

# Public Document Pack



## Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

Monday, 11 September 2023 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](mailto:ann.jones@halton.gov.uk) for further information.  
The next meeting of the Board is on Monday, 13 November 2023*

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

**Part I**

<b>Item No.</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
<b>1. MINUTES</b>	<b>1 - 7</b>
<b>2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)</b>	
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.	
<b>3. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME</b>	<b>8 - 10</b>
<b>4. CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE &amp; FAMILIES PPB ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23</b>	<b>11 - 17</b>
<b>5. DEVELOPMENT OF POLICY ISSUES</b>	
<b>(A) YOUNG CARERS UPDATE</b>	<b>18 - 27</b>
<b>(B) OVERVIEW OF CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE</b>	<b>28 - 31</b>
<b>(C) SUMMARY OF 2023 PROVISIONAL UN-VALIDATED ATTAINMENT OUTCOMES</b>	<b>32 - 41</b>
<b>6. PERFORMANCE MONITORING</b>	
<b>(A) PERFORMANCE MONITORING FOR QUARTER 4 OF 2022/23</b>	<b>42 - 68</b>
<b>(B) PERFORMANCE MONITORING FOR QUARTER 1 OF 2023/24</b>	<b>69 - 106</b>

*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, 12 June 2023 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Logan (Chair), Baker, Begg, Goodall, Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, McDermott, Rowe and Ryan

Apologies for Absence: Councillors C. Plumpton Walsh and Skinner

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: P. Murphy, J. Farrell, A. Jones and C. Finch

Also in attendance: None

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

	<i>Action</i>
CYP1 MINUTES	
<p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2023 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.</p>	
CYP2 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
<p>It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.</p>	
CYP3 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
<p>The minutes relating to the Children and Young People Portfolio taken from Executive Board meetings held since the last meeting of this Board, were attached at Appendix 1 for information.</p>	
CYP4 THE BIG CONVERSATION UPDATE	
<p>The Board received a report presenting the approach being taken to 'The Big Conversation', which was integral to formulating a new Council Corporate Plan, to take effect from April 2024.</p> <p>Further to agreement at Executive Board in March,</p>	

the Council would provide adequate opportunity for meaningful public consultation and ultimately produce a Corporate Plan, which was unique and meaningful to the people of Halton.

'The Big Conversation' was all about engaging with the public so that they understood the challenges the Council is facing. The approach being taken was between the Council and everyone who lived or worked in Halton, to work together in order to create an improved Borough in all aspects of everyday life. It was noted that feedback would be welcome in all formats; paper submissions, electronically or face to face, between now and the end of the year.

The report and accompanying presentation outlined the survey themes and questions, the process of data analysis and gave the timescales the project will take, up to the launching of the new Corporate Plan.

Following the presentation and Members' discussions and comments, the following was noted:

- The consultation would include the Council's workforce – it was noted that two thirds of the workforce lived in Halton;
- The survey was anonymous but responses will be monitored, to show where they were coming from – this would help to ensure an even representation, as areas that were under represented could be encouraged to take part;
- A good level of engagement will be identified by the Council's Central Intelligence Unit (CIU) who record the numbers of responses;
- Doubt was raised as to where schools, children's social services and SEND would be in the next 5 years so it was difficult to see how the five themes applied to these areas;
- Children and Young People would be invited to participate and a simplified version of the survey is available for them to complete;
- The Council was working with individual groups across Halton to ensure the survey was cascaded down to the people belonging to them;
- All schools will be included as part of the engagement process;
- It was thought that the five themes were aspirations;
- The wording of the themes would need to be clear to ensure they were understood by everyone;
- The five themes were taken from evidence based data from within the Council on the challenges the

Borough currently faced and comparisons with other LA's Corporate Plans across the Country; and

- The transformation is how we support each other to make the changes agreed in the communities and what we need to do to achieve these.

RESOLVED: That

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) that the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board endorses the approach to facilitate 'The Big Conversation'.

Operational  
Director Policy,  
People,  
Performance and  
Efficiency

#### CYP5 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE UPDATE

The Board considered a report of the Operational Director – Children's Social Care, detailing the work undertaken to date in relation to the Children's Services Improvement Plan.

It was noted that Children's Services continued to operate under the auspices of a Notice of Improvement issued by the Department for Education (DfE) in January 2022 – this followed the Ofsted Focused Visit in October 2021. The Council is required, under the conditions of the Notice of Improvement, to have an Improvement Plan, whilst also operating with a Children's Improvement Board.

It was reported that the Improvement Plan was currently being reviewed to ensure that it was aligned with the findings from the most recent Ofsted Focused Visit completed in November 2022, along with the DfE 12-month review of the Improvement Notice that was reported to the Council in March 2023. It was noted that the findings from the latest Ofsted Focused Visit were reported to Members of the Board in January 2023.

The outcome of the DfE's 12-month review of the Children's Service Improvement Plan was reported on 14 March 2023; the report provided the main highlights from this. They set several priorities for the Council, which included workforce capacity and stability, partnership working, practice model and social work practice, and communication and engagement.

Members were advised that the Children's Services Improvement Plan was being refreshed to ensure it covered the latest findings and priorities as set out in the DfE review. The refreshed Plan and road map would be brought to the

next Board meeting.

The following information was provided in response to Members questions:

- The possibility of offering permanent employment to agency workers to offer them job security – this was an employee driven market due to demand exceeding the supply of qualified social workers, so they had many employment options to choose from;
- Social workers were generally a younger transient workforce – this was the case in the region and nationally;
- Recommendations on ways to retain staff had been made to central Government following the national review of Children's Social Care completed by Josh McAllister – for example tying in Council newly qualified social workers for 3 years;
- The 'Halton offer' for social workers was discussed – this was being improved and promoted to help with recruitment and retention of social workers;
- An improved employment offer was also important in such a highly competitive market – neighbouring authorities were also struggling with retention of staff;
- A local arrangement was suggested whereby social workers had to accept permanent employment with an authority if they worked there for a certain length of time;
- The Council was currently operating with a full complement of social workers, with vacancies being covered by agency staff;
- The 'Front Line Practice Unit' was a national apprenticeship programme by the Department for Education (DfE) starting in September and would offer one year training for 4 trainee social workers;
- An improvement in staff morale was identified by annual surveying and health assessments as well as feedback given to the Improvement Board;
- The need to have 'systematic social work practice' embedded throughout all areas of the service was recognised – this would also help with the reputation of Halton and be attractive to staff who were used to working under these principles; and
- The importance of partnership working was discussed, especially since the dissolution of the Safeguarding Board.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the current position on progress in relation to the

Executive Director  
Children's

requirements as set out by the Department for Education in the Notice of Improvement; and Services

- 2) supports the key priorities and actions outlined in the Children's Improvement Plan.

CYP6 SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES (SEND) SUFFICIENCY

The Board received a report on the progress to date on expanding the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision within Halton and the next steps, following receipt of a £3.3m capital allocation from the Department for Education (DfE).

It was reported that the DfE notified Halton it would be allocated £3.3m of capital funding to support the provision of new places or to expand existing provision for pupils and students with high needs. Officers then wrote to all schools to seek expressions of interest from them to offer new or additional SEND provision, based against need identified within the Local Authority. Out of nine expressions of interest received seven met the need identified and were agreed for progression and consideration to Executive Board; Appendix A listed the seven schools and the provision offer made by them.

It was noted that the Executive Board agreed to progress to statutory consultation for five schools where the SEND provision would be new; agreed to the expansion of provision at two further schools that already had existing SEND provision; and agreed to the progression of capital works at those two primary schools that already offered specialist provision and were not subject to statutory consultation. It was reported that approximately 100 additional SEND places would be made available through this new provision.

Members discussed the information presented regarding the expansion of SEND provision and queried whether 100 additional places would be enough. Discussions also took place on the following:

- The increasing pressures on SEND provision and the costs associated with this;
- The inclusivity of schools - not all children with an ECHP needed specialist provision and could stay in mainstream schools with support;
- Delays with the opening of Raise Academy, the Free School – the new opening date is June 2024 and

- regular meetings were being held with the DfE;
- The loss of the *English as an Additional Language* (EAL) service at a time when numbers requiring this type of support were increasing;
- The time limits of EHCP assessment, which was 20 weeks, however this was not being met currently for various reasons; and
- The EHCP 'pre' assessment and the reasons behind these – Senco staff provided support to parents and schools to help with the preparation of these, however staff shortages existed in the area since the pandemic.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the information provided.

Executive Director  
Children's  
Services

CYP7 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR QUARTER 3 OF 2022/23

The Board received the Performance Management reports for quarter 3 of 2022-23 (1 September 2022 to 31 December 2022).

The key priorities for development or improvement in 2022-23 were agreed by Members and included in the Local Authority's Business Plan for the following Departments:

- Education, Inclusion and Provision Services; and
- Children and Families Services.

The reports detailed progress made against objectives, milestones and performance targets and provided information relating to key developments and emerging issues that had arisen during the period. Members were requested to consider the progress and performance information and highlight any areas of interest and/or concern, where further information could be reported at a future meeting of the Board.

The Chair informed the Board that he would be meeting with the Interim Director of Children's Services to plan future agendas around the performance issues highlighted in the report.

From the information presented, issues relating to transformation costs, children in care, school exclusions, child exploitation, realism of performance measures and targets and benchmarking with neighbouring authorities were discussed.



In response to queries, it was reported that a new Family Hub service was being introduced, operating from buildings in Runcorn and Widnes and would offer services out in the community. Further information on the delivery of this would be sent following the meeting.

The expression '*edge of care*' was described generally as when a child is considered to be at risk of becoming a child in care. The focus is to maintain the child within their birth family where this is considered safe to do so.

RESOLVED: That the Performance Management reports for quarter 3 of 2022-23 be received.

Executive Director  
Children's  
Services

*Meeting ended at 8.25 p.m.*

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

**DATE:** 11 September 2023

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

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

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Children, Young People and Families Policy & Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	11 September 2023
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Interim Executive Director Children
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Children & Young People
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Annual Report 2022/2023
<b>WARD(S)</b>	All

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To receive the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Boards' Annual Report for 2022/2023.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION:**

**That the 2022/2023 Annual Report be received and noted.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Article 6 of the Constitution requires each Policy and Performance Board to submit an Annual Report to Council outlining their work.
- 3.2 The Annual Report (Appendix 1) is submitted to the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board for consideration.

### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 None identified.

### **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None identified.

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

#### **6.1 Children & Young People in Halton**

None identified.

#### **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.

**ANNUAL REPORT CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY & PERFORMANCE BOARD APRIL 2022 – March 2023**

Throughout the last municipal year, our staff across Children's services have risen to the challenges presented to them and demonstrated flexibility, creativity and resilience whilst supporting, protecting and educating our children and young people of Halton.

I would like to thank all of our staff for their dedication, hard work, and selflessness in dealing with the challenges that have arisen in supporting our children in care, our foster carers, our care leavers, and our children in schools. Finally, I would like to thank the Board for supporting me during this year and know that together we will ensure that the children and young people of Halton will be safe, healthy and gain a high-quality education that will prepare them to be caring, achieving, contributing citizens of the future.

Councillor Geoff Logan  
Chair – Children, Young People & Families PPB

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The following is a summary of topics scrutinised by the PPB during the cycle of its meetings. The usual September meeting was cancelled because of the death of HM Queen Elizabeth.

**June 2022**

The Board received a presentation, which gave an update of the work undertaken to date, following the Ofsted focused visit and the subsequent actions taken in response to their findings.

Halton received the focused visit to its Children's Services Department in October 2021 and inspectors looked at the arrangements for Children in Need (CIN), including those who were subject to a Child Protection Plan. Since the findings of the inspectors, steps had been taken to make improvements to the service, including the establishment of an Improvement Board.

The presentation outlined the progress made within leadership and management, areas of concern and the next steps to be taken; and progress made with the quality of practice, areas of concern and next steps to be taken. It also gave information on progress of quality assurance and performance and the activities carried out by the Operational Group.

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director – People, which provided update in relation to the progress of the local area Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy 2021-25. The report also outlined some of the pressures on the SEND provision and support service. It gave the position in relation to applications for Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) assessments, in that these had continued to be received at a high rate since Covid restrictions were eased in Schools

over summer 2021, with 20% of applications being made by parents. Further, it was reported that the completion rate of applications to within 20 weeks had dropped to 62.5%; the report discussed the three factors contributing to this decline.

The Board was also presented with information on the following strategic developments:

- The Working Better Together sub-group of the SEND Partnership;
- The development of a Halton Co-production Charter;
- The DFE's Delivering Better Values Programme; and
- The development of a new SEND Sufficiency Strategy.

The key priorities for development or improvement in 2021-22 were agreed by Members and included in the Local Authority's Business Plan, for the relevant areas reported to the Board.

### **November 22**

The Board received the Annual Report of the Headteacher of the Virtual School, which gave the education outcomes and achievements of Halton's Children in Care (CIC).

The Annual Report included detailed data, analysis and a summary of the work of Halton's Virtual School, during the academic year 2021-22. It was reported that the work of the 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.

