRU Secondary – Sec Special – Spec Total	LA - 92.12% Pri - 93.86% Sec - 90.38% Spe - 87.62% PRU - 54.61%	95%	LA – 93.62% Pri – 95.62% Sec - 92.10 % Spe - 89.22% PRU – 52.61%	N/A	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton /Scott Middlehurst <i>Attendance across all schools for autumn term 23/24 has improved across all phases which is positive, although the 95% target has not been met other than for primary schools. There has been ongoing support to improve school attendance by the Education Welfare Service and schools supported by other partner agencies. The Education Welfare Service will again trade with schools in 23/24 alongside an increased statutory offer in line with the Government Guidance 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance'.</i></p>						



Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED01a	Work with schools to maintain the level of attendance at Primary and Secondary Schools. Debbie Houghton (March 2024)	
<p>Supporting commentary: Debbie Houghton <i>Attendance across all schools for autumn term 23/24 has improved across all phases so attendance for autumn term 23 exceeds the previous attendance for 22/23. The education Welfare Service are continuing to work with schools, parents, pupils and other agencies to help improve school attendance.</i></p>		

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED01b	Implement Pause project and support women to make positive choices, improving their relationships with their children and preventing further children being taken into care.	
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> Val Armor</p> <p><i>PAUSE in Halton is now over 12 months old and we have celebrated an annual event showcasing the superb work that is being carried out. The project is already having a significant positive impact on the lives of the women involved. The first cohort of women graduated on 20th Jan 23 at a wonderful ceremony highlighting their achievements over the last 18 months. Funding for a further 12 months have finally been secured in March 23. A plan is now in place to secure further funding from partners for 3-5 years. The new cohort of women for 23-24 have been contacted and are in the engagement process of the programme 90% of the women have already signed up to the programme.</i></p>		
PED01c	Revise Halton's parental offer that will include further developmental of reducing parental conflict training.	
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> Val Armor</p> <p><i>The Parenting officer has been in post since January 2022 and now all referrals for parenting go to one central point. This has made it much easier for partners to understand. There have been three parenting events so far in June 2022, January 23 and April 23 and this will be on a rolling programme so partners in the borough are aware of all of the parenting offer. Talks are still in place with IT to develop our own parenting hub. The reducing parental conflict programme has been rolled out over the past 2 years and over 160 workers have been trained. The aim is to embed this work into the everyday work of frontline practitioners. A new partnership with Amity (training provider) has been established and the parenting coordinator will become a train the trainer and roll this programme out in the next quarter. The success in this parenting role has resulted in the need to look for further funding to have an assistant parenting role to help with the delivery and coordination of the parenting hub. This funding will be aligned with Family Hubs transformation and two scale 5 parenting assistants have now been recruited to, this will enhance the reducing parental conflict agenda. The borough continues to embed nurture principles through all of our parenting work across the workforce.</i></p>		

Objective: Keeping Children and Young People safe by improving practice (PED02)



Ref:	Measure	22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
PED02 01	Monitor the rate of referrals to Children's Social Care per 10000 0–18-year-olds (Forecast annualised rate at end of financial year)	617 (prov)	500 (full year)	637 (rate) 405 (total)	 Q2 22-23 316	
<p>Supporting commentary: Claude Madembo <i>We are strengthening the understanding and application of thresholds at the front door to ensure that only children in need of support and intervention at tiers 3 and 4 progress to referrals. There are plans to re-launch threshold document and Multi Agents referral process. We are also working closely with Early Help/ Intervention to prevent children entering statutory services who do not need to. We have an additional health specialist sitting in iCART to support screening and navigating health establishments when sharing information. Work is also beginning with community partners to do more for children and families before referring to Children Social Care by completing comprehensive multi-agency plans (MAPs) for tier 3 cases.</i></p>						
PED02 02	Monitor the rate of children in need (open cases) per 10000 0–18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	499 (includes care leavers)	500	413 (rate) 1137 (total)	 Q2 22-23 389	
<p>Supporting commentary: Claude Madembo <i>We have re-issued our practice standards clearly articulating frequency requirements of visiting to our children. We will visit children to our set standards and make decisions early during assessments ensuring that cases do not unnecessarily drift or stay open where there is no need for it. We are strengthening our transition decision making points to ensure that only the right cases progress further in the system. Working closely with Early Help soon after assessments cases which do not require statutory services will be transferred. A CIN Reviewing Officer recently appointed will support case progression of CIN cases.</i></p>						
PED02 03	Monitor the rate of children subject to a child protection plan per 10000 0–18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	70	45	66 (rate) 182 (total)	 Q2 22-23 56	
<p>Supporting commentary: Claude Madembo <i>Working closely with Early Help step down cases will be worked on so that they do not escalate back into statutory services. By strengthening the understanding and application of thresholds at different transition points (contact to referral, referral to assessment/ strategy discussion) we will reduce the number of cases progressing as CP. We have managed to reduce our caseloads per social worker. This is strengthening the quality of our assessments and intervention to reduce number of cases escalating to CP. Practice Improvement Lead and CIN Reviewing Officer are supporting managers in iCART/ DAT to ensure that cases are progressing at the right levels.</i></p>						
PED02 04	Monitor the rate of children in care per 10000 0–18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	133	90	143 (rate) 395 (total)	 Q2 22-23 131	
<p>Supporting commentary: <i>Halton's rate of CLA has remained above all comparators for the past 13 months. The number of children in care has been impacted by the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) as an LA. In September 23 there were 29 UASC. There has been an increase in the CLA numbers April-23 to September-23</i></p>						

Ref:	Measure	22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
PED02 05	Reduce the number of children and young people who enter the care system (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	147	68	62	 Q2 22-23 76	
<p>Supporting commentary: Raj Bharkhada Prevent children entering the CIN service by ensuring that Early Help services are targeted towards meeting the needs of the children in the community in conjunction with the front door. We continue to strengthen our working with our early help colleagues. The 12-week plan has seen increased visits and better planning. We anticipate better outcomes moving forward.</p>						
PED02 06	Reduce the average caseload in Children in Need Teams (snapshot end of quarter)	21	18	21	 Q2 22-23 18	
<p>Supporting commentary: Raj Bharkhada Caseloads are continuing to stabilise. We have closed many cases and believe there are some within the system that require closure or stepped down to early Help. We will review the impact of the CIN review manager at the front door in the next few weeks.</p>						
PED02 07	Increase the proportion of missing incidents where a return interview is completed (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	70%	85%	53%	 Q2 22-23 46%	
<p>Supporting commentary: Clare Hunt For this period, there have been 98 return interviews completed with 58 young people by the commissioned service. 53% of all incidents have had a return interview and 71% were completed within 72 hours, this is a decrease from the previous quarter. The Declines for return interviews were 87 incidents by 13 young people.</p>						
PED02 08	Reduce the number of children who repeatedly run away in Halton (in last 12 months, snapshot end of quarter)	21	N/A	3	 Q2 22-23 8	
<p>Supporting commentary: Clare Hunt For this reporting period, there has been a total of 184 notifications from the commissioned service. There have been three young people with repeat missing incidents. These three young people have made five or more incidents during the quarter, accounted for 14% of all missing incidents in the quarter. The repeat cohort was made up of 2 males (1 20 miles I Care) and 1 female (20mile). With You's engagement rate with this cohort is 62%, with 2 out of 3 in this quarter engaging with at least one return home interview.</p>						
PED02 09	Reduce the number of children who go missing in the year (number of children recorded as missing in last 12 months, snapshot end of quarter)	357	N/A	96	 Q2 22-23 85	
<p>Supporting commentary: Clare Hunt There has been a decrease of 23% of missing incidents from 240 to 184, as well as a decrease of 33% young people from 143 to 96. The largest percentage of incidents broken down by CYP accommodation status is Home CYP, at 45%, a 5% decrease compared to Q1. This is the same cohort with the highest percentage of incidents as in the previous quarter. Incidents produced by CYP residing in care saw a 4% increase compared to Q1, with 20% of incidents accounted for by this cohort. This is a 23% decrease from Q2 2022. The missing incidents are slightly higher for females compared to males for both the 10-15yrs and 16-18yrs cohorts reported MFH. The under 10 cohort saw an even split between males and females for this quarter. The main reasons for missing identified by young people in the return interviews that caused them to be reported as MFH were boundary issues at home or in care, family conflicts and school issues. These are the same as the professional reasons cited, with the addition of substance misuse and older peer influence.</p>						