The Report also gave a summary of the Virtual School's progress towards its identified key priorities in 2022- 23.

The Board received a presentation from the Strategic Director – People, which provided an update of the work undertaken to date, following the Ofsted focussed visit and the subsequent actions taken in response to their findings.

Inspectors had looked at the arrangements for Children in Need, including those who were subject to a Child Protection Plan. Since then, steps had been taken to make improvements to the service, including the establishment of an Improvement Board. It was noted that Members received an initial update at the Board meeting on 13 June 2022.

The Board considered a report and presentation from the Strategic Director – People, advising on the progress and updates in relation to the Halton Local Area SEND Strategy 2021-25 and current pressures. Members were advised that throughout 2021-22 Halton, in common with other local authority areas, had seen an unprecedented growth in demand for Education Health and Care Needs Assessments. The number of applications for EHC Needs Assessments reached 353 for the academic year in July 2022. This represented a 35% increase in demand, presented in the table in paragraph 3.1.2. The report outlined the impacts that the increased demand was making across the service. Considerable pressure was being placed on the capacity in both the SEN Assessment Team and those services that



provided advice and assessments that contributed towards developing EHCP's, such as the Educational Psychology Service, Speech and Language Therapy Services, Occupational and Physiotherapy services.

It was reported that these capacity issues had resulted in a decline in the completion rate for EHCP's, which was due to three main factors; these were described in the report. Further, Members were advised that the growth in demand for EHCP's was placing huge stress on the availability of specialist provision in Halton. Paragraph 3.2.7 gave details of capital developments that had been put in place over the last 3 years to help accommodate the increase in the numbers and complexities of pupils with SEND, as all specialist places and resource bases were oversubscribed for 2022.

The report made comparisons on the current pressures with national data and neighbouring authorities; gave information on funding / grants being made available; and presented information on the new SEND Sufficiency Strategy currently being consulted upon.

The Board received an update on the Supporting Families Programme and its current performance levels.

It was reported that following the Spending Review in October 2021, the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) announced an extra £200m boost to the Supporting Families Programme, which would now continue for the next 3 years (2022-2025) and allow the Programme to be expanded. The report outlined the improvements being made to the Programme by the DLUHC in order to achieve this.

It was noted that Halton signed up to the Programme commitments and funding agreement in April 2022, which included key parameters around performance requirements, resourcing the Programme, and service and data transformation. These were outlined in the report and a detailed update on all aspects of the Programme in Halton was provided as well as a performance update.

The Board considered a report which provided a summary of the 2022 provisional un-validated attainment outcomes for Halton's Children and Young People.

The data presented included a summary of Early Years Good Level of Development (GLD) indicator; Key Stage One phonics results; and Key Stages 1, 2, 4 and 5 attainment information. This data provided the Board with an early indication of the educational attainment data across Halton's Schools before publication of the validated data by the Department for Education (DfE) in December. The DfE publication would include detailed national data on progress and provide comparative groups. Members were advised however, that the data provided in this report gave sufficient information for the Local Authority, schools and wider stakeholders to plan and prioritise actions.

The report also shared with the Board some key updates regarding educational priorities and developments both locally and nationally:

- Priority Educational Investment Area (PEIA) – of which Halton is one;
- Halton Learning Alliance – to be formally relaunched;
- Delivering Better Values Programme – of which Halton was part; and
- Early Years Experts and Mentors Programme – Halton participating.

### **January 2023**

The Board received a presentation on the outcome of the Ofsted focussed visit which took place on 23 and 24 November 2022 and the subsequent actions taken in response to their findings.

Members were advised that the focus of the visit was the Council's first response in dealing with contacts and referrals to Children's Social Care and Early Help, including the strategy discussion / S27 process. Inspectors also took the opportunity to review the arrangements for managing allegations against professionals under the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) process and considered the recommendations from previous inspections, most notably the areas for priority action from the last focussed visit in October 2021. Officers presented the key headlines from the visit and reported that there were no 'areas for priority action' identified, so no serious weaknesses existed in the quality of practice. The next steps were also outlined and discussed and it was noted that any areas for development were now incorporated into the Improvement and Transformation programme.

The Board considered a report and received a presentation, which summarised key work taking place locally and at a regional level to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

The presentation gave an overview of work taking place in Halton by a variety of organisations and teams such as: Halton Borough Council; Halton Public Health; NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Halton Place (Integrated Care Board [ICB] formally CCGs); and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Systems (ICS).

Preventative work was carried out by these organisations that aimed to keep children and young people mentally well. The report and presentation described core and statutory services that were available to provide direct interventions and support when children and young people were struggling.

The Board received the Sufficiency Duty Report for 2022-23 (previously known as the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Review) CSA.

It was noted that Sections 6 and 7 of *The Childcare Act (2006)* and the associated statutory guidance: *Early Education and Childcare – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (March 2018)*, requires all local authorities in England to undertake and provide an annual childcare sufficiency report to elected Council Members, on how they were meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare and to make it available to the public.

The report detailed achievements since the last review and outlined Halton's current position for Members. It also highlighted any gaps in provision and how these were

being addressed. The report shared the longer-term effects of how Covid-19 had affected the childcare sector. Despite the impact of Covid-19, the childcare market in Halton continued to be secure and sustainable, although there were some concerns amongst providers regarding the future with the rising cost of living.

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director of Children's Services, which presented the Annual Report for comments, complaints and compliments, relating to Children's Social Care Services from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021.

Publication of the Annual Report was a statutory requirement, which provided an analysis on complaints processed under the Children Act 1989 Representation's Procedure and evidenced how feedback from service users had been used to improve service delivery.

The Report also provided Members with compliments made by clients and positive feedback from workers/professionals relating to Children's Services in the People Directorate. The report also demonstrated the positive impact and outcomes on the lives of people accessing services in this Directorate.

As part of its overview, the Policy and Performance Board also considers the Council's Executive Board minutes and Children's Trust minutes as well as the Quarterly Performance Monitoring Reports.

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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	11 September 2023
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Carl Harris – CEO Halton Carers Centre
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Children & Young People
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Young Carers Update
<b>WARDS:</b>	Borough-wide

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report is an update on the work and achievements of Halton Carers Centre which has been produced on the request of Jill Farrell, Operational Director for Education, Inclusion and Provision.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That the Policy & Performance Board note the information provided.**

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Halton Carers Centre is the primary organisation working with young carers in Halton. Our aims as an organisation are to enhance well-being, build skills and increase knowledge for both young and adult carers in Halton.

3.2 2.7% of Children & young people in Halton were identified on the 2021 census as having a caring role. Halton has the highest proportion of unpaid carers amongst younger age groups in the country.

3.3 There are currently 954 young carers aged 5-17 registered with Halton Carers Centre, with added resources and capacity this figure would increase.

3.4 How Halton Young Carers Team supports registered young carers:

- Age appropriate groups and activities focused on increasing wellbeing
- 1-2-1 reviews with feedback from parents
- Information, advice and guidance
- Support for parent / guardian to gain the right support for the young carer
- Activities to promote family cohesion
- Access to carer break fund

- Training as appropriate
- Advocate between home and school
- Sessions in school
- Fun based activity sessions designed to give respite and build emotional resilience
- School holiday programmes
- Information about the condition of their loved one and how this plays out in reality
- Workers attending meetings MAP / CiN / CP to advocate for the young carer
- Support for both primary and secondary young carers

### 3.5 Things young carers may have to do at home:

- Cooking
- Housework
- Shopping
- Emotional support
- Helping with medication
- Helping with appointments
- Helping to pay bills
- Looking after Siblings

The effects of this are varied:

- It gets in the way of school and homework, resulting in lower than average attendance, persistent lateness and lower than average attainment
- It makes young carers tired, frustrated and even angry – affecting mental wellbeing
- Young carers can experience increased anxiety (heightened during Covid)
- There is less time for social interaction and simply ‘being a child’
- These all can lead to lower life chances and increased likelihood of mental ill-health

3.6 Currently Halton Carers Centre is commissioned by HBC and NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board. However the majority of this is for our work with adult carers. Whilst we do receive some one off support from HBC for young carers and can apply for generic HBC project funding when it is available the vast majority of funding for this work is generated by HCC from other sources e.g. Steve Morgan Foundation, Trusthouse foundation. In 2022 we added an extra member of staff into the young carers team (funded externally) to increase capacity and whilst this was beneficial we still need more staff to meet demand. This has consequences for the future of the service as external funding becomes more competitive year on year.

3.7 Please see additional presented report.

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 N/A

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 As it currently stands Halton Carers Centre young carers provision is subject to external funding and is therefore not a secure service. Whilst our staff team is skilled in securing the additional income needed the external funding world is becoming increasingly more competitive and we are concerned regarding our ability to maintain the income generation required into the future.

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

##### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

Young Carers should be a priority group within the generic heading of children and young people.

##### **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

Educational achievement is critical to the life chances of all children in the borough and attendance helps to maximise educational opportunity. 27% of Young Carers aged 11-16 regularly miss school. By increasing the support available to young carers we can minimise this.

##### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

Young Carers grow to be adult carers. We know that adult carers are more likely to experience poor mental and physical health.

##### **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

N/A

#### **7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Whilst we are in receipt of a pooled budget for work with carers in the borough we would be grateful if designated young carers funding could be considered.

#### **8.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 None identified

**9.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 9.1 HBC has a responsibility to young carers. We believe there are more risks in leaving the situation as it is meaning our young carers services is subject to the risks of the external funding world.

**10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 10.1 The proposals meet any requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

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

- 11.1 None under the meaning of the Act.

# HALTON CARERS CENTRE

A Network Partner of  
**CARERS  
TRUST**



## Halton Borough Council 2022/23 Carers report Quarter 4

Halton Carers Centre is registered in England & Wales as a Registered Charity No: 1124493  
Company Limited by Guarantee No 06574889







# Carers stat's

## Quarter 4 2022/23

During Jan - Mar 2023 Halton Carers Centre Support Workers registered **270 carers** on our database, this was 174 adult carers and 96 young carers taking the full total of carers registered at Halton Carers Centre at the end of Quarter 4 2022/23 to **5657 Carers**, 4723 Adult Carers & 934 Young Carers.