Ref:	Measure	22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
PED02 10	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (snapshot end of quarter)	13	20	23	 Q2 22-23 23	





Supporting commentary: [Raj Bharkhada](#)

Multi-agency meetings are in place and are attended regularly by partner agencies. Social Care is the co-chair for this meeting. We need to ensure that all relevant cases are reviewed by this panel, actions addressed. And where required social workers are to provide a detailed and current risk assessment. All cases are heard at the monthly meeting with a targeted risk management plan for each child. Police and Social Care need to work closely over the next few months to establish good working relationships. Additionally, we have reviewed high risk cases within the service and continue to monitor them regularly.









PED02 11	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (snapshot end of quarter)	34	12	23 Low 24 Med 13 High (U18's only)	 Q2 22-23 32	
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Supporting commentary: [Raj Bharkhada](#)

Multi-agency meetings are in place and are attended regularly by partner agencies. Social Care is the co-chair for this meeting. We Multi-agency meetings are in place and are attended regularly by partner agencies. Social Care is the co-chair for this meeting. We need to ensure that all relevant cases are reviewed by this panel, actions addressed. And where required social workers are to provide a detailed and current risk assessment. All cases are heard at the monthly meeting with a targeted risk management plan for each child. Police and Social Care need to work closely over the next few months to establish good working relationships need to ensure that all relevant cases are reviewed by this panel, actions addressed. And where required social workers are to provide a detailed and current risk assessment. All cases are heard at the monthly meeting with a targeted risk management plan for each child. Police and Social Care need to work closely over the next few months to establish good working relationships.

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED02a	Embed a systemic model of social work practice across the whole service, social workers, managers and senior leaders.	
<i>Supporting commentary:</i> The 'roll out' of training in support of systemic practice remains ongoing. Systemic principles are being aligned to policy and procedures, including social work practice standards and the supervision policy. Practitioners are beginning to use systemic principles in their work with children and families.		
PED02b	Review and update Workforce Strategy in line with the Knowledge and Skills framework and the Professional Capabilities Framework. Developing the competencies, skills and knowledge of the workforce making them motivated, stable and ambitious will improve the outcomes for families and keep them at the heart of everything we do.	
<i>Supporting commentary:</i> Work is continuing in developing a workforce strategy. A "star chambers" approach has been adopted to align the service structures with the current staffing establishments in Early Help and Children's Social Care.		
PED02c	Implement redevise structure for children and need service to ensure better resilience and management accountability to provide a safe and structured environment for social workers.	
<i>Supporting commentary:</i> The Service structure supporting Children in Need is currently under review.		
PED02d	Implement redevise quality and assurance framework to monitor improvements in practice	
<i>Supporting commentary:</i> Quality assurance and audit systems are in place; these provide accurate narrative on the quality of practice across the Service. The framework for learning, to convert this narrative in to practice improvement, has been strengthened by a small team of Practice Improvement Leads who provide mentoring, training and support to practitioners and first line managers		




Objective: Improve outcomes for Children in Care and Care Leavers (PED03)


Ref:	Measure	22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
PED03 01	Reduce the number of children who are placed in residential care (snapshot at end of quarter)	40	20	44	 Q2 22-23 43	
<p>Supporting Commentary: There is a significant focus currently in respect of reviewing those children and young people who are placed in a residential placement to ensure that only those children and young people who require this type of placement remain in such placements. Tracker meetings take place to ensure appropriate timely plans are in place for young people moving towards independence as well as reviewing progress. Furthermore, the Care Leavers Accommodation Group continues to meet monthly to discuss all referrals for those young people aged 17 plus who require their own accommodation in line with their Pathway Plan.</p>						
PED03 02	Reduce the number of children who are placed in independent fostering agencies (snapshot at end of quarter)	71	35	95	 Q2 22-23 56	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Placements are tracked through the resource and placements meeting where sourcing Halton's mainstream foster carers is a primary focus. The current level of sufficiency due to increase of looked after children is resulting in the use of Independent Fostering Agencies, and in some circumstances residential, however as foster carers approvals are also tracked there are means to place with in house carers planned. All requests for a fostering placement on Eclipse go to the internal fostering team to ensure best use of resources as well as tracking against new applicants at an early stage and only after this is a referral made to the independent sector. This remains an ongoing area of focus and the fostering team are looking to strengthen their fostering recruitment for in house carer.</p>						
PED03 03	Maintain the percentage of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (snapshot at end of quarter)	94%	95%	96%	 Q2 22-23 98%	
<p>Supporting Commentary: The Care leaver accommodation group continues to meet monthly and track young people alongside sourcing appropriate accommodation for them to transition into.</p>						
PED03 04	Increase the percentage of Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training (snapshot at end of quarter)	57%	65%	56%	 Q2 22-23 54%	
<p>Supporting Commentary: There has been an increase in the team around personal advisors which going forward will allow more focus in working with the virtual school in sourcing appropriate EET opportunities and supporting Care Leavers to access them.</p>						
PED03 05	Percentage of CIC Residential and Leaving Care placements that have received a Quality Assurance Visit from the Placements Team within the previous 12 months (cumulative from April to end of quarter)	Residential 42% Leaving Care 94.7%	N/A	7 Residential visits 1 Leaving Care visit	N/A	N/A
<p>Supporting Commentary: The increase in the number of placement requests this quarter as well as previous quarter has impacted on the teams ability to complete some planned quality monitoring visits. However, as well as the planned visit there have been a number of responsive visits that have taken place linked to quality concerns from Professionals as well as a result of OFSTED inspection outcome reports</p>						

Ref:	Measure	22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
PED03 06	Report on the budget spent on independent and out of borough placements for Children in Care (Forecast end of year) (Sarah Riley/Lucy Freaney)	Projected spend forecast for 2022/23 Residential £13,805,604.33 IFA £2,713,219.28 UASC Residential £1,550,840.21 IFA £189,878.55	Projected 9,583,822	Projected spend forecast for 2023/24 Residential £15,777,052 IFA £3,731,551 UASC Residential £1,316,508 IFA £101,463 Total overspend of £3,283,331		










Supporting Commentary:







In order to address these rising costs, the following initiatives have been embedded to help to reduce spend in this area: High-cost tracker meeting, Residential Step Down to Fostering events and an increase in, Supported Lodgings, Commissioned Care Leavers Group and Training Flats. This is in line with other neighbouring local authorities, there have also been an increase in the number of potential Continuing Health Care assessments for the young people in care which may result in joint funding being put in place with Health services.





Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED03a	Ensuring all children in care achieve permanency in a timely way.	
<u>Supporting Commentary:</u> <i>The permanence panel is embedded operationally in the service and meets monthly. All CIC are presented at the panel to add scrutiny and oversight to their permanence plan. The revised procedure and TOR for permanence and the panel have been launched and delivered at social care and early help development briefings. Panels are being arranged to review and track children's permanency plans.</i>		
PED03b	Ensure that Safeguarding Unit escalate any delays or concerns using escalate policy	
<u>Supporting Commentary:</u> <i>The Safeguarding Unit use the dispute resolution process to ensure timely and effective planning for our Children in Care and Children who are subject of a Child Protection Plan. The IRO's raise escalations through this process when more informal discussions with the Social Worker and Practice Lead has not led to satisfactory resolution/progress in planning for an individual child.</i>		
PED03c	Review and quality assure the commissioning of services for Children in Care and Care Leavers to ensure that they meet the needs of Halton's population and inform future commissioning decisions	
<u>Supporting Commentary:</u> <i>Jill Farrell</i> <i>Quality assurance visits are carried out with wider teams to identify strengths of offer; areas of development to meet need more effectively and review that the contract requirements are being fulfilled to meet need. Specialist teachers, school improvement colleagues and other teams support this process to monitor quality of provision in relation to quality of education and curriculum offer and interventions and strategies to meet need and plan next steps.</i>		

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED03d	Through the quality assurance of Personal Education Plans (PEP), identify areas of need and support to improve outcomes for individual Children in Care	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Ben Holmes</p> <p><i>Autumn term PEPs are now underway, alongside those for children and young people who are new into care. At the end of the Summer Term 2023, 95% of PEPs were completed within timescale in secondary and post 16 (up from 80% in the spring term) and 98% of EY and Primary. These figures are in line or better than the same time last academic year. As a result of the more rigorous QA process introduced in the spring term, it has resulted in an increase in Amber rated PEPs, particularly within Primary. However, the SMART targets training has now been delivered, with further targeted support put in place and a successful conference delivered in Q2 with over 150 delegates from education and social care, which further developed the quality of PEPs. Overall, the most popular requests for Pupil Premium + funding are for Speech and Language support in EY, SEMH in Primary and 1:1 tuition in secondary. A focus this academic year is the development of our offer for Post 16 and more structured strategic support for young people and their schools and carers as they leave care (whether that be at 18, or via an SGO, adoption or returning to parents). We are also looking to rollout a PEP for 2-year-olds.</i></p>		










Objective: Improve the offer for children and young people with disabilities and those with Special Educational Needs (PED04)






Ref:	Measure	22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
PED04 01	Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plan assessments completed within 20 weeks (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	25.8%	75%	58.3%	 Q2 22-23 55.9%	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Charlotte Finch Implementation of the staff recovery plan has impacted positively. Slow but steady improvement has been seen since Spring. In April, timeliness dropped to a worrying low of 12.9%. Most recent data indicate a live performance rate (based on a 12 month rolling cycle) of 58.3, which is significant recovery and put us on track to align with national average within 12 months- should staffing capacity remain stable.</p>						
PED04 02	Reduce the number of incidents of fixed term Suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	1218	500	208 instances		
<p>Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton/ Scott Middlehurst The number of suspensions for this period is 208 which is slightly lower than at this point last year at 261 although it is already unlikely the target set of 500 will be met. In 22/23 the 1866 suspensions resulted in a loss of 6,784 sessions of attendance lost.</p>						
PED04 03	Reduce the number of children subject to fixed term suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	552	350	176 Children		
<p>Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton/ Scott Middlehurst We are currently in the first half term of 23/24 and the number of suspensions is 176 children, which is 50% of the target set for 23/24 and slightly higher than at the same point last year of 165. The Team around the School meetings are taking place each week to discuss children with multiple suspensions at risk of exclusion. These meetings are attended by school and other partner agencies including Education Psychologist, Education Welfare Service, Mental Health Support Team, Early Help etc. The aim of the meetings is to provide support and advice to schools to reduce suspensions and exclusions. Common themes raised by school are around persistent disruptive behaviour and internal truancy.</p>						
PED04 04	Reduce the number of children subject to a permanent suspension (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	39 (but 40 PERM Exc. One child excluded from 2 schools	30	6 Children Perm Excluded in the period		
<p>Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton/ Scott Middlehurst In this period we have had 6 permanent exclusions again predominantly KS3 children although we have had 2 year 11 KS4 children. Looking at the reasons for exclusion they are predominantly for persistent disruptive behaviour, but we have had an early number of assaults against adults which is more likely to result in school making the decision to permanently exclude. This number is slightly less than at the same point last year. The number of permanent exclusions is increasing with the actual number for 22/23 as 52 compared to 32 the previous academic year 21/22.</p>						
PED04 05	Report on the proportion of children subject to Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) placed in independent and out of borough provisions (snapshot end of quarter) – long term target is to reduce	8% As of Q3 22/23	3.6%	8.5%	 Q2 22-23 8.1%	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Charlotte Finch Halton continues to place high numbers of EHCP learners OOB in independent settings. This is due to our own settings being at saturation point and possibly in part due to us not having our own SEMH provision. This situation will be positively impacted over the next 12 months by the introduction of almost 100 additional resource base places and the opening of a free school catering for SEMH learners. We should therefore see positive impact in this area in the future, although current trends are concerning.</p>						

Ref:	Measure	22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
PED04 06	Report on the budget spent on independent and out of borough (OOB) provision for SEND (Forecast end of year)	Total year projected spend £6,726,000	£250000 reduction	£6,728,000	 N/A	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Claire Gurney / Jill Farrell</p> <p>113 pupils are placed at non-maintained and independent schools, overall this represents an increase of 6 placements compared to September 2022. Nineteen of the 113 children were new starters. In Q2 there were 30 referrals received for non-maintained and independent schools with 19 of these parental requests for consultation. The average placement cost has risen to £59,406. Work has continued as an individual local authority as well as collaboratively across Liverpool City Region to mitigate against the uplift requests this year from providers. Of the children on-roll: - Primary Needs: - 40 are Cognition and Learning or have ASC as a primary need, SEMH – 61, Speech, Language and Communication – 5 and Visual Impairment – 7, Key Stages are:- KS1: - 5, KS2: 15, KS3: 39, KS4: 39, KS5: 15</p>						
PED04 07	Increase the percentage of children subject to EHCP placed in mainstream provision (snapshot end of quarter)	51% As of Q3 22/23	65%	32%	 Q2 22-23 49%	N/A
<p>Supporting Commentary: Charlotte Finch</p> <p>Since 2018, EHCP learners in mainstream schools in Halton have been low compared to our Stat neighbours. This number is growing over time, although still lower than we would like it to be. Work on improving the graduated approach, as set out in the Improvement Action plan, should continue to impact positively on this figure over the next 12 months. In 2018 we had 98 earners with EHCPs in mainstream. Since then, the numbers have grown year on year, with by far the greatest growth occurring between 2022 and 2023, when 145 additional EHCPs were educated in mainstream. Now, in 2023 we have 480. This means that 32% of our EHCP learners are now in mainstream, which is an improvement of 4% since last year, when the figure was 28%.</p>						
PED04 08	Monitor the percentage of Special Schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	100%	100%	100%	 Q2 22-23 100%	N/A
<p>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</p> <p>All special schools are rated good or outstanding and provide high quality, inclusive educational provision.</p>						
PED04 09	Increase the percentage of Education Health and Care plans for Child Protection and Children in Care completed in 16 weeks (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	N/A	75%		N/A	N/A
<p>Supporting Commentary: Charlotte Finch</p> <p>We continue to prioritise vulnerable children for timely assessment. This data is not currently available but will be reported at next quarter.</p>						
Ref:	Milestones					Quarterly Progress
PED04a	Develop and Implement the Social Emotional and Mental Health Strategy (SEMH) by March 2023. Impact to be monitored through the action plan.					
<p>Supporting Commentary: Charlotte Finch</p> <p>We are currently working on this strategy with Nigel Hunt, who has been commissioned to lead on this work. We are exploring opportunities to tie this work in with DBV grant delivery. NH currently exploring pilot opportunities with secondary settings.</p>						
PED04b	Review the current framework of support for children and young people with disabilities, including short breaks provision					
<p>Supporting Commentary: Claire Gurney / Jill Farrell</p>						









Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
<p>There has been 1926.5 hours of short breaks delivered to disabled children this quarter, this is always higher in Q2 due to the play schemes that run through the summer holidays. 189 children have accessed short break activities attending 8 different services: - Play Clubs and Summer Play Schemes, Swimming Lessons, Splash Play, Trips and Visits, Outdoor Activities and Digital Media Workshops. Activities are advertised on the Local Offer. Quarterly and bi-annual performance reviews continue. A provider meeting took place in the quarter expanding the membership to include other providers who deliver activities to children with special educational needs and disabilities, this is leading to joint working to broaden the offers available to children and young people.</p>		
PED04c	Review direct payments with all recommissions co-produced with parents and young people.	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Val Armor This has been reviewed in terms of commissioning to get the best offer and value for parents and carers</p>		
PED04d	Improve quality and timeliness of Education Health and Care Plans.	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Charlotte Finch As is shown in data above, timeliness is on an ever-improving trajectory. QA audits are conducted regularly and are showing improvements in the quality of plans. Headteachers report that they are noting the improving quality of plans. Invision 360 is currently being implemented, which should improve the quality of plans further.</p>		
PED04e	Quality assure all provision currently being utilised to ensure that provision meets the needs of our children and young people	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Claire Gurney/Jill Farrell Monitoring visits for NMISS continue with a visit taking place in quarter 2 and of the 33 schools commissioned 14 have been monitored covering 62.8% of children placed. The updated monitoring process was presented to SEND Strategic Partnership and is being trialled with a school in the autumn term.</p>		
PED04f	Review in borough specialist provision and revise to meet the needs of Halton's children and young people	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Charlotte Finch SEND sufficiency strategy phase 1 is now in implementation phase. Phase 2 now needs to be drafted. So far, the sufficiency strategy has created almost 100 additional resource base places, with potentially 50 additional special school places scheduled to be open between September 24 and 25.</p>		


Objective: Raise achievement across Early Years and all Key Stages, and diminish the difference between vulnerable groups and their peers (PED05)




Ref:	Measure	22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
PED05 01	Ensure all eligible children for the vulnerable 2-year-old funding access quality EY provision (internally collected termly information – may not match to published data from census)	98%	100% of eligible	91%	N/A	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell / Belinda Yen</i> The DfE provided a target of 485 children to be placed. Halton have placed 442 (including 8 Out of Borough (OOB) settings) which equates to 91%. Although the percentage of children placed appears to have gone down since last quarter, the target has increased. Also, once all placements had been made, there were no children waiting to be placed and all eligible referrals were placed.</p>						
PED05 02	Increase the take up of Early Years Entitlement for 3- to 4-year-olds.	93.9%	96%	90.10%	 Q2 22-23 89%	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell / Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson</i> The current 90.10% figure is based upon national data published in the August 2023 LAIT. Using the PCT GP registration data and the autumn headcount of 3- & 4-year-old funded children 89% of 3- & 4-year-olds are accessing a funded place. There are sufficient places for all 3- & 4-year-olds who require a place. The Early Years team continue to actively market places, via media channels, posters shared with EY settings and attendance at summer campaigns/activities across the borough.</p>						
PED05 03	Monitor the percentage of Early Years settings (pre-schools, day care, out of school clubs, childminders) with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding (snapshot end of quarter)	91%	N/A	97%	 Q2 22-23 93%	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell / Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson</i> 87.27% of all PVIs are Outstanding, Good or Met. This includes 11 settings (10%) who have not yet been inspected. 2 settings currently require improvement, 1 childminder is inadequate. Of those settings who have been inspected 97% are Outstanding, Good or Met.</p>						
PED05 04	Monitor the percentage of Primary schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	76%	Dependent on Inspection dates	78%	 Q2 22-23 86.7%	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</i> Based on the latest data published, 100% maintained nurseries and 78% primaries are graded good or outstanding. A high number of schools were inspected over the summer term, including several graded inspections, resulting in the increase from 74% the previous quarter. All maintained schools receive support and challenge from their Associate School Improvement Advisor.</p>						
PED05 05	Monitor the percentage of Secondary schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding (snapshot end of quarter) N.B. 7 out of the 8 schools are academies. (snapshot end of quarter)	50%	N/A	50%	 Q2 22-23 80%	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</i> 50% of secondaries, 100% special schools and the Pupil Referral Unit are graded good or outstanding.</p>						

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED05a	Monitor and evaluate educational outcomes of all pupils, vulnerable pupils (CIC: EHCP etc.), disadvantaged pupils and the impact of funding streams (including Free EY Entitlement, Catch Up funding, Pupil Premium, Sports Premium etc.) to raise achievement for all and diminish the difference between vulnerable groups and their peers	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</p> <p>ASIA Link Officers to maintained and faith schools, as part of their termly visits, hold leaders to account for educational outcomes and progress of all pupils, especially disadvantaged and SEND. Disadvantaged working groups are led by the local authority, but work alongside education leads, SENDCOs and DSLs to ensure there is an effective pupil premium strategy within each school and that funding is being used to best effect to secure improved outcomes and life chances for children and young people. Guidance is provided to school governors through the director's briefing and through governor briefings to enable them to fulfil their duties. The Virtual School tracks the outcomes for Looked After Children and during 23/24 will continue to expand this to also track Children with a Social Worker. Schools have also engaged with Peer to Peer SEND Reviews, including those with SEND resource base provision.</p>		
PED05b	Monitor and evaluate the impact of COVID-19 lockdown and remote learning offer on all pupils and vulnerable pupils learning	N/A
<p>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</p> <p>No longer tracked directly as foci has shifted post pandemic.</p>		
PED05c	Review the process of risk assessment for schools and settings to target support and drive improvement	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</p> <p>The School Improvement Team risk assess schools termly (and after Ofsted visits) and adjust targeted support to meet needs of schools. In Q2 all school gradings were reviewed ready for implementation in September 2023. Due to the termination of the School Improvement, Monitoring and Brokering Grant for LAs, the service will move to an SLA model over Q2-Q4, which will impact on the level of support schools can receive, but this will be tracked closely alongside plans for when urgent, intensive support is required.</p> <p>The SLA model has been developed in collaboration with school leaders and will be signed up to in Q3-Q4. We now have a school improvement website to support our new offer. https://haltonschoolimprovement.co.uk/</p>		
PED05d	Build engagement, capacity and governors understanding of the strategic roles and responsibilities	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</p> <p>Governor training and briefings were well attended in Q2. During workshops the governor roles and responsibilities were promoted in relation to being confident about their roles in relation to safeguarding, PEIA actions and during inspections. Further training from Ofsted is scheduled for Q3 for Governors. Peer reviews are being carried out in partnership with school leadership teams and SEND governors. Governors were also encouraged to attend SEND Roadshows and EHCP assessment workshops.</p>		
PED05e	In partnership with schools, review and design an effective educational vision for the region that meets pupils needs whilst raising ambitions	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</p> <p>We have a continued focus on the work of the Priority Educational Investment Area plans. Key priorities include Early Years development, improving outcomes in reading and maths through all key phases and improving attendance. A focus of inclusion runs throughout all key priority themes. Plans and Organisation leads for each strand have been identified and commissioned with successful launch events held towards the end of Q2 and delivery has been initiated, with 94% of schools who have been invited to engage in the projects signed up and enrolled.</p>		
PED05f	Launch Halton Learning Alliance Strategic Partnership to develop an inclusive, ambitious approach developing contributing, successful citizens locally, nationally and globally. All educational stakeholders and community members acting with moral purpose for Halton children, young people and community members	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</p> <p>The HLA has been paused for 23/24 to enable focus on the PEIA across the authority. Schools will be clustered to ensure all benefit and develop greater collaboration between neighbouring schools.</p>		

Objective: Improve participation and skills for young people to drive Halton's future (PED06)

Ref:	Measure	22/23 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
PED06 01	Maintain the percentage of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (snapshot end of quarter, end of year information February)	4.4%	4.4%	6.4%	 Q2 22-23 5.3%	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell <i>As in Quarter 1 the results show a continuation of the issues seen in 2022/23: a significant greater number of young people are not available to the labour market due to illness, including mental health issues, compared to previous years. For those who are not in education or training since March 2023 there have been no education or training options that young people could join mid-year within the borough.</i></p>						
PED06 02	Maintain the percentage of 16–17 year olds whose activity is not known (snapshot end of quarter, end of year information February)	0.5%	0.5%	0.9%	 Q2 22-23 0.8%	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell <i>If young people (and/or their families) refuse to disclose the young person's activity or where they are currently living, they are recorded as cannot be contacted or refused to disclose. In addition, for some households we are unable to gain a response to contact at the door, via phone, email or letter. The figure does rise as we come to the end of each academic year, and we experience issues making contact with young people over the summer period. The current situation is similar to last year, so we anticipate being able to make progress by the February 2024 end of year measure for this outcome.</i></p>						
PED06 03	Increase the percentage of 16-17 year olds with an offer of learning (September guarantee)	96.02%	97%	93%	 Q2 22-23 95.7%	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell <i>Whilst the percentage of offers made to young people is currently lower than Quarter 2 last year, this report is being completed 1 week earlier, therefore we are still in the process of tracking young people and will have more information before the submission deadline to the Department for Education of 31st October 2023.</i></p>						
PED06 04	Increase the percentage of 16-17 year olds participating in education or training that meets the Government definition of full participation (known as Raising the Participation Age)	88.6%	90%	85.7%	 Q2 22-23 87%	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell <i>The increase in the number of young people who are not in education employment or training in 2022-23 also affects this figure as they are not participating in education or training.</i></p>						

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED06a	Closely monitor the cohort of young people not in education, employment or training and identify common patterns/issues to inform actions, guide the effective use of resources and to identify any future commissioning needs	
<p>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell <i>Ongoing analysis takes place to respond to need and ensure the resources available are being targeted appropriately. Work has been targeted at raising the lack of provision issue with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and the Education and Skills Funding Agency, as well as speaking to providers in neighbouring authorities to encourage provision into the borough.</i></p>		

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED06c	Work with schools, the College and training providers to review the post 16 offers of learning made to young people and increase the amount of offers made before the end of an academic year.	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> <i>Final analysis of the information is still being processed to confirm final figure compared to previous year.</i></p>		
PED06d	Work with schools, the College and training providers to report where young people progress to Post 16 as quickly as possible so those who haven't progressed can be identified and contacted to offer support	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> <i>Data from the college and training providers in the borough submitted in a timely manner. Schools supporting with any young people known to them.</i></p>		
PED06d	Work with Post 16 education and training providers in the borough to support the development of provision that does have clear progression opportunities	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> <i>Significant provision issues in 2023 with two Post 16 providers losing contracted provision with little notice. A resolution was found for both providers. Paper has been submitted to a new provider to evidence need in Halton for more provision, with the desired outcome of encouraging that provider to develop a provision base in Halton, this is still in discussion with the provider.</i></p>		

5.0 Financial Summary






Q2 2023.24
Children and Families



EIP Q2 23.24
Final.pdf




6.0 Appendix I

6.1 Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress		Milestone	Measure
Green		Indicates that the milestone is on course to be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that the annual target is on course to be achieved.
Amber		Indicates that it is uncertain, or too early to say at this stage whether the milestone will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that it is uncertain or too early to say at this stage whether the annual target is on course to be achieved.
Red		Indicates that it is unlikely or certain that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that the target will not be achieved unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.

6.2 Direction of Travel indicator

Where possible measures will also identify a direction of travel using the following convention:

Green		Indicates that performance is better compared to the same period last year .
Amber		Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the same period last year .
Red		Indicates that performance is worse compared to the same period last year .

6.3 Key for responsible officers: **JF** Jill Farrell, Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision Service

Education, Inclusion & Provision Department**Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2023**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Expenditure					
Employees	7,464	3,568	3,446	122	184
Premises	28	14	9	5	0
Supplies & Services	1,245	709	665	44	60
Transport	6	0	0	0	0
Schools Transport	1,588	794	1,138	(344)	(1,132)
Commissioned Services	1,654	515	327	188	72
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	10	0	0	0	10
Independent School Fees	6,728	3,679	3,679	0	0
Inter Authority Special Needs	604	382	382	0	0
Pupil Premium Grant	220	22	22	0	0
Nursery Education Payments	7,467	3,655	3,655	0	0
Capital Financing	1	0	0	0	0
Total Expenditure	27,015	13,338	13,323	15	(806)
Income					
Fees & Charges Income	-101	-100	-173	73	73
Government Grant Income	-856	-428	-428	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-445	-223	-263	40	66
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	0	0	-40	40	40
Transfers from Reserves	-134	-25	-25	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-18,730	-9,364	-9,364	0	0
Inter Authority Income	-483	-207	-207	0	0
Total Income	-20,749	-10,347	-10,500	153	179
Net Operational Expenditure	6,266	2,991	2,823	168	(627)
Recharges					
Premises Support	281	140	140	0	0
Transport Support	441	220	294	(74)	(140)
Central Support	1,609	807	807	0	0
Asset Rental Support	17	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
Net Total Recharges	2,348	1,167	1,241	(74)	(140)
Net Departmental Expenditure	8,614	4,158	4,064	94	(767)

Financial Position

The net Departmental expenditure is £0.094m under budget at the end of quarter two, based on available information. However, the forecast outturn for 2023/24 is currently estimating an overspend against budget of £0.767m.

Core funded employee expenditure is forecast to be £0.184m under budget at year end. As in previous years there are a number of vacancies across the department. There are a number of vacant positions across the department that are being acted-up/covered by agency staff. It is hoped that most of these vacancies will be filled by the end of this financial year but there will not be full year costs for them in 2023/24, resulting in a one-off saving.

The Q1 report provided a forecast that supplies and services costs would be over the available budget, but since that point revisions have been made to the forecast spend for

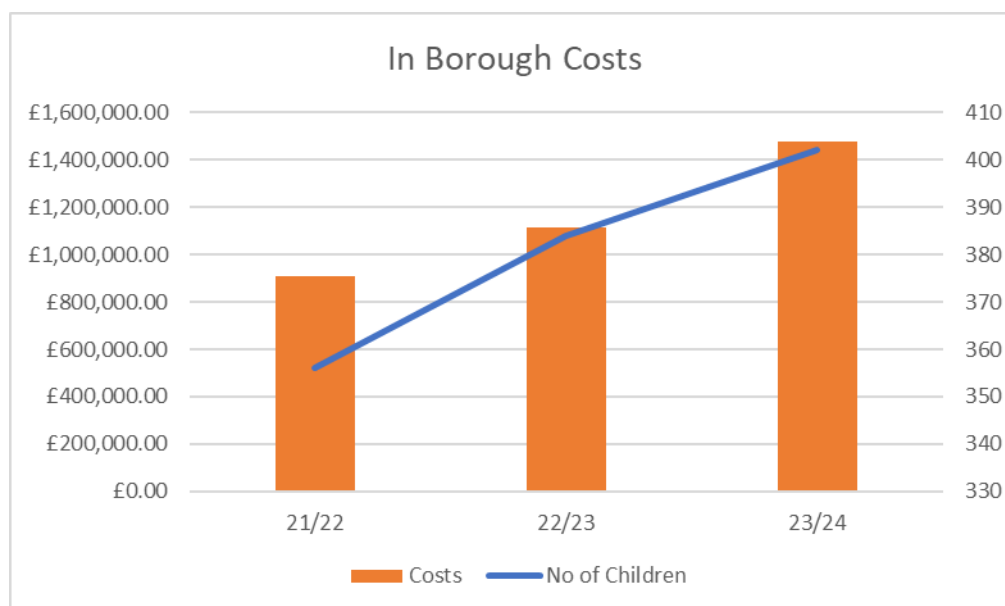
the year and it is now estimated that costs will be under the available budget by £0.060m. All spend in this area is essential spend only and the budget holders across the Department closely monitor all spend.