**2516** telephone calls to/from Carers 

 **285** information packs were distributed to carers.

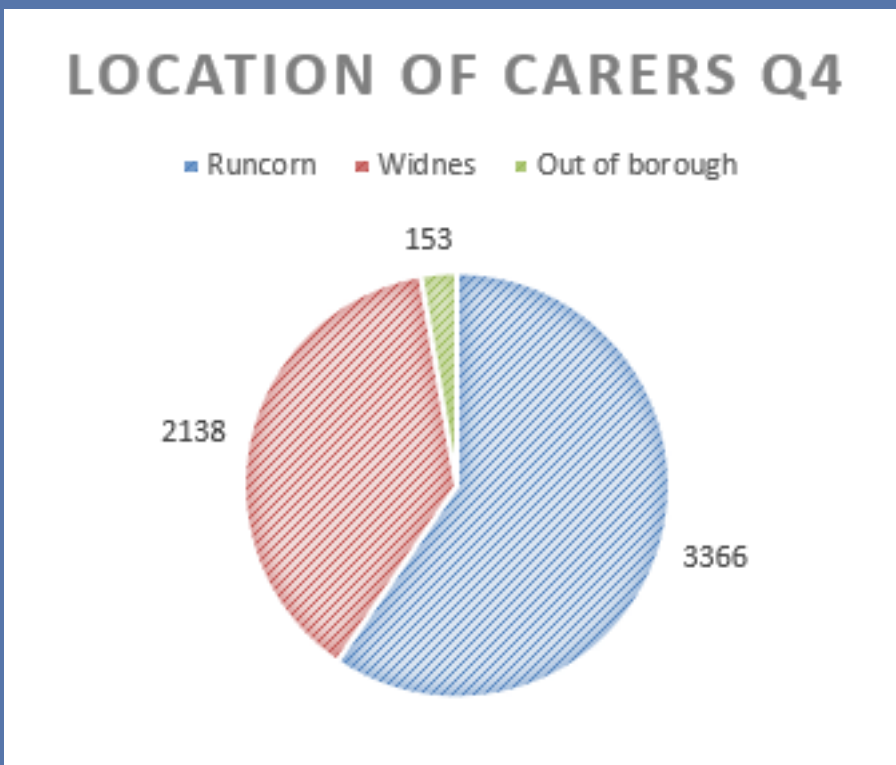
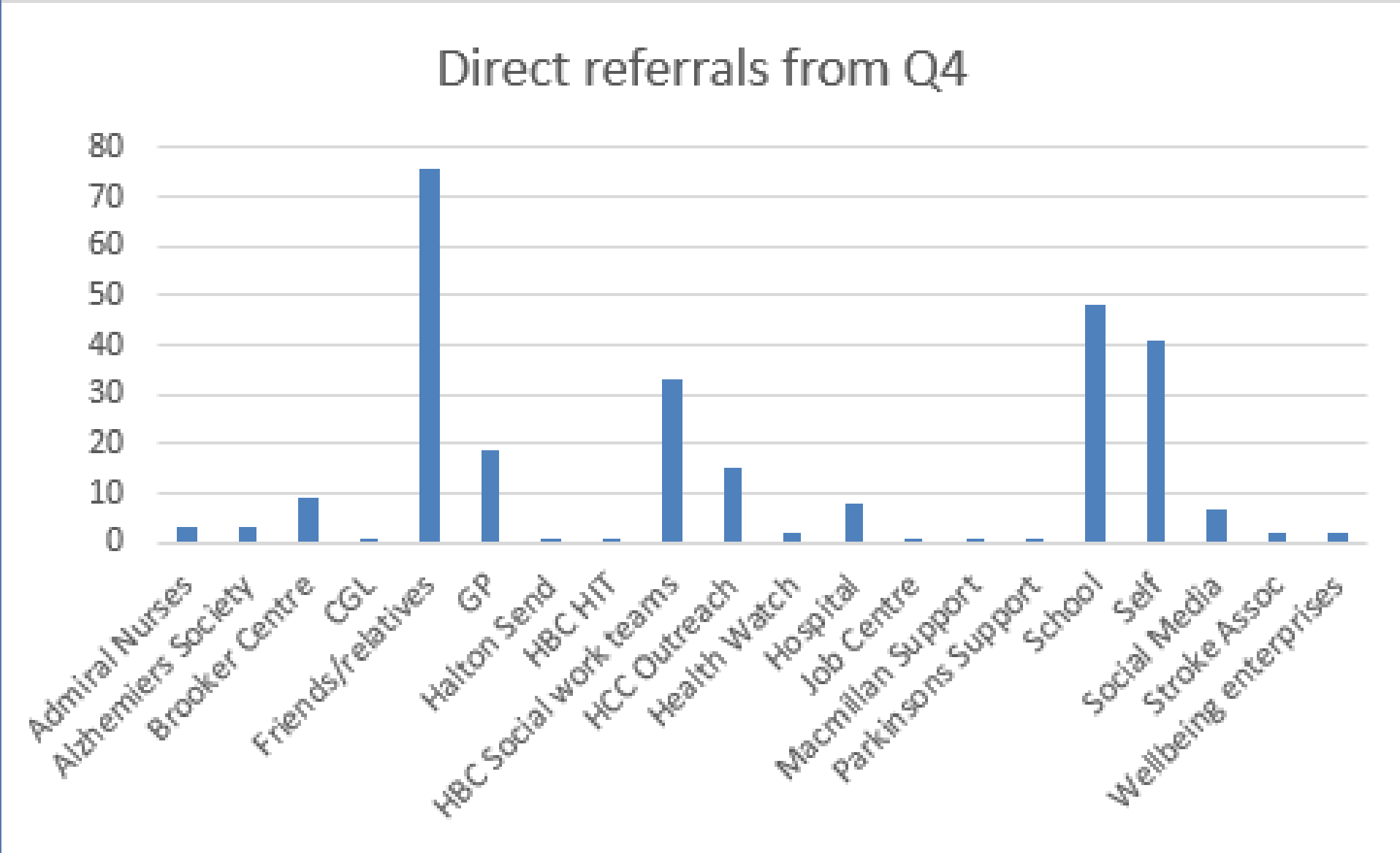
We **signposted 429** times to other agencies in Halton and made 126 direct referrals to other agencies on behalf of carers. 



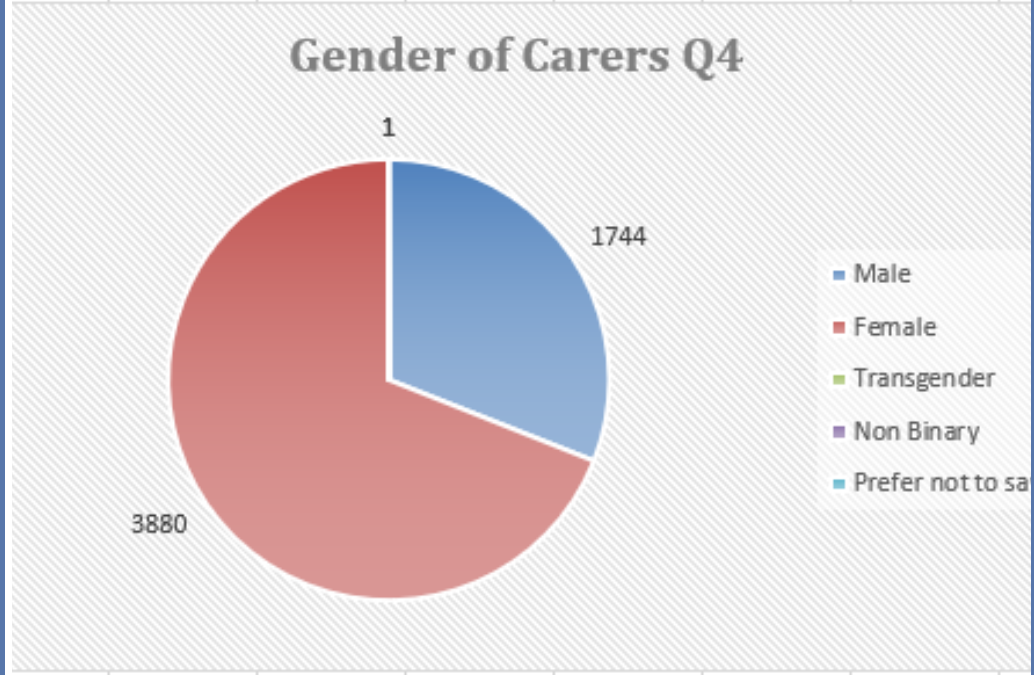
Information & advice from Halton Carers Centre was provided **1178** times to Carers. 


 **936** Reviews were completed with Carers.


We receive referrals from services throughout the borough, this quarter the highest point of referrals has been from relatives referring the carer to ourselves and also as our presence has increased within schools, schools are becoming more prominent in identifying young carers and directly referring them to our young carers team.



Of the 270 Carers registered in Q4, 163 live in Runcorn, 99 in Widnes and 8 are from outside the borough but caring for someone in Halton.



 There are 585 Carers 65yrs+ with their own health conditions registered. There are 499 Carers registered that are a male carer over 65yrs. There are 273 Young Adult Carers aged between 18yrs - 25yrs.

Of the 4723 Adult carers we have registered 760 of these are caring for more than 1 person and 1451 are still in a form of employment alongside their caring commitments. 

Of the 270 Carers registered in Q4, 186 carers are female and 84 male

# Adult Carers support groups and activities in Q4 2022/23

In quarter 4 of 2022/23 we held **33 adult carers support groups** for carers to attend, these groups consist of a monthly all carers coffee group (Runcorn & Widnes base), a weekly evening dementia group, a monthly daytime dementia group, a fortnightly dementia zoom group, a monthly Parent Carer Group, a monthly Parent Carer ADHD zoom group & a monthly Mental Health Carer Group. All of our groups are facilitated by a HCC Worker and have time on the agenda for a guest speaker to attend.

*'Getting to meet other people who have an understanding of the struggle you can go through as a carer and not judge you is something unique I get from accessing the carers groups'*

We hosted **4 day trips and activities** for adult carers these included a spa day @ Vita Beauty in Riverside College where attendees were treated to 2 pamper treatments each as well as a 2 course meal, a private cinema showing at Cineworld which gave attendees the opportunity to access the cinema in a more relaxed environment eg: lights only dimmed, volume lower, no adverts etc, a family day trip to Gullivers world with transport there & back and finally an adult carers only night out at the local comedy office. All the feedback from these activities was positive and carers felt that their isolation had been reduced and they had a break from their day to day caring role.

*'We've not been able to go the cinema before because of my sons needs but to go to a private showing which is much more relaxed has allowed us to go as a full family and not be worried about anything, thank you for providing this!'*

This quarter we have been able to start back up on START training which is coping strategies for carers who are caring for someone with dementia, the course is a 7 week course with 1 session per week. The course covers all topics and gives the attendees the opportunity to learn, share stories and meet other carers. We have also help a cooking workshop which gave the carers the opportunity to get some idea on making budget health family meals.

*'Would love more sessions like this. not only did I relax and I have some time away from my caring role, but I learnt how to save money and time which will help in my role as carer'*

Carers accessed **359 therapy/podiatry appointments** in our Runcorn & Widnes office, this includes Saturday appointments for working carers.

*'I cannot commend your podiatrist enough. He was extremely professional and sociable throughout. A pleasure to have met him - really nice man. I am feeling the benefit of his work already so please pass on my thanks'*



# Young Carers support groups and activities in Q4 2022/23

In quarter 4 of 2022/23 we held **6 Young Carers RTIME** groups which is for YC aged 11+, the groups aims are to give the YC a much needed break from their caring role, the opportunity to meet other carers and listen to guest speakers from other youth services in the borough.

*'I think it's a great way for children who are young Carers to be involved in something like this it really does make a difference'*

In Quarter 4 we have held **6 Young Carers Me-Time** groups. In Quarter 3 started to run the Me-Time group which is for our younger carers 4ys - 10yrs, initially we started the group in Runcorn fortnightly but due to the success and demand in Quarter 4 we have now also started a fortnightly Widnes group!

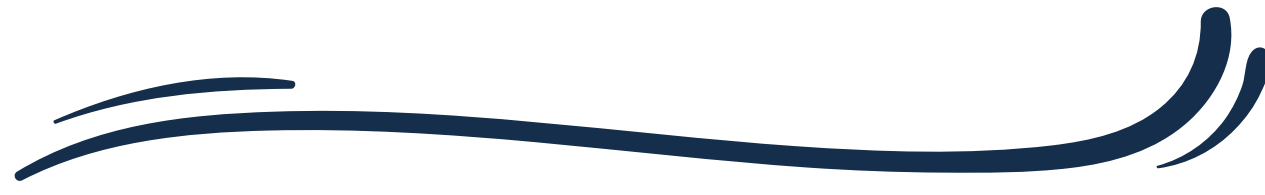
*'He came back in a really positive mood and had made some new friends. He really enjoys the sessions and having some time for himself'*

We hosted **3 day trips and activities** for Young Carers including a trip to Go Karting, a VR Experience and 40+ young carers joined us at our very own roller disco!

*'My child was very eager to tell me all about how much he enjoyed it. It gave him a break from activities at home and allowed him to be a kid with all the other kids.'*



# Total for the full year 2022/23



Since April 22 - Mar 23 **910 Carers** in Halton have been identified, registered and supported at Halton Carers Centre. This breaks down to 627 Adult Carers and 283 Young Carers newly identified carers registered on our Carers database.

**7064** telephone calls to/from Carers



We have facilitated **118 Adult Carers** Support Groups & **34 Young Carers** Groups. A total of **152 Carers groups**.

Provided **36 Adult Carers** day trips/activities for carers to attend and **25 Young Carers** day trips/activities.

Held **1553** Relaxation & podiatry appointments for adult & young carers.



**1021** information packs were distributed to carers.

We **signposted 1840** times to other agencies in Halton and made **415 direct referrals** to other agencies on behalf of carers.



Information & advice from Halton Carers Centre was provided **4538** times to Carers.



**3743** Reviews were completed with Carers.

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<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	11 September 2023
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Interim Executive Director: Childrens
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Children and Young People
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Overview of Children's Social Care
<b>WARDS:</b>	Borough-wide

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

To provide members with an update on Childrens Early Help and Social Care to address unresolved issues in performance, quality and practice.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

- (1) Members receive the update; and
- (2) Members ask any questions about the implications of the update; and
- (3) Members are aware of the key challenges in children's social care and their implications for the Borough

### **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Since the Ofsted Inspection known as ILACS (March 2020) there has been a continuous circle of priorities and plans, audits and reviews, two Ofsted Focus Visits including one which led to the issue of a DfE Improvement Notice (Jan 2022) and the creation of a Children's improvement Board.
- 3.2 Serial changes to senior staffing have introduced both turbulence and complexity. Covid contributed to the challenges faced by the service, as did rising numbers of cases coming through the Front Door. An increase in staffing levels, predominantly agency staff above establishment, helped mitigate rising caseloads to some degree but this created significant budget pressures. Placement costs for children and young people with complex needs have risen dramatically, both as a consequence of the lack of suitable placements regionally and nationally and due to the escalating degree of need presented by a small number of young people. Furthermore, the lack of educational provision for children and young people with SEND in the Borough adds transport cost pressures to the budget outturn as children travel out of Borough.
- 3.3 The turbulence associated with changes at senior level is stabilizing and the appointment of the new Director of Children Services, Zoe Fearon, who starts in late October provides the context for the creation of our twelve week priority plan. This plan focusses our work in ensuring that children of the

Borough are safe and that we know they are safe, distilled in three priorities:

**see children, hear children, help children.**

### **3.4 Twelve Week Priority Plan**

The core focus of our work is to ensure that children known to us are seen appropriately have a robust plan that takes account of their circumstances, wishes and aspirations. Where work with children does not swiftly improve their outcomes, escalation is timely and proportionate. Partners contribute to direct work with children including as lead practitioner and children attend school regularly.