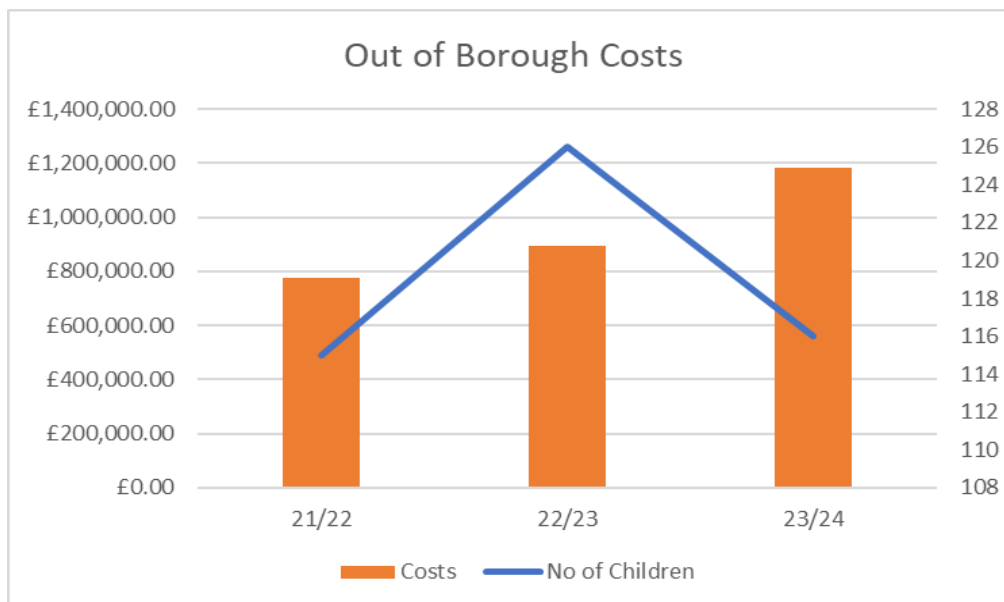
Schools Transport is the main budget pressure for Education, Inclusion and Provision. The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide Special Educational Needs (SEN) pupils with transport. The budget can be split into two main areas: between SEN pupils attending schools within the borough and those attending out of borough schools.

The table below breaks down the split between the different areas, and how each areas spend compares to budget.

	2023-24 as at Q2				
Area	No. of Users	Budget £'000	Projected Spend £'000	Variance £'000	Average Cost per User
In Borough	402	1,104	1,478	(374)	£3,676
Out of Borough	116	426	1184	(758)	£10,207
Total	518	1,530	2,662	(1,132)	

At Q2 there are currently 518 service users, the majority of which attend schools within the Borough, 402 compared to 116 out of the Borough. As can be seen both areas are overspending compared to budget. However, the out of borough forecast overspend is far greater than that for in-borough. The demand for the School Transport service is increasing in line with the increasing number of pupils with SEN within the Borough. The graphs below show that the number of SEN children using this service has increased year on year, which has driven the costs up. Although there has been a small reduction in the number of out of borough SEN children using the service, the cost of transport has increased massively due to running costs.





It is worth noting though that this situation is not unique to Halton, it is a pressure across all Councils nationwide.

Fees and Charges income is forecast to generate £0.073m above budget. This is due to increase in usage of the Careers Education Service and non-school attendance fines.

Reimbursements and Other Grant Income has generated income £0.040m above the budgeted income target at Q2. Presently this forecast consists of contributions from the CCG towards Integrated Youth contracts. However, in previous years there has also been other income such as reimbursements from parents for school's transport costs for elected placements. This type of income is demand / service led and so there is no target/forecast for it presently.

School SLA income is forecast to generate £0.066m above the income target for the year, with the possibility of services such as Educational Psychology and Education Welfare generating higher levels of income than initially targeted as both are in high demand from schools. As a result, they generally achieve higher levels of income than initially targeted.

Approved 2023/24 Savings

Please see Appendix A for full details

Risks/Opportunities

Cost of out of borough transport is increasing year on year, due to demand and high fuel costs. The average cost for out of borough users has increased from £7,079 (2022/23) to £10,207 in the second quarter of the current financial year.

Supporting Families has a large surplus reserves balance (£0.745m as at 31.03.23), which is expected to increase to £0.788m by the end of 2023/24. It has been suggested that this be used to fund core activity.

Capital Projects as at 30 September 2023

	Annual Capital Allocation	Allocation to date	Actual Spend	Total Allocation remaining
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Repairs	1,040	644	644	396
Asbestos Management	22	0	0	22
Asset Management Data	15	0	0	15
Small Capital Works	142	60	60	82
Access Initiative	44	0	7	37
SEMH Free School	239	0	0	239
Cavendish School	605	1	1	604
Astmoor Primary RB	300	175	30	270
Ashley School	500	26	26	474
Kingsway Academy RB	30	0	0	30
Oakfield Primary	370	219	219	151
St Basil's Primary RB	250	0	0	250
St Peter's & Paul High School	356	0	0	356
The Brow Primary RB	115	0	0	115
Victoria Road Primary RB	250	105	105	145
Westfield Primary RB	220	186	186	34
Woodside Primary RB	340	14	14	326
Brookfields School	300	0	0	300
High Needs unallocated	19	0	0	19
Basic Needs unallocated	601	0	0	601
Total Capital	5,758	1430	1,292	4,466

Comments on the above figures

Many of the Capital repairs and SEND works have been completed over the summer holiday.




Cavendish School remodelling started on site in August, with completion planned for February 2024.

Fairfield project is still at feasibility stage.

Asbestos management surveys are updated annually, and remedial work conducted where necessary.

EDUCATION, INCLUSION AND PROVISION DEPARTMENT

APPENDIX A

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value			Current Progress	Comments
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
EIP1	Education Psychology Service	339	There is excess demand from schools for the Education Psychology Service. The service is valued and there is opportunity to expand our offer and generate additional income.	0	52	0		On target to be achieved
EIP2	SEN Assessment Team	82	Consideration will be given to funding the full service costs from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.	0	80	0		To be reviewed
EIP5	Commissioning	148	Review with Health colleagues how the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service for Children in Care, Care Leavers and Carers could instead be provided by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as they are commissioned by the Integrated Care Board.	0	148	0		To be reviewed

EIP5	Commissioning	291	Additional funding for Youth Grants has been confirmed for three years from the DfE Holiday Activity and Food Programme grant, therefore core budget can be released.	40	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On target to be achieved
EIP9	Education Welfare Service	396	There has been increased buy-back of this service from schools and as a result the income budget can be increased.	60	0	0	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	On target to be achieved
Total Education, Inclusion and Provision Department				100	280	0		

CHILDREN & FAMILIES DEPARTMENT**Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2023**