This focus leads to our Directorate priorities which frame the work of our teams. This priority plan is scheduled to produce rapid results and is focussed over a twelve week period, concluding week beginning 16 October.

Our intention is to build a collective, coherent and connected leadership system where we hold joint and collective responsibility for the ownership of work with and for children of the Borough

- Resources are shared across the system
- Communications provide clarity
- We seek and act on feedback from staff
- Ensure the golden thread is secure and that manager roles are clear; accountability is seen as positive predictor of improved outcomes
- Support and challenge managers to ensure front line staff meet the needs of the children on their caseloads so their outcomes improve
- Build relations across our partnerships to ensure that collectively we improve outcomes for children
- Raise the importance of school attendance across the Borough. Our teams have established their priorities and are working towards improvements that can be evidenced through a complementary performance framework which will be reported to the Childrens Improvement Board on 8 September.

## **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 This planning framework has been shared with both the DfE and Ofsted and will be presented to the Childrens Improvement Board with Divisional Managers owning their elements of the plan.
- 4.2 The Plan will demonstrate Halton Borough Council's commitment to ensuring that children of the Borough are safe, and that we know they are safe and that the turbulence of the past is now firmly in the past.
- 4.3 Should Ofsted announce an inspection of children's services in Halton in the next 'window' that opens on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> September (and repeats every Monday through to the end of November) we have a position that will grow stronger and stronger as the weeks pass.

## **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The financial burden of funding services for children over and above the councils allocated children's services budget is at the forefront of our thinking and the twelve week plan is designed to ensure only the right cases progress into the statutory service arena, that cases are discharged speedily where that is appropriate and that social worker caseloads reduce to allow the service to reduce its reliance on agency workers.

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

### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

The focus of this report is designed to provide assurance that the needs of some of the most vulnerable children in our Borough are identified at the earliest opportunity, addressed swiftly and engagement with services ceases as soon as is appropriate.

### **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

It is very difficult for children in need of help and protection to thrive in any educational setting or environment and it is incumbent on us all to ensure we discharge our corporate parenting duty to support them.

### **6.3 A Healthy Halton**

None.

### **6.4 A Safer Halton**

Children in need of help and protection have a right to expect that the council will do everything in its power to assure their safeguarding and support them to become productive members of our community. This report demonstrates or

### **6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

None.

## **7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 7.1 The effectiveness of Halton's provision of children services is judged by Ofsted through the ILACS process – Inspection of Local Authority Children Services. Halton is due an ILACS wef 4 September.

- 7.2 Currently our provision is not where it needs to be which is why the twelve-week plan is so important in re-establishing our base line practice to ensure that the good practice that exists across the Borough grows and extends and provides a stable platform for the development of the good service we would all wish to see.

- 7.3 As in so many walks of life, timing is everything!



**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

None.

**9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

None identified.

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

Ofsted Children's services inspection – March 2020

Ofsted Children's services focussed visit - October 2021

DfE Improvement Notice issued - 13 January 2022

Ofsted Children's services focussed visit - November 2022

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	11 September 2023
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Interim Executive Director Children
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Children and Young People
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Summary of 2023 Provisional Un-validated Attainment Outcomes
<b>WARDS:</b>	Borough-wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To provide a presentation on the provisional 2023 educational outcomes for Halton's children and young people for Early years Good Level of Development (GLD) indicator; Key Stage One phonics results; Key stage 1, 2, 4 and 5 attainment information. To share some key updates regarding educational national and local priorities and developments.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That**

- (1) Members receive the presentation; and
- (2) Members ask any questions about the implications of these results; and
- (3) Members are aware of any key updates and implications for the borough

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 As part of the Children's Policy and Performance Board overview and scrutiny role for children's services in Halton, members regularly receive reports on educational attainment and other educational developments/issues in the borough. This report is to feedback on Statutory Educational Assessments throughout EYFS and Statutory Assessments undertaken in the summer term throughout the primary, secondary and post 16 phases of education. This series marks the return of non-compensated statutory assessment, post pandemic.

The information provided shares information regarding pre pandemic and 2022 performance, to gain an insight into the borough's prior educational position and then the provisional results achieved this academic year. Clearly direct comparisons cannot be made against prior performance and whilst Halton as a region were badly affected by Covid infections, individual schools have been affected to varying degrees so caution also needs to be exercised as there is variance in performance across schools.

- 3.2 The Operational Director for Education, Inclusion and Provision will provide a summary of 2023, GLD, phonics, Key Stage 1, 2, 4 and 5 provisional, un-validated

educational attainment. This data provide an early indication of the educational attainment data across Halton's schools before formal publication of the validated data by the Department for Education in December. At that time more detailed national data on progress and comparative groups will be available. This data, does however, provide sufficient information for Schools, LA and wider stakeholders to plan and inform key priorities.

### 3.3 Provisional Attainment Results for 2023: Early years Good Level of Development (GLD):

Percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development								
Year	Halton			England			gap	
2017	60.9	↓	-1.0	70.7	↑	1.4	-9.8	↓
2018	64.5	↑	3.6	71.5	↑	0.8	-7.0	↑
2019	66.1	↑	1.6	71.8	↑	0.3	-5.7	↑
2022	60.1	↓	-6.0	65.2	↓	-6.6	-5.1	↑
2023	62.2	↑	2.1	67.3	↑	2.1	-5.1	⇒

For information Early Years Framework and revised Early Learning Goals changed in 2022, so cannot be compared directly with prior data. However gap to national is a useful indicator to give a benchmark of how we are comparing to the national average. This revised framework removed any exceeding measurements with figures based upon percentage of children reaching the expected standard in the Early Learning Goals (ELG).

The children undertaking these assessments were only two years old when the Covid pandemic hit. This cohort of children had reduced social interaction opportunities at a formative stage of their lives and many also had reduced physical development opportunities with parks, leisure centres, children's playbarns and outdoor activities closed due to Covid. Any delays in gross motor skill development lead to delays in fine motor skills development so whilst pencil hold, scissor control, manipulative skills are impacted, so are self care skills and using tools such as a knife and fork to feed themselves. These are significant experiences that this generation missed out on and are seen nationally as well as locally. From early data, we have seen the following results in each Area of Learning (AOL), with the (national data) being provided by early NCER data sources (subject to validation):

- **Communication and Language AOL** 76.5% (79.7%) achieving expected standard
- **Personal, Social and Emotional Development AOL** 81.0% (83.2%) achieving expected standard
- **Physical Development AOL** 82.1% (85.2%) achieving expected standard
- **Literacy AOL** 64.2% (69.8%) achieving expected standard
- **Mathematics AOL** 71.8% (77.2%) achieving expected standard
- **Understanding the World AOL** 76.3% (80.3%) achieving expected standard
- **Expressive Arts and Design AOL** 82.1% (85.0%) achieving expected standard

As with 2022 outcomes, the Writing early learning goal (ELG) continues to be the lowest performing ELG, which mirror national performance, with 66.2% (71.1%) of children achieving the expected standard.

### Phonics:

End of Year One data:

Phonics - Year 1							
Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard							
Year	Halton			England			gap
2017	79	↑	3	81	⇒	0	-2
2018	79	⇒	0	82	↑	1	-3
2019	80	↑	1	82	⇒	0	-2
2022	73	↓	-7	75	↓	-7	-2
2023	79	↑	6	79	↑	4	0

It is very encouraging to see the improvement in the proportion of children achieving expected standard in the Phonics Screening Check in 2023, with a year-on-year increase of 6% (4%), and more encouraging that the children in the borough have now attained in-line with early national data, given the high level of deprivation within Halton. The passmark remained at 32/40 in 2023.

End of Year Two data, also known as end of key stage (this includes those whom retook the assessment in Year Two as they didn't reach the expected standard by the end of Year One).

Phonics - by end of Year 2							
Percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard							
Year	Halton			England			gap
2017	91	⇒	0	92	↑	1	-1
2018	92	↑	1	92	⇒	0	0
2019	90	↓	-2	91	↓	-1	-1
2022	86	↓	-4	87	↓	-4	-1
2023	88	↑	2	89	↑	2	-1

Improvement from 2022 is in-line with national, with the gap to national remaining at -1%. Pupils who were not working at the expected standard by the end of key stage one will continue to develop their phonic skills throughout the following school years.

## Key Stage One Assessments: Expected standard

Reading							Writing									
Year	Halton			England			gap	Year	Halton			England			gap	
2017	66	↓	-1	76	↑	2	-10	↓	58	↑	4	68	↑	3	-10	↑
2018	73	↑	7	75	↓	-1	-2	↑	67	↑	9	70	↑	2	-3	↑
2019	72	↓	-1	75	⇒	0	-3	↓	66	↓	-1	69	↓	-1	-3	⇒
2022	66.4	↓	-5.6	66.9	↓	-8.1	-0.5	↑	57.8	↓	-8.2	57.6	↓	-11.4	0.2	↑
2023	65.3	↓	-1.1	68.3	↑	1.4	-3	↓	57.5	↓	-0.3	60.1	↑	2.5	-2.6	↓

Maths							Reading, writing and maths									
Year	Halton			England			gap	Year	Halton			England			gap	
2017	65	↑	1	75	↑	2	-10	↓	53	↑	3	64	↑	4	-11	↓
2018	74	↑	9	76	↑	1	-2	↑	63	↑	10	65	↑	1	-2	↑
2019	71	↓	-3	76	⇒	0	-5	↓	61	↓	-2	65	⇒	0	-4	↓
2022	66.9	↓	-4.1	67.6	↓	-8.4	-0.7	↑	53.3	↓	-7.7	53.4	↓	-11.6	-0.1	↑
2023	66.7	↓	-0.2	70.4	↑	2.8	-3.7	↓	52.9	↓	-0.4	56	↑	2.6	-3.1	↓

Key stage one data is based on teacher assessment informed by tasks and key stage one tests. The combined Reading, writing, maths figure isn't a DFE reportable measure at key stage one but is a useful indicator to track to identify proportion of children reaching the expected standard in all three areas by the end of the key stage. This is the last academic year in which the key stage one testing and formal teacher assessment is statutory.

The gap to national widened across all subjects in 2023, although this can somewhat be offset by the previous year's (2022) comparisons, where Halton children made large gains on their peers nationally compared to the previous reporting years. It is important to note that this Year 2 cohort had serious interruption to both their pre-school and reception class early years' education.

## Key Stage One: Greater Depth/Higher Standard

Reading							Writing									
Year	Halton			England			gap	Year	Halton			England			gap	
2017	17	↑	1	25	↑	1	-8	⇒	9	↑	3	16	↑	3	-7	⇒
2018	21	↑	4	26	↑	1	-5	↑	12	↑	3	16	⇒	0	-4	↑
2019	22	↑	1	25	↓	-1	-3	↑	11	↓	-1	15	↓	-1	-4	⇒
2022	17.1	↓	-4.9	18	↓	-7	-0.9	↑	7.8	↓	-3.2	8	↓	-7	-0.2	↑
2023	16.5	↓	-0.6	18.8	⇒	0.8	-2.3	↓	8.1	⇒	0.3	8.2	⇒	0.2	-0.1	↑

Maths							Reading, writing and maths									
Year	Halton			England			gap	Year	Halton			England			gap	
2017	13	↑	2	21	↑	3	-8	↓	6	↑	2	11	↑	2	-5	⇒
2018	17	↑	4	22	↑	1	-5	↑	8	↑	2	12	↑	1	-4	↑
2019	18	↑	1	22	⇒	0	-4	↑	9	↑	1	11	↓	-1	-2	↑
2022	14	↓	-4	15.1	↓	-6.9	-1.1	↑	6.5	↓	-3	5.9	↓	-5	0.6	↑
2023	13.8	↓	-0.2	16.4	↑	1.3	-2.6	↓	6.6	⇒	0	6.2	⇒	0	0.4	↓

In Writing, the proportion of children receiving greater depth outcomes was almost in-line with national at key stage one in 2023, which is a considerable achievement, given the high level of deprivation within the borough. Although the combined reading, writing and mathematics measure is not reported nationally, it is encouraging the Halton children outperformed their peers nationally, for the second year running, when considering those achieving greater depth outcomes.