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance (Overspend) £'000	Forecast Outturn £'000
Expenditure					
Employees	11,460	5,689	7,214	(1,525)	(3,439)
Other Premises	476	217	151	66	131
Supplies & Services	1,084	563	1,095	(532)	(1,022)
Transport	113	26	106	(80)	(221)
Direct Payments	1,016	453	435	18	30
Commissioned services to Vol Orgs	224	81	73	8	15
Residential Care	13,505	5,505	6,818	(1,313)	(2,776)
Out of Borough Adoption	30	15	0	15	30
Out of Borough Fostering	3,050	1,377	1,728	(351)	(611)
In House Adoption	461	129	121	8	15
Special Guardianship Order	2,221	1,010	1,108	(98)	(225)
In House Foster Carer Placements	2,670	1,262	1,299	(37)	(75)
Lavender House	230	91	91	0	0
Home Support & Respite	340	220	191	29	71
Care Leavers	271	139	138	1	3
Family Support	53	26	52	(26)	(53)
Contracted services	3	2	2	0	0
Early Years	275	231	375	(144)	(195)
Emergency Duty	124	5	20	(15)	(89)
Youth Offending Services	255	42	76	(34)	(77)
Total Expenditure	37,861	17,083	21,093	(4,010)	(8,488)
Income					
Fees & Charges	-31	-3	0	(3)	(4)
Sales Income	-4	-2	-1	(1)	(3)
Rents	-76	-42	-40	(2)	(4)
Reimbursement & other Grant Income	-539	-212	-173	(39)	(61)
Transfer from reserve	-47	-47	-47	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-50	0	0	0	0
Government Grants	-7,571	-4,788	-4,788	0	0
Total Income	-8,318	-5,094	-5,049	(45)	(72)
Net Operational Expenditure	29,543	11,989	16,044	(4,055)	(8,560)
Recharges					
Premises Support	339	169	169	0	0
Transport Support	15	7	7	0	0
Central Support	3,290	1,645	1,645	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-1,124	-562	-562	0	0
Net Total Recharges	2,520	1,259	1,259	0	0
Net Departmental Expenditure	32,063	13,248	17,303	(4,055)	(8,560)

Financial Position

The net departmental expenditure is £4.055m over budget at the end of the second quarter of the financial year, with the majority directly relating to Social Care Services. Additional growth budget was provided in 2023/24 of £6.054m, with the majority £4,052m allocated to residential care placements. A savings target of £0.058m leaves a net growth of £5.997m.

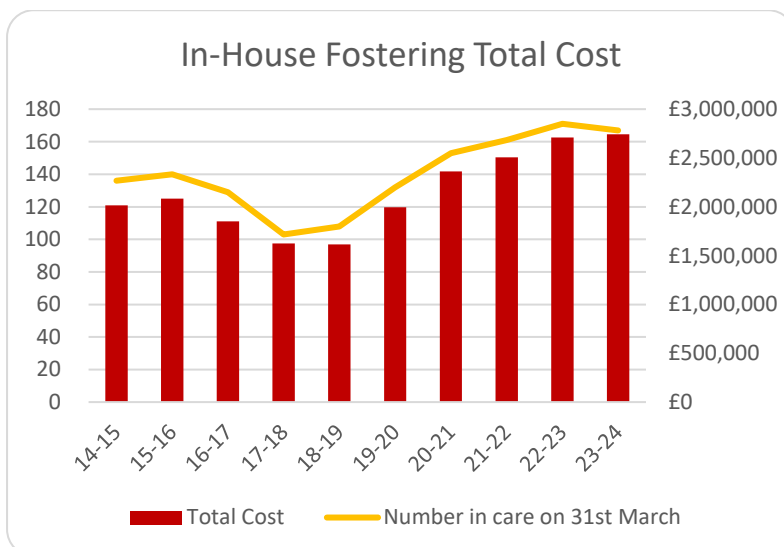
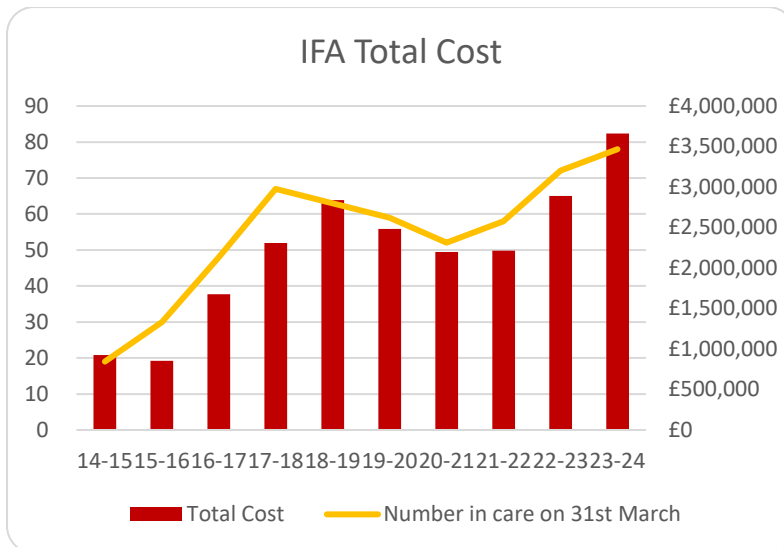
Employee costs are £1.525m above budget at the end of Quarter 2. There continues to be a heavy reliance on agency staff to fill vacancies across the structure including Social Workers, Practice Leads and Divisional Managers. This combined with a number of agency staff recruited in addition to the current staffing structure is the cause of this overspend. Social worker recruitment is proving difficult due to an extremely competitive market and highly inflated agency payment rates. Spend on agency staff at the end of Quarter 2 is £2.900m or 51% of employee budget to date. The final outturn for employee costs is expected to be £3.439m overspent. This is £0.537m more than was forecast at quarter 1 and is due to the increased numbers of agency staff, including Senior Manager roles, along with the extension of agency staff to the end of the financial year that were previously due to end in November 23. There are various workstreams currently in place to target the difficulties in recruitment and reduce the volume of agency staff, including a new Local Offer for employees offering recruitment and retention bonuses for those working in children's social care. It is hoped that these will be able to reduce the spend on employees throughout the year, however a significant overspend is still to be expected.

Within the employee forecast spend through to the end of year an element has been included for the 2023/24 pay deal (yet to be agreed) based on latest available information. The forecast also assumes there will be reduced reliance on agency staff as the year progresses and take-up of the recruitment and retention scheme takes effect.

Transport costs are currently £0.080m over budget with an anticipated outturn of £0.221m over budget. The majority of these costs relate to the contracted transport of young people to their education provision. These costs can fluctuate in year dependent on the placements made, but transport costs and proximity to education are considered when arranging placements for young people.

Supplies and Services expenditure is £0.532m above budget at the end of Quarter 2 with a forecast outturn of £1.022m. Additional growth was provided of £0.314k to cover the increase in court costs and related legal spend. However, supplies and services is diverse and high levels of spend relating to a number of areas including nursery fees, consultancy, translation costs, equipment and travel are adding pressure to this budget. The outturn position has increased by £0.153m since quarter 1, with the vast majority of this relating to IT computer licensing, in particular the renewal of the Eclipse contract at a cost of £0.152m.

Although in-house fostering provision has increased enabling more young people to be accommodated in house, recruitment has slowed lately which is consistent with the market in general. Increasing numbers of children in care and insufficient in-house fostering provision has meant increased reliance on Independent Fostering Agencies (IFA's). Higher numbers of children placed within IFA provision and increased IFA rates has resulted in an outturn forecast overspend of £0.611m, spend in this area is expected to be around £0.769m more than was the case in 2022/23.



Out of Borough Residential Care continues to be the main budget pressure for the Children and Families Department as the costs of residential care have continued to rise year on year. This budget was given an additional growth of £4.052m for this financial year to alleviate the pressure, however residential care is £1.313m overspent at the end of Quarter 2 with an anticipated outturn of £2.776m over budget at the end of the year. Forecast spend for the year is expected to be £1.963m greater than in 2022/23.

The main reason for such a high increase in spend can be attributed more to the rise in costs of individual packages rather than an increase in numbers in care, for example there are currently six children in packages costing over £9k per week. The table below illustrates the trend towards numbers of children accommodated in higher cost packages with the numbers in lower priced packages reducing.