**Key Stage Two; Expected Standard:**

Reading				Writing (TA)			
Year	Halton	England	gap	Year	Halton	England	gap
2017	69 ↑ 6	72 ↑ 6	-3 →	2017	72 ↑ 6	76 ↑ 2	-4 ↑
2018	75 ↑ 6	76 ↑ 4	-1 ↑	2018	75 ↑ 3	78 ↑ 2	-3 ↑
2019	70 ↓ -5	74 ↓ -2	-4 ↓	2019	76 ↑ 1	78 → 0	-2 ↑
2022	76 ↑ 6	75 ↑ 1	1 ↑	2022	70 ↓ -6	69 ↓ -9	1 ↑
2023	73 ↓ -3	73 ↓ -2	0 ↓	2023	71 ↑ 1	71 ↑ 2	0 ↓

Maths				Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling			
Year	Halton	England	gap	Year	Halton	England	gap
2017	70 ↑ 5	75 ↑ 5	-5 →	2017	75 ↑ 5	77 ↑ 4	-2 ↑
2018	74 ↑ 4	75 → 0	-1 ↑	2018	75 → 0	78 ↑ 1	-3 ↓
2019	75 ↑ 1	79 ↑ 4	-4 ↓	2019	75 → 0	78 → 0	-3 →
2022	69 ↓ -6	71 ↓ -8	-2 ↑	2022	70 ↓ -5	72 ↓ -6	-2 ↑
2023	70 ↑ 1	73 ↑ 2	-3 ↓	2023	72 ↑ 2	72 → 0	0 ↑

Reading, Writing and Maths			
Year	Halton	England	gap
2017	56 ↑ 9	61 ↑ 8	-5 ↑
2018	63 ↑ 7	64 ↑ 3	-1 ↑
2019	60 ↓ -3	65 ↑ 1	-5 ↓
2022	58.1 ↓ -1.9	59 ↓ -6	-0.9 ↑
2023	58 ↓ -0.1	59 → 0	-1 ↓

The proportion of Halton children securing expected standard outcomes at key stage two remains broadly in-line with their national peers in 2023 across most of the subject areas, with the percentage of children achieving this in the combined reading, writing and maths measure remaining constant year-on-year. The gap to national in mathematics has widened from 2022 and this will be one of the key focus areas of the priority education investment area project.

**Key Stage Two: Greater Depth/Higher standard:**

Reading				Writing (TA)			
Year	Halton	England	gap	Year	Halton	England	gap
2017	19 ↑ 4	25 ↑ 6	-6 ↓	2017	13 ↑ 5	18 ↑ 3	-5 ↑
2018	25 ↑ 6	28 ↑ 3	-3 ↑	2018	19 ↑ 6	20 ↑ 2	-1 ↑
2019	22 ↓ -3	27 ↓ -1	-5 ↓	2019	19 → 0	20 → 0	-1 →
2022	25 ↑ 3	28 ↑ 1	-3 ↑	2022	11 ↓ -8	13 ↓ -7	-2 ↓
2023	28 ↑ 3	29 ↑ 1	-1 ↑	2023	11 → 0	13 → 0	-2 →

Maths				Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling			
Year	Halton	England	gap	Year	Halton	England	gap
2017	17 ↑ 6	23 ↑ 6	-6 →	2017	25 ↑ 6	31 ↑ 8	-6 ↓
2018	21 ↑ 4	24 ↑ 1	-3 ↑	2018	30 ↑ 5	35 ↑ 4	-5 ↑
2019	21 → 0	27 ↑ 3	-6 ↓	2019	30 → 0	36 ↑ 1	-6 ↓
2022	18 ↓ -3	23 ↓ -4	-5 ↑	2022	22 ↓ -8	28 ↓ -8	-6 →
2023	20 ↑ 2	24 ↑ 1	-4 ↑	2023	26 ↑ 4	30 ↑ 2	-4 ↑

Reading, Writing and Maths			
Year	Halton	England	gap
2017	6 ↑ 3	9 ↑ 4	-3 ↓
2018	9 ↑ 3	10 ↑ 1	-1 ↑
2019	9 → 0	11 ↑ 1	-2 ↓
2022	6 ↓ -3	7 ↓ -4	-1 ↑
2023	6 → 0	8 ↑ 1	-2 ↓

Although behind national levels, the proportion of children achieving higher standard (reading, maths and grammar, punctuation and spelling tests) and greater depth

(writing teacher assessment) has improved year-on-year, with the gap to national narrowing in each individual subject area in 2023.

### Key Stage Four Attainment: GCSE Performance:

**Pending following release on 24<sup>th</sup> August**

2022/2023 are the first cohort, post pandemic to undertake exams as the last two years GCSE results have been based on Centre Assessed Grades and Teacher Assessed Grades. The last year where GCSE's were based on purely exams and assessments was 2019. Early national data indicates that most GCSE performance nationally shows a small increase on 2019 data and a decline on 2021 teacher assessed grade data. Halton's GCSE results mirror much of this pattern, although maths at grades 9-5; English grades 9-5 and combined English and Maths grade 9-5 have all also increased on 2021 data too.

Ebacc data has declined slightly. The Ebacc measure is calculated by average point score counting all schools in all measures, based on a range of subjects including:

- English language and literature
- maths
- the sciences
- geography or history
- a language

To count towards the English part of the EBacc, pupils need to take both English literature and English language GCSE exams. For the science element, pupils need to take either GCSE combined science, or 2 single sciences. The language includes any ancient or modern foreign language.

Whilst Ebacc is a measure encouraged by DFE, for some pupils it does not reflect their strengths and ambitions. In some circumstances pupils individual best results may be gained by selecting subjects which don't cover this diverse, approved range. In these cases these students won't meet the Ebacc measure, but may have attained strong results in their chosen subjects.

### Key Stage Five: Post 16 A level Attainment:

Halton A-Level Summary						
Year	Number of Students	Number of Entries	% A*-A	% A*-B	% A*-C	% A*-E
2019	350	960	16.8%	43.2%	70.2%	98.1%
2020	56	123	9.8%	35.8%	67.5%	97.6%
2021	-	1082	37.9%	66.6%	89.5%	98.7%
2022	-	1191	26.3%	58.4%	83.0%	99.7%
2023	-	1592	14.5%	44.2%	75.4%	98.7%

Halton Tech/Vocational			Distinctions		High (MMM +)		Passes	
Year	Students	Entries	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
2019	468	519	449	87%	491	95%	518	100%
2020	24	60	37	62%	16	27%	63	105%
2021								
2022	491	518	350	68%	467	90%	31	6%
2023	-	1480	833	56%	418	28%	208	14%

In 2023 A level results, Halton's young people performed well with 75% of all grades being awarded at A\*-C at A level against a national average of 75.4%. As has been the case nationally, A\*-A grades has fallen with some of the protective measures from covid being removed.

Equally in relation to BTEC, T levels and Vocational qualifications 86% achieved MMM or above and 56% achieved distinctions.

Data regarding performance of vulnerable groups; performance by gender and performance of SEND support, EHCP and Looked after children and care leavers will be published in a subsequent report. DFE release characteristic data in December 2023 and so analysis and performance reporting of these groups will be reported later once released.

### 3.4 Key Educational Developments:

- Priority Educational Investment Area (PEIA)**- Halton have been identified as a Priority Educational Investment area and are one of 24 Local Authorities to be identified in this category. 55 out of 152 Local Authorities across England have been identified as Educational Investment Areas. These areas will receive additional funding to support local and national priorities in line with ambitions identified within The Schools White Paper. As a PEIA, Halton is working closely with the DFE. The key priorities are improving Early Years Good level of development, whilst improving outcomes in English and Maths across all ages and stages. These priorities will also focus on schools and settings being inclusive and raising achievement for children and young people with SEND. The fourth key priority is improving attendance in school for all children but particularly reducing persistent absenteeism and absence for vulnerable children and young people.
- Delivering Better Values**- Halton have been identified as a Local Authority to be part of the Delivering Better Values Programme. This programme is targeting authorities with high needs DSG funding deficits (about a third of all LA's) whom aren't at the highest level risk but have deficits that need to be addressed. The programme have commissioned Newton and CIPFA (specialists working with public financial management) to aid regions in identification to key drivers to address their high needs and inclusion needs whilst reducing deficit budgets. Halton are part of tranche three and having shared data and financial reporting, forecasting and system engagement work are taking place throughout the Autumn term of 2023.



#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 This data will also be shared with Department for Education (DFE) and Ofsted. As Halton are a priority education investment area (PEIA), this data will be used to help inform our educational key priorities and support action plans and deployment of priority funding use in consultation with DFE and overseen by the Regional Delivery Directorate (RDD).
- 4.2 Support and challenge to schools was previously funded through the receipt of the School Improvement Monitoring and Brokering Grant (SIMB). From April 2022, the SIMB grant funding for Local Authorities was reduced by 50% and from 1st April 2023, Local Authorities no longer received SIMB grant funding. The removal of this funding stream without the removal of duties has required the Local Authority to consider how educational support and challenge needs will be met and partnership working facilitated. In order to continue our close working with schools and work to support and challenge schools in the shared aim of improving educational outcomes for all, we are now needing to move to a Service Level Agreement model to fund these key roles.

#### **5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Local Attainment results are summarised, the current national data is un-validated until the Statistical First release due in December 2022.

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

##### **6.1 Children and Young People in Halton**

Outcomes for children and young people have to be treated with some caution due to impact of post Covid pandemic, with all pupils and schools having been affected to varying degrees. Relative position to unvalidated national figures are reported, but again consideration does need to be given to the varying impact of covid across regions, with disadvantaged areas being affected more adversely than other areas. This performance information will inform the priorities, training, support and challenge available to schools. Schools continue to be risk assessed and challenged/supported whilst also developing the capacity of the whole school system to be a sector led improvement system working in partnership with multi agency teams and local authority and Children's services colleagues. Our collective ambition is to raise aspiration and ambition for children and young people across the borough, so that they achieve successful outcomes in line with their aspirations and contributing to the regions development, businesses, services, growth and regeneration.

##### **6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton**

Due to the pandemic young people received a range of disruptions over time due to lockdowns and varying Covid infection levels. Curriculum offer, work experience, field trips, practical experiences have all been adversely affected by Covid. Employers and trainers need to be aware that young people moving into employment/training may not have received the same ranges of experiences and opportunities as cohorts pre pandemic and need to consider this in relation to

induction and training processes that will be required to support new recruits/trainees into the workforce/placements.

**6.3 A Healthy Halton**

Data regarding Covid infections in settings/schools/colleges is still being collated and is shared with relevant parents/carers/professionals as appropriate if any action needs to be taken to protect children, young people and the school workforce. Risk assessments and mitigation of risk are ongoing.

**6.4 A Safer Halton**

None

**6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal**

None.

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

The governments' ambition long term is that all schools will become part of a "family of schools ie. part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). Current legislation identifies that this can happen through governor choice to convert or equally schools can be directed to convert if a school becomes graded as inadequate by Ofsted and is issued with a Directive Academy order (DAO). Halton currently have two maintained schools graded as inadequate with Directive Academy orders and are in the process of converting.

In Halton, we have four Diocese with a large number of Diocesan schools The government ambition is clear and Diocesan boards are also being actively encouraged to support this academy conversion agenda and Halton do have a large number of Diocesan schools.

As a PEIA, Halton are working closely with DFE and anticipate that there will be a drive by DFE to progress with The White Paper ambitions. If this does occur, there will be increased requirements from legal services to support academy conversion processes and may impact on their capacity for wider work. Multi Academy trusts can buy into any council traded services, but frequently have their own back office teams and contract their own services. This could impact adversely on wider traded services to schools, with a decline in demand for some council services.

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None identified at this stage.

**9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None identified

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

Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage, 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021, effective 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021, DFE.

Key Stage One Assessment and Reporting arrangements Guidance (ARA), October 2021, Standards and Testing Agency

“Key Stage Two Assessment and Reporting arrangements Guidance (ARA), October 2021, Standards and Testing Agency

“Secondary Accountability Measures update, June 2022, Department for Education, June 2022

“Schools causing concern Guidance for local authorities and Regional Schools Commissioners on how to work with schools to support improvements to educational performance, and on using their intervention powers”, DFE, March 2022

“Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child,” HM Government, March 2022

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	11 September 2023
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Interim Executive Director Children
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Children, Young People and Families
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Performance Management Report for Quarter 4 2022/23
<b>WARD(S)</b>	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 fourth quarter period 01 January 2023 to 31 March 2023.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2022/23 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 fourth 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 4 2022-23

### 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 8).
- 1.2 Please note initials 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 8).

### 2.0 Key Developments

- 2.1 The Virtual School have worked with Social Care and PA colleagues to establish a NEET panel to increase the number of CICCL progressing into education, employment, or training.
- 2.2 The Safeguarding Children in Education Officer began in January 2023. They have already established strong working relationships with school leaders, colleagues within EIP and multi-agency safeguarding partners, including Early Help, Social Care and Health.
- 2.3 Free School Provision Work around The Raise Academy Free School has started to make progress, with onsite build activity due to begin in Q1 23/24 for a September 2024 opening.
- 2.4 Team Around the School A pilot 'Team around the School' project has been established and will begin after the Easter Break. Involving numerous teams and support services, including the Virtual School, School Improvement Service, Halton's Educational Psychology Service, Specialist teachers, mental health services and Early Help, the team will visit schools on a rolling programme to discuss specific young people who are at risk of exclusion or have poor attendance (as well as more broadly at practice and training needs within each school).
- 2.5 Priority Education Investment Areas the PEIA's delivery plan has now received ministerial approval, with £1.8million allocated to Halton in order to improve educational outcomes at EYFS, KS2 and KS4, alongside improving school attendance. There is a strategic board in place, which is independently chaired and attended by representatives from schools, trusts, teaching schools and the LA.
- 2.6 SEND Staffing is at a satisfactory level. 2 additional Interim Assessment Coordinators are providing some additional capacity to the team working on annual reviews. They have also helped the team to recover the phase transfer position, which was vulnerable prior to their appointment. An interim Senior Operational Lead for SEND is in post, along with an Interim SEND Team Manager. An interim Tribunal Officer joined the local authority on 7th June. This additional capacity will become evident gradually in performance reporting but will take time whilst working through the large volume and backlog of applications. It is anticipated that accelerated improvement will be evident from September onwards. Schools are reporting an improved experience in terms of communication and responsiveness from the service.
- 2.7 Additional SEND Resource base capacity in Halton is in development aligned to the SEND sufficiency strategy. 9 expressions of interest were received, 8 are currently progressing with 5 undergoing statutory consultation. The two remaining proposals were expansion of existing provision therefore not requiring a statutory consultation process. Statutory consultations for 5 new resource bases closed on the 7th of June. The new resource bases and expansion programme will open in a phased approach across the academic year 2023/4.
- 2.8 **Family hubs** 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. DM for early help is the strategic lead for coordinating this 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 currently in the consultation stage and the 1st Family Hub to be launched will be Kingsway on the 19th of July 2023. 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.

- 2.9 **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.
- 2.10 **Right to Succeed** – 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 DM for early help and the OD for education represent the borough on the regional board.

### 3.0 Emerging Issues

- 3.1 Post 16 provision that allows for young people to start mid-year has always been limited in Halton. Unfortunately, due to changes in sub-contracting arrangements, there is currently no education provision for a 16–17-year-old to start during the summer term in borough. Provision is available in neighbouring boroughs and online. Whilst several providers have been approached to encourage new entrants into Halton, the lack of suitable and affordable provision base and a requirement for a guaranteed number of young people means it is not possible to attract new provision into the borough.
- 3.2 The number of young people who are not in education, employment, or training (NEET) has risen sharply in the last 12 months. Fewer young people made the transition from school to Post 16 education in September 2022, and during this academic year more young people have been unable to sustain their placements. Undiagnosed mental health issues, including anxiety is a key factor in young people’s barriers to progression. Very limited provision choices for mid-year starts have impacted on progression for young people who are NEET. The significant increase in the number of young people who are NEET is impacting the capacity of the 14-19 Team to be able to offer careers guidance support, meaning less time is available to give to individuals.
- 3.3 The timeliness of ‘new into care’ PEPs need to improve to increase the number completed within timescales.
- 3.4 Timeliness of EHCP applications- the statutory assessment SEND 20 WEEK timescale slipped significantly in the Autumn and Spring term due to increase in volume and reduced service capacity due to vacancies and absences within the service. Improvement in timeliness is required, which is being addressed through additional capacity brought in on an interim basis, review of service processes and training for all partners involved in the assessment process.

This is now demonstrating slow, small improvements, which it is anticipated will escalate and accelerate from September onwards once the backlog capacity has been addressed.


- 3.5 SEND Phase transfers- There were some challenges this year with the phase transfer process due to impact of service capacity pressures. All pre-16 phase transfers are now complete. Some post-16 transfers are incomplete, but only as the individual students are awaiting exam results to secure a post 16 place. This is an annual occurrence across all LAs and not down to a failure of process in Halton. A robust and comprehensive Phase transfer plan is in place.
- 3.6 Capacity in Special Schools- Capacity in all Halton Special Schools remains a significant challenge. All Halton Special Schools are either at capacity or oversubscribed. The additional capacity in new resource bases, should alleviate some of this pressure over the next academic year but immediate pressure for placements in September is high. This is exacerbated by the lack of availability in Independent Non-maintained Special Schools, an expensive and less favourable option than placing within the local community. The DFE SEMH Free School is due to add to capacity but forecast for opening is not until September 2024.
- 3.7 Annual Reviews – the SEND Annual review position has fallen outside of statutory timeframes. A recovery plan has been drafted and implemented and the position is being quickly recovered.



## 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	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED01 01	Increase the number of early help assessments (MAP/PRE-MAP) health/education and other partners are leading on (Val Armor)	484 all MAP	N/A	674 all MAP (prov)	N/A	N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary: Val Armor</i> The number of early help assessments have increased overall however over 80% of these are led by LA staff in locality teams. There has now been a principal manager dedicated to this work to help and support schools engage with the process of leading on assessments. Also, the nurse role in iCART has now returned to work and will help engage health colleagues with advice and support on assessments. The early help partnership board will oversee this work in terms of accountability.						
PED01 02	Improve overall attendance at schools: Primary – Pri PRU – PRU Secondary – Sec Special – Spec Total	LA - 91.18% Primary – 93.25% Secondary- 88.92% Special 85.49% PRU 59.09%	95%	*LA – 92.12% *Pri-93.86% *PRU- 54.61% *Sec- 90.38% *Special- 87.62%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton</i> There has been an improvement in school attendance across primary and secondary schools from 21/22. The overall attendance for Halton has gone up from 91.18% to 92.12%. The improvement is seen across all schools with the exception of the PRU with primary up from 93.25% to 93.86%, secondary up from 88.92% to 90.38%, special schools up from 85.49% to 87.62%, the attendance at the PRU decreased from 59.09% in 21/22 to 54.61% in 22/23.						
	<b>Milestones</b>					<b>Quarterly Progress</b>
<b>Ref:</b>						
PED01a	Work with schools to maintain the level of attendance at Primary and Secondary Schools. Debbie Houghton (March 2023)					
<i>Supporting commentary: Debbie Houghton</i> For the latest DfE data release for Autumn 22/23 attendance in Halton was 92.1% which was similar to Halton's statistical neighbours and the Liverpool City Region attendance at 92%. However, Halton was below the northwest average of 92.7% and the England average of 92.5%. However, the 95% Halton target set for 22/23 has not been met but this is reflected nationally in the average for England at 92.5%. Following Covid, we have also seen an increase in children stating anxiety as a reason for absence and also a significant increase in parents taking children out of school for holidays in term time.						
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. (Val Armor March 2023)					
<i>Supporting commentary: Val Armor</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.						

PED01c	Revise Halton's parental offer that will include further developmental of reducing parental conflict training (Val Armor March 2023)
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <a href="#">Val Armor</a></p> <p>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 two parenting events so far in June 2022 and January 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 will be recruited to by July 23. The borough continues to embed nurture principles through all of our parenting work across the workforce.</p>	

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



Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	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)	458	500 (Full year)	616 (prov full year)		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <a href="#">Linda Evans</a></p> <p>ICART managers are continuing to review each referral coming through for Early Intervention / Safeguarding screening. The data is reflecting that just under half of children referred and screened by social workers in ICART are sent for a child and family assessment. Audit is reflecting management oversight at the point of allocation to social worker as well as at the point of authorisation. Thresholds have been appropriate.</p>						
PED02 02	Monitor the rate of children in need (open cases) per 10000 0–18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	360	380	426 (prov)		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <a href="#">Linda Evans</a></p> <p>Overall Children in Need (including CP &amp; CLA) trend started to decrease to Mar-22 to Jun-22. In the six months to Mar-23 to Halton rate has been steadily rising by 10% overall. The Mar-23 rate; 404.6 is similar to the Mar-22 rate 407.4. Figures have been updated to include Care Leavers and refreshed back to Mar-22. Halton are below all comparators. CIN open to the service has decreased overall since Mar-22, falling below our 2021/22 outturn since Aug-22. The Mar-23; 577 figure is 13% lower than the Mar-22; 662 figures. The six months previous average to Mar-23 is 2% lower than the six months previous average to June-22 and below the 21/22 outturn.</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)	59	45	70 (prov)		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <a href="#">Susanne Leece</a></p> <p>The number of CP cases has fluctuated over the 13 months to Mar-23 (202). The rate for Mar-23 is at 70.0. The average for Halton over the last three months is now in line with statistical neighbour rate of 69.9. The trend for those CYP starting a CP Plan shows to be increasing over the 13 months to Mar-23 (9). The trend for those CYP ending CP Plan although falling slightly, remains stable over the 13 months to Mar-23 (19). Category of Abuse for the 13 months to Mar-23 show a drop of 20% for Neglect, from 79% in Mar-22 to 55% in Mar-23. Physical abuse shows a steady rise of from Mar-22 (8%) to Mar-23 (25%) with an increase of 15% over the 13 months. Emotional and sexual abuse remain stable over the 13 months.</p>						
PED02 04	Monitor the rate of children in care per 10000 0–18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	107	90	133 (prov)		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <a href="#">Liz Davenport</a></p> <p>Halton's rate of CLA has remained above all comparators for the past 13 months. 133.1 for Mar-23. The number of children in care has been impacted by the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) as an LA. In Mar-23 there were 18 USAC accounting for 5% of Halton's CLA population. There has been a 3% increase in the CLA numbers Mar-22 (372) to Feb-23 (384) The linear line for numbers of children ceasing in period of care remains stable for the 12-month period. Mar-23;</p>						

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
	seven ceased with an average of 14 ceasing per month for the 13 months to Mar-23. Those starting a period of care is showing a small increase for the linear line to Mar-23; five. On average each month over the last 13 months 14 children started a period of care.					
PED02 05	Reduce the number of children and young people who enter the care system (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	132	68	147 (prov)		
	<i>Supporting commentary:</i> <a href="#">Linda Evans</a> 133.1 for Mar-23. The number of children in care has been impacted by the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) as an LA. In Mar-23 there were 18 USAC accounting for 5% of Halton's CLA population. There has been a 3% increase in the CLA numbers Mar-22 (372) to Feb-23 (384). The linear line for numbers of children ceasing in period of care remains stable for the 12-month period. Mar-23; seven ceased with an average of 14 ceasing per month for the 13 months to Mar-23. Those starting a period of care is showing a small increase for the linear line to Mar-23; five. On average each month over the last 13 months 14 children started a period of care.					
	Reduce the average caseload in Children in Need Teams (snapshot end of quarter)	23	18	21 (prov)		
	<i>Supporting commentary:</i> <a href="#">Linda Evans</a> The caseloads continue to remain relatively high on average. This is increasingly more so in the DAT service area. There is currently a review of CIN plans and an emphasis on step down and more robust scrutiny on transfer to manage caseloads. The Service are working towards social workers having on average caseloads of 18 children per full time equivalent social worker.					
PED02 07	Increase the proportion of missing incidents where a return interview is completed (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	71%	85%	70%		
	<i>Supporting commentary:</i> <a href="#">Clare Hunt</a> For this period, there have been 83 return interviews completed with 64 young people by the commissioned service. 70% of young people completed a return interview and 78% were completed within 72 hours, this is an increase from the previous quarter. The Declines for return interviews were 65 incidents by 30 young people.					
PED02 08	Reduce the number of children who repeatedly run away in Halton (in last 12 months, snapshot end of quarter)	38	N/A	21 (full year)		N/A
	<i>Supporting commentary:</i> <a href="#">Clare Hunt</a> For this reporting period, there has been a total of 186 notifications. 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 32% of all missing incidents in the quarter. 3% of all young people for the quarter are within the repeat cohort and was made up of 2 males (1 Home, 1 OLA) and 1 female (1 Care/20mile). With You's engagement rate with this cohort is 100%, with an overall RHI acceptance rate of 58%.					
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)	243	N/A	357(full year)		N/A
	<i>Supporting commentary:</i> <a href="#">Clare Hunt</a> There has been a decrease 4% of missing incidents from 193 to 186, as well as an increase of 3% young people 88 to 91. It continues to be the case that the majority (45%) of CYP reported missing are residing at home, following the trend seen in the previous quarters. The significant reasons that CYP reported as their main reasons/trigger for going missing this quarter were boundary issues (Home & Care), direct family conflict, substance misuse and issues at school. Looking at the professional reasons identified within the RHI alongside this, these reasons were largely agreed with, however peer pressure was identified by the professional completing the RHI as a key trigger for CYP going MFH.					
PED02 10	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (snapshot end of quarter)	15	20	13		
	<i>Supporting commentary:</i> <a href="#">Linda Evans</a> There has been targeted piece of work underway to review all high-risk cases as per procedure under the multi-agency meetings with social workers providing a detailed and current risk assessment, We have now progressed a review of all medium risk cases. All cases are heard at the monthly meeting with a targeted risk management plan for each child.					