Residential Care

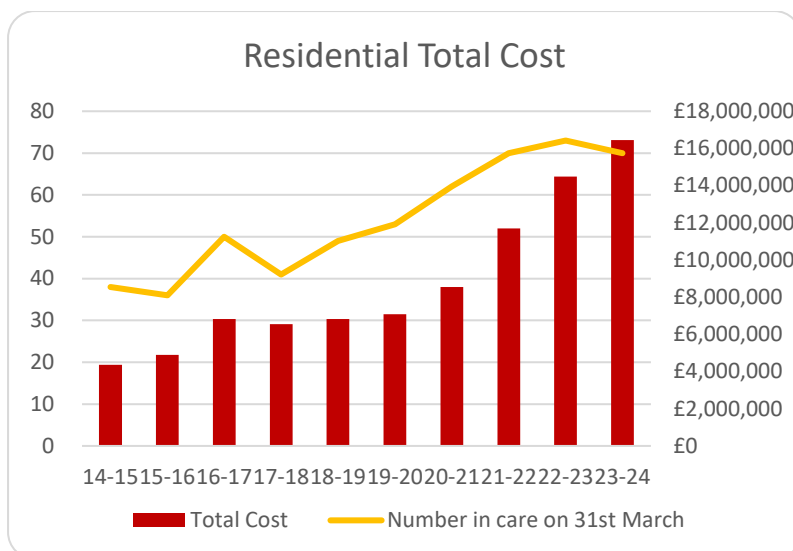
Provision	Weekly Costs	30th September 2023		30th June 2023	
		No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year	No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year
Residential	£2000 - £3000	4	768,400	6	876,000
Residential	£3001 - £4000	9	1,606,255	7	1,306,075
Residential	£4001 - £5000	7	1,549,874	9	1,942,736
Residential	£5001 - £13720	29	10,381,554	24	8,946,076
Secure	£6397 - £8137	0	0	0	0
Leaving Care	£443 - £7175	16	1,750,828	17	2,175,930
Parent & Child	£2000 - £5500	5	393,882	4	530,234
Total:		70	16,450,793	67	15,777,052

UASC Residential Care

The number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) currently placed in care remains high but fairly stable. Home Office funding has been agreed for the vast majority of UASC placed in our care and is currently sufficient to cover the costs of those UASC accommodated. This position has improved since quarter 1 when there was a shortfall of funding. However, as was anticipated in the previous report a number of UASC have now received right to remain status. This has enabled them to access housing benefit which contributes towards the cost of their placement thus reducing the costs to the authority. We also have additional UASC's now placed with us who are under 18 and are therefore eligible for the higher rate of funding at £1,001 per week, in comparison to the £270 per week that we receive for those UASC who are aged over 18.

Provision	Weekly Costs	30th September 2023		30th June 2023	
		No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year	No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year
UASC	£300-£500	58	729,235	53	815,543
UASC	£500-£5000	2	456,468	3	500,964
Total:		60	1,185,703	56	1,316,508

The graph below illustrates the rising costs of Residential Care, for consistency this does not include the costs of UASC as these costs were not included previous years.



Residential Care continues to be a persistent pressure on the budget. The numbers of young people in residential placements remains high and the cost of placements is rising significantly. This is a national issue and market factors such as low supply and high demand have resulted in the costs of residential care packages rising significantly over the last year, meaning that the level of spend is unsustainable at the current rate.

Work to reduce the numbers in residential care has so far avoided additional costs of £1.824m by the timely transfer of placements to lower priced Leaving Care packages, the reduction of additional support packages where possible, and reunification of young people with their families where appropriate. It is hoped that continued scrutiny will bring down the current projected costs of residential placements, but the costs will remain high and continue to be a considerable pressure on the budget.

Work is continuing to identify those children able to step down from residential care. IFA events take place on a regular basis, where young people suitable for fostering are considered for placements with available IFA families. However, this is proving difficult and is highly dependent on the needs of the young people in care and the ability to match them with a suitable foster family.

Work is ongoing to provide alternative placement types where possible for care leavers in order to mitigate some of the rising costs:

The new in-house Supported Lodgings service is working well and still recruiting for carers, with four young people now placed. The costs of this service are far less than the costs of current leaving care provision, and as well as the financial benefits, the service will provide a much more home like and supportive environment for young people.

There are currently two training flats for care leavers which are occupied with support packages in place. There are plans to increase the number of training flats available to be able to accommodate care leavers in-house at a lower cost than current leaver care provision.

The Care Leaver provision at Lavender House, has four young people currently accommodated and is operating at full capacity.

In House Fostering is £0.037m over budget with an expected outturn of £0.075m over budget. Growth of £0.268m was added which has reduced pressure in this area, but a consistently high number of young people placed means there is still pressure on this budget. Work

continues to recruit and retain Halton's In-house foster carers, along with training to develop carers enabling them to accommodate more specialist placements and support and mentor each other. This therefore means that costs could increase further still. However, the ability to accommodate young people within in-house provision provides a substantial saving in comparison to IFA or residential care. Further growth is needed in order to fully cover the additional costs.

Special Guardianship Order (SGO) costs are currently £0.098m over budget at the end of Quarter 2, with an expected outturn of £0.225m over budget. Growth of £0.340m was added to this budget, but the increasing number of young people placed under an SGO and an uplift in the payment rates means that it still remains a significant pressure. These are long term placements for young people, where the carers are granted parental responsibility for the young person in their care. This is a positive outcome for the young person as these are stable placements and the children are no longer classed as a 'child in care'. They are also less expensive than other placements so they are financially beneficial too.

The Early Years net divisional expenditure is £0.144m over budget at the end of the Quarter 2, with a forecast outturn of £0.195m over budget. This is due to the underachievement of parental income due to income targets being based upon the Early Years provision having high occupancy levels. Due to the inability to become self-sustaining and the consistent budget pressure the Early Years Centres have now closed and therefore will no longer be a pressure in future years.

Income is underachieving by £0.045m at the end of Quarter 2 with an estimated outturn of £0.072m under budget. The majority of this relates to an income generation target for the Leaving Care provision, Lavender House of £0.053m for renting a room to a neighbouring authority. Due to high demand from our own care leaver numbers, there are no plans as yet to rent one of these bedrooms out to a neighbouring authority and therefore this income target is will not be met.





Overall the financial picture for the Children and Families Department continues to be one of serious concern. The main issues relate to the difficulty in the recruitment of Social Workers and the subsequent extortionate agency costs, along with the spiralling costs of residential placements. This has been an ongoing problem for a number of years. Urgent action to reduce these costs should now be taken as a priority as this level of spend cannot be sustained without resulting in significant financial harm to the Local Authority.

Approved 2023/24 Savings

Please see Appendix A for full details

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT

APPENDIX A

Ref.	Service Area	Net Budget £'000	Description of Saving Proposal	Savings Value			Current Progress	Comments
				23/24 £'000	24/25 £'000	25/26 £'000		
C1	Ditton and Warrington Road Daycare Centres	52	Closure of Ditton and Warrington Road daycare centres, given the significant on-going net losses at both centres. Sufficient alternative provision exists nearby, as well as in the adjoining nursery schools.	26	26	0		The daycare centres closed in August 23. The daycare centres will continue to be overspent in 23-24, however the savings should be realised in 24/25.
C2	Children's Centres	1,293	Reduce the opening hours of Children's Centres.	12	0	0		Initial indicators suggest saving unlikely to be made, but awaiting further clarification from Divisional Manager
			Review the operation of Windmill Hill Children's Centre, where there is the potential to save on premises and staffing costs.	0	0	22		Initial indicators suggest saving unlikely to be made, but awaiting further clarification from Divisional Manager
			Target to generate at least 5% additional income by increasing a range of charges at Children's Centres.	20	0	0		

C3	Children with Disabilities and Inglefield	858	Explore the potential for selling Inglefield and then purchase two bungalows within the community to provide a more appropriate setting.	0	112	0	U	Initial indicators suggest saving unlikely to be made, but awaiting further clarification from Divisional Manager
Total Children & Families Department				58	138	22		