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED02 11	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (snapshot end of quarter)	36	12	34		
<p><u>Supporting commentary</u> <a href="#">Linda Evans</a></p> <p><i>There has been targeted piece of work underway to review all high-risk cases as per procedure under the multi-agency meetings with social workers providing a detailed and current risk assessment, We have now progressed a review of all medium risk cases. All cases are heard at the monthly meeting with a targeted risk management plan for each child.</i></p>						



Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED02a	Embed a systemic model of social work practice across the whole service, social workers, managers and senior leaders. Peter Murphy (March 2023)	
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> <a href="#">Peter Murphy</a></p> <p><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.</i></p>		
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. Peter Murphy (March 2023)	
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> <a href="#">Peter Murphy</a></p> <p><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</i></p>		
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. (Peter Murphy)	
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> <a href="#">Peter Murphy</a></p> <p><i>The Service structure supporting Children in Need is currently under review.</i></p>		
PED02d	Implement revised quality and assurance framework to monitor improvements in practice (Peter Murphy)	
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> <a href="#">Peter Murphy</a></p> <p><i>These arrangements are now in place. Quality assurance systems are in place that provides oversight as to the quality of practice across the Service, including a framework for learning.</i></p>		

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

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED03 01	Reduce the number of children who are placed in residential care (snapshot at end of quarter)	35	20	40(SM) 37 (prov)		
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> <a href="#">Liz Davenport</a> / <a href="#">Sam Murtagh</a></p> <p>A review of the Local Authorities Sufficiency Strategy is reaching its conclusion by an Independent Consultant, this will include other more localised residential options operating as a Community Interest Company linked to the Liverpool City Regional Market Reform Programme. Within Halton two sites for children's homes are being explored along with some joint work with the Community Land Trust. This will enable more placements more locally based and also increase the number of placements with the not-for-profit sector as opposed to the independent sector.</p> <p>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. Weekly high-cost tracker meetings take place to ensure appropriate timely plans are in place for young people moving towards independence as well as reviewing progress. We will be delivering the next Step Across to fostering event in</p>						



July at which a group of 10 young people currently in Residential will be presented individually with a view to matching to a Fostering placement.

Furthermore, the Care Leavers Accommodation Group continues to meet on a monthly basis to discuss all referrals for those young people aged 17 plus who require their own accommodation in line with their Pathway Plan.

PED03 02	Reduce the number of children who are placed in independent fostering agencies (snapshot at end of quarter)	35	35	71 (prov)		
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**Supporting Commentary:** [Liz Davenport](#) / [Sam Murtagh](#)

All 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 (SM)

PED03 03	Maintain the percentage of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (snapshot at end of quarter)	99%	95%	94% (prov)		
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**Supporting Commentary:** [Liz Davenport](#) / [Sam Murtagh](#)

The Care Leavers Accommodation Group is embedded within the Service with registered landlords being part of the meeting which meets on a monthly basis. The meeting reviews and tracks all young people aged 16 and older who require accommodation in preparation for leaving care. Referrals to this group continue to be coordinated and tracked via the Placements Team. Halton have an embedded Supported Lodgings scheme within the service. Halton have placed three young people currently placed with hosts. Lavender House, our commissioned service continues to be operational. This is a four bedroomed group living property in Runcorn and we currently have four young people placed in this provision. We also have two trainer flats which are commissioned from Social Landlords, one in Widnes and one in Runcorn both of which are operational. A recent review of the Commissioned service with P3 outlined some really positive impacts with the young people placed with all being in some form of employment and/or Educational placement, There are plans to increase the number of trainer flats that the local authority Commission with a meeting having taken place with the Registered Social Landlords as part of the boroughs Strategic Housing Strategy review. There are also plans to commission a further 3 studio flats for Care Leavers for a maximum stay of 2 years (SM)

PED03 04	Increase the percentage of Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training (snapshot at end of quarter)	51%	65%	57% (prov)		
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**Supporting Commentary:** [Liz Davenport](#)

Monthly NEET meetings with the Virtual school are in place to target those Care leavers who are not in education, employment or training. A plan of multi-agency support is designed to work with and identify a number of options to identify the most appropriate intervention to support care leavers in options and choices to improve this key milestone.

PED03 05	Benchmarking year – 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)	N/A	N/A	Residential 42% Leaving Care 94.7%	N/A	N/A
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**Supporting Commentary:** [Sam Murtagh](#)

The increase in the number of placements requests this quarter as well as previous quarter has impacted on the team's 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 (SM)

PED03 06	Report on the budget spent on independent and out of borough placements for Children in Care (Forecast end of year) (Sarah Riley/Sam Murtagh)	Projected spend forecast for 2022/23-year end Residential £15,956,660-83(budget overspend of £4,607,000) IFA £3,070,960-02 (budget overspend of £389,000) Including UASC Residential £1,469,182-64 IFA £179,456.64				
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






Supporting Commentary: [Liz Davenport](#) / [Sam Murtagh](#)




In order to address these rising costs, the following initiatives have been embedded to help to reduce spend in this area: High-cost tracker weekly meeting, Residential Step Down to Fostering events (next planned for July), 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 – this is a focussed area of work within the Transformation team (SM)



Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED03a	Ensuring all children in care achieve permanency in a timely way. (Sarah Riley March 2023)	
	<u>Supporting Commentary:</u> <a href="#">Liz Davenport</a> The permanence panel is embedded operationally in the service, 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 a delivered at social care and early help development briefings.	
PED03b	Ensure that Safeguarding Unit escalate any delays or concerns using escalate policy (Susanne Leece March 2023)	
	<u>Supporting Commentary:</u> <a href="#">Susanne Leece</a> <i>The Dispute Resolution Process is used by the Independent Reviewing Officer's (IRO) in the Safeguarding Unit to challenge drift or delay in planning for individual children. Resolution is often achieved at the initial, informal stage through the IRO having a discussion with the Social Worker and their Practice Lead. This discussion is recorded on the child's file but has not, until recently been reportable from the system. We are now able to accurately report on IOR oversight and challenge and will produce reports going forward.</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 (March 2023 Sam Murtagh)	
	<u>Supporting Commentary:</u> <a href="#">Sam Murtagh</a> Work remains ongoing within the Liverpool City Region framework for Fostering and Residential placements. The Team continues to work with colleagues across the Council to identify further properties for residential purposes within Halton, to assist in driving costs down. As well as the identification of landsite to develop local children's homes. A financial due diligence exercise has been completed recently with the Social Enterprise Juno who would be the provider to deliver the children's homes staffing - the outcome of which was positive. This work stream is linked to a 6-month project plan with the Transformation team. It is likely that further commissioning work will come from the revised Sufficiency Strategy as well as the work linked to the Edge of Care service and diversionary work to avoid children becoming looked after (SM)	
PED03d	Through the quality assurance of Personal Education Plans (PEP), identify areas of need and support to improve outcomes for individual Children in Care (March 2022 Peter McParland and Jo Lloyd)	
	<u>Supporting Commentary:</u> <a href="#">Ben Holmes</a> <i>At the end of the Spring Term 2023, 89% of PEPs were completed within timescale in secondary and 100% of EY and Primary. 80% of Post 16 PEPs were completed. These figures are comparatively in line with the previous term and the same time last academic year. Internal Moderation of PEP judgements have been established and will be expanded to include partners in the process later this academic year. Initial moderation identified some inconsistencies in judgements in the Autumn Term. Subsequently, training and support materials have been disseminated to Social Workers and Designated Teachers. Inevitably, and as anticipated, the more rigorous QA process 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 conference planned for Q2 in 23/24, which will further develop the quality of PEPs. A member of the virtual school team has now taken on responsibility for 'new into care' PEPs, resulting in initial PEPs being tracked more closely. This has identified a priority on increasing the timeliness of new into Care PEPs to more swiftly identify needs in order to support outcomes. The NEET rates for 16 - 17-year-olds is currently 23%: this has risen slightly when compared to the Autumn term, 4 of these young people are UASC students who wished to join ESOL courses, but due to the timing of the year these are not open to enrolment (other avenues are being explored for these young people). 2 young people were not able to access EET due to mental health concerns and 2 young people had placement moves in this period and EET opportunities are to be sourced in the local area. For the 18–21-year-olds cohort, we have a NEET rate of 42%. Within the NEET cohort, 15% are young parents and not in a position for EET with 9% are not ready to engage in EET</i>	

due to Mental Health concerns. We have implemented an enhanced NEET PEP process during Q3, including a NEET panel, which will provide greater focus on progressing opportunities for the young people.




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

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED04 01	Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plan assessments completed within 20 weeks (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	78.9%	75%	25.8%		
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Charlotte Finch</a>            25.8% is based upon 47 of 182 cases being completed from August to present.) This is an unacceptably low KPI. The timescales fell significantly during the Autumn and Spring term. Additional staff capacity and new management is now in place and the performance is slowly improving, by approximately 2 % per week. It is anticipated that the recovery will gain momentum from September onwards.            25.8%</p>						
PED04 02	Reduce the number of incidents of fixed term Suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	535	500	1218 Instances of SUSP's		
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Debbie Houghton</a>            There has been a significant increase and more than doubling of suspensions of pupils from schools from 535 in 21/22 to 1218 this year. This is a particular concern as it impacts significantly on the pupils missing school due to suspension but also other pupils whose learning may be disrupted by behaviour in the classroom. The local authority have established a multi-agency group to work with schools to identify pupils at risk of exclusion with a view to advising on support and strategies to avoid permanent exclusion. The group meets every week at a different school to look at support and processes in place at each school and any pupils raised at risk of exclusion. We have seen an increase in suspensions following Covid. This includes younger primary children in Reception and Year 1 with behavioural issues possibly due to limited experience of Nursery provision due to Covid and also lack of transition support when starting in primary. We have also seen increases in behaviour concerns in early secondary years again possibly due to lack of transition support. During Covid there was also lack of face-to-face support for families and children which again may have had an impact. During Covid the gap in learning for some children has widened from their peers which has impacted on self-esteem, engagement with school and behaviour.</p>						
PED04 03	Reduce the number of children subject to fixed term suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	308	350	552 Children with SUSP's		
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Debbie Houghton</a>            With the number of suspensions is increasing across Halton we are also seeing the number of children being suspended increasing from 308 in 21/22 to 552 children to date. The target of 350 hasn't been met.</p>						
PED04 04	Reduce the number of children subject to a permanent suspension (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	15	30	39 (but 40 PERM Ex. One child excluded from 2 schools		
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Debbie Houghton</a>            There has been a significant increase in permanent exclusions of pupils from schools particularly at KS3. The local authority established a multi-agency group is working with schools to identify pupils at risk of exclusion with a view to advising on support and strategies to avoid permanent exclusion. The rise in permanent exclusions reflects the rise in suspensions with a significant majority being for persistent disruptive behaviour. The multi-agency group is working with schools to better understand what behaviours are seen in schools and any patterns of behaviour and interventions in place looking to identify areas of good practice and share with other schools.</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	7.4%	3.6%			
<b>Supporting Commentary:</b>						
PED04 06	Report on the budget spent on independent and out of borough (OOB) provision for SEND (Forecast end of year)	Total year spend £6,875,000	£250000 reduction			
<b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Sam Murtagh</a> 107 pupils are placed at non-maintained and independent schools with 39 referrals received between April 2022 and March 2023. This represents a slight reduction in terms of current placements The average placement cost has risen to £56,059. Work has been completed both as an individual local authority as well as collaboratively across Liverpool City Region to mitigate against the uplift requests this year from providers with the average uplift settling around the 7% mark as opposed to the uplifts requests that ranged up to 18%. There are currently 27 open referrals for a NMISS placement: 24 of whom are male; 14 children referred have a primary need of SEMH and 2 of ADHD. 16 referrals are in KS3, with 5 in KS4, 5 in KS2 and 1 child in KS1.(SM)						
PED04 07	Increase the percentage of children subject to EHCP placed in mainstream provision (snapshot end of quarter)	44.6%	65%			
<b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Charlotte Finch</a> 50.9% does not include mainstream colleges and nursery settings. With mainstream college's it would be 59.9% and 50.9% does not include mainstream colleges and nursery settings. With mainstream college's it would be 59.9% and including nurseries would be 66.2%, which would in effect be an improvement on the last reporting cycle.						
PED04 08	Monitor the percentage of Special Schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	xx	100%			N/A
<b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <i>All schools good or outstanding including recently inspected special schools with strong outcomes across the board.</i>						
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
<b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Charlotte Finch</a> All Education and health care plans timeliness is improving.						

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.	
<b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Charlotte Finch</a> <i>Due to significant absence and vacancies within SEND, this has been delayed due to focus being placed upon increased volume of statutory assessments; recruiting staff and building service capacity and developing provision within borough aligned to the SEND sufficiency strategy. This will be developed in consultation with stakeholders across the next academic year.</i>		
PED04b	Review the current framework of support for children and young people with disabilities, including short breaks provision (Sam Murtagh March 2023)	
<b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Sam Murtagh</a> <i>There has been an increase in hours delivered between quarters 3 – 1204 hours compared to 1297 hours in quarter 4. Overall annual hours delivered have been maintained with 5898 hours of short breaks delivered to children in 2022/2023. On average there has been an increase in the number of children accessing provision this year with over 140 children accessing activities each quarter compared to 100 to 110 during 2021/2022. The contracts for Swimming Lessons and the Personal Assistant Support Service have been extended for 1 year from April 2023, however the contract for Motiv8 that delivered Art classes and Dance and Drama is ending due to staff changes. Vibe has introduced an additional club for a smaller group of children with more complex needs, which is running well. Quarterly and bi-annual meetings are taking place with providers to monitor provision and a provider meeting is booked in for quarter 1.</i>		




Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED04c	Review direct payments with all recommissions co-produced with parents and young people. (March 2023 Val Armor)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Val Armor</i> This has been reviewed in terms of commissioning to get the best offer and value for parents and carers.		
PED04d	Improve quality and timeliness of Education Health and Care Plans. (March 2023)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Charlotte Finch</i> The SEND Sufficiency Strategy has been consulted upon with schools. It has prompted the call for expressions of interest for additional resource bases, which has led to the development of 5 additional resource bases and the expansion of 3 resource bases, across both primary and secondary phases and addressing needs in the areas of SLCN, SEMH, ASC and complex needs. 25 SEMH places will be created at the shared free school, scheduled for opening in September 2024. We continue to explore additional satellite bases across the LA, to add capacity at both Brookfield and Cavendish Schools. Scoping is underway to explore adding capacity at a special school.		
PED04e	Quality assures all provision currently being utilised to ensure that provision meets the needs of our children and young people (March 2023 Sam Murtagh)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Sam Murtagh</i> Monitoring visits for NMISS are being booked in with two visits arranged for quarter 1. Of the 32 schools currently commissioned, 11 have been monitored which encompasses 56% of pupils placed. Updated process of monitoring will be rolled out for autumn term 2023. (SM)		
PED04f	Review in borough specialist provision and revise to meet the needs of Halton's children and young people (March 2023 Adrian Leach)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Charlotte Finch</i> The SEND Sufficiency Strategy has been consulted upon with schools. It has prompted the call for expressions of interest for additional resource bases, which has led to the development of 5 additional resource bases and the expansion of 3 resource bases, across both primary and secondary phases and addressing needs in the areas of SLCN, SEMH, ASC and complex needs. 25 SEMH places will be created at the shared free school, scheduled for opening in September 2024. We continue to explore additional satellite bases across the LA, to add capacity at both Brookfield and Cavendish Schools. Scoping is underway to explore adding capacity at a special school.		


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

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	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 Jan census)	91	100% of eligible	98%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell / Belinda Yen</i> The DfE provided a target of 477 children to be placed. Halton have placed 466 (not including 17 Out of Borough (OOB) settings) which equates to 98%. 95% of day care and pre -school settings are good or outstanding; funded two-year-olds are only placed in good/outstanding Childminders provision 44						
PED05 02	Increase the take up of Early Years Entitlement for 3- to 4-year-olds.	89%	96%	93.9%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell / Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson</i> The current 93.9% figure is based on national data produced from the January 2023 annual census.						
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)	94%	N/A	91% (as of 31st March 2023)	N/A	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell / Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson</i>						






3.6% of early years settings are graded 'Requires Improvement'; and 1% are graded 'Inadequate'. There are currently 9 settings who have not yet been inspected and 14 who are 'meeting the requirements' (this is the judgement awarded to Child minders and Out of School Clubs who have an inspection when there are no children present).

ED05 04	Monitor the percentage of Primary schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	81.6% (As of 30th April 2022)	N/A		N/A	
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**Supporting Commentary:** Jill Farrell April 2023, 37/49 primary schools Good or outstanding (76%). 8 schools remain requires improvement and 4 inadequate. There have not been any category changes published during Q4, and we continue to work closely with school leaders









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% (as of 30 <sup>th</sup> April 2022)	N/A		N/A	
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**Supporting Commentary:** Jill Farrell April 2023 4/8 Secondary schools Good or Outstanding (50%)

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 (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	
<b>Supporting Commentary:</b> Jill Farrell ASIA Link Officers to maintain 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 directors briefing and through governor briefings to enable them to fulfil their duties.		
PED05b	Monitor and evaluate the impact of COVID-19 lockdown and remote learning offer on all pupils and vulnerable pupils learning (March 2023, Jill Farrell)	
<b>Supporting Commentary:</b> Jill Farrell The continued impact of Covid on pupils, especially the most vulnerable, is monitored as part of termly ASIA Link officer work in schools, including the use of National Tutoring Programme funding and the impact on pupil premium pupils.		
PED05c	Review the process of risk assessment for schools and settings to target support and drive improvement (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	
<b>Supporting Commentary:</b> Jill Farrell The School Improvement Team risk assess schools termly and adjust targeted support to meet needs of schools. In Q4 1 secondary school and 3 primary schools were re-categorised with 3 improving and 1 identified as needed additional support. Outcomes published in summer 2022 based on statutory assessments and exams showed that bespoke working to meet individual need supported by National Tutoring Programme enabled young people to receive individual tuition that made a positive difference to outcomes.		
PED05d	Build engagement, capacity and governors understanding of the strategic roles and responsibilities (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	
<b>Supporting Commentary:</b> Jill Farrell Governor training and briefings were well attended and promoted governor roles and responsibilities in relation to use of performance data and being confident about their roles within a school inspection and understanding of the school inspection handbook. Peer reviews are being carried out in partnership with school leadership teams and SEND governors		
PED05e	In partnership with schools, review and design an effective educational vision for the region that meets pupils needs whilst raising ambitions (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
<p><u>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</u> Halton Learning Alliance have agreed the educational vision for the region in line with 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 are being identified.</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 morale purpose for Halton children, young people and community members (March 2023, Jill Farrell)	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</u> Halton Learning Alliance have agreed the educational vision for the region in line with 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 are being identified, including MATs, a maths hub and currently talks are in progress with regard to the lead for KS2 and KS4 reading outcomes.</p>		

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

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	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)	3.7%	4.0%	4.9%		
<p><u>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</u> A continuation of the issues seen in previous quarters: a significant greater number of young people are not available to the labour market due to illness, including mental health issues, in 2022/23 compared to the previous year. In addition, there are a greater number of young people who are not in education, employment or training this year. All are allocated to a worker to support them, although not all do want support from the team.</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)	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%		
<p><u>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</u> A continuation of the issues seen in previous quarters: there are more young people (and/or their families) who have refused to disclose the young person's activity or where they are currently living in 2022/23 than in previous years, meaning more young people are recorded as cannot be contacted or refused to disclose. This means their current situation is not known and we have no other means of gaining the information.</p>						
PED06 03	Increase the percentage of 16–17-year-olds with an offer of learning (September guarantee)	96.6%	98%	96.02%		
<p><u>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</u> This is the September 2022 reported figure as figures leading up to September 2023 are not currently available. The outcome is a result of the increased number of young people who are not available to the labour market due to illness and who have not sought options for learning due to their illness.</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)	90.9%	92%	86.6%		
<p><u>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</u> The increase in the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training impacts this figure. The significant reduction in those participating has been in the 16-year-old cohort. The figures are 3.1% lower for 16-year-olds compared to last year, for 17 year olds the figure is 1.5% lower. This matches the experience with those who left Year 11 in July 2022 and haven't progressed to post 16 educations.</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 (Háf Bell) (March 2023)	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> Ongoing analysis takes place to respond to need and ensure the resources that are available to the team are being used appropriately. This has been developed through the year to meet the increasing demand of young people who are not in education, employment or training. Whilst the resources available are being used effectively, there are not enough resources to give the same level of service to young people as in previous years due to volume of need.</p>		
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. (July 2023) (Háf Bell)	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> Work is currently taking place to analyse the returned information from the school sector and identify any gaps in information.</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 (Háf Bell)	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> Good flow of information from institutions, including being able to access information from out of borough institutions quicker this year than previous years, helping us identify young people who need support sooner.</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 (March 2023) (Háf Bell)	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> Post 16 provision in the borough is limited in terms of range of provision. There is a large range of options at an Outstanding college, although this is oversubscribed, and places fill quickly. There is also school 6th form provision and provision in small work-based learning providers. Two work-based learning providers rely on sub contracted arrangements, limiting control they have over the number of young people they can take. The college and school 6th form work on academic year courses, limiting in year progression.</p>		

## 5.0 Financial Summary




Q4 2022.23 Children  
& Families Final.docx





Q4 2022.23  
Education, Inclusion a

## 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
- PM** Peter Murphy, Operational Director, Children and Families Service

**CHILDREN & FAMILIES DEPARTMENT****Revenue Budget as at 31 March 2023**

	<b>Annual Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variance (Overspend)</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	12,628	14,590	(1,962)
Other Premises	329	343	(14)
Supplies & Services	977	2,199	(1,222)
Transport	113	222	(109)
Direct Payments	944	772	172
Commissioned services to Vol Orgs	233	212	21
Residential Care	11,349	15,956	(4,607)
Out of Borough Adoption	89	0	89
Out of Borough Fostering	2,503	2,892	(389)
In House Adoption	427	459	(32)
Special Guardianship Order	1,780	2,209	(429)
In House Foster Carer Placements	2,589	3,046	(457)
Lavender House	219	219	0
Home Support & Respite	70	443	(373)
Care Leavers	249	213	36
Family Support	53	58	(5)
Contracted services	3	3	0
Early Years	203	447	(244)
Emergency Duty	118	183	(65)
Youth Offending Services	261	337	(76)
Capital Finance	210	210	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>35,347</b>	<b>45,013</b>	<b>(9,666)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges	-24	-21	(3)
Sales Income	-4	-1	(3)
Rents	-58	-73	15
Reimbursement & other Grant Income	-1,209	-1,150	(59)
Transfer from reserve	-2,388	-2,388	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-50	-50	0
Government Grants	-6,806	-6,806	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-10,539</b>	<b>-10,489</b>	<b>(50)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>24,808</b>	<b>34,524</b>	<b>(9,716)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	235	235	0
Transport	18	16	2
Central Support Recharges	3,036	3,036	0
Internal Recharge Income	-140	-140	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>3,149</b>	<b>3,147</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>27,957</b>	<b>37,671</b>	<b>(9,714)</b>

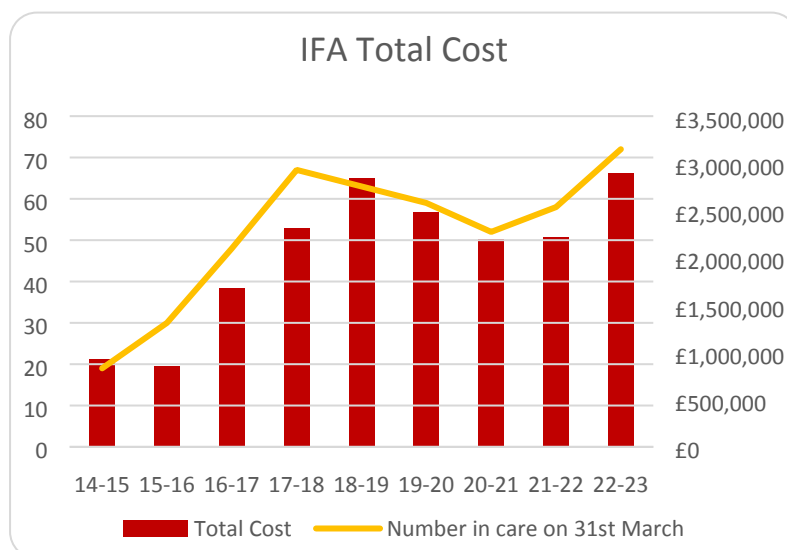
The net departmental expenditure is £9.714m over budget at the end of the financial year, with the majority directly relating to Social Care Services. Additional budget growth was provided in 2022/23 of £1m for residential care placements. The removal of a £0.486m unallocated savings target, along with additional savings/reductions resulted in net growth of £1.470m.

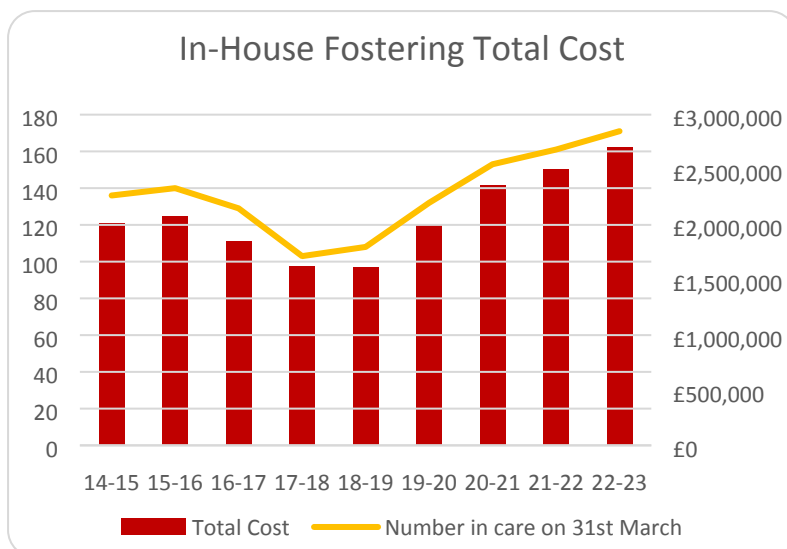
Employee costs are £1.962m above budget with the continued long term reliance on agency staff primarily the cause of this overspend. Social worker recruitment is still proving difficult due to an extremely competitive market and highly inflated agency payment rates. Spend on agency staff at the end of the year is £6.315m or 50% of the employee budget. There was further pressure on the budget from the costs of the Innovate managed agency team that was brought in as a result of the Ofsted inspection. This costs of the team in 2022/23 was £1,468m with funding from reserves allocated to cover the costs of the contract. Innovate involvement is currently expected to end in June 2023, however there are no additional reserves agreed to fund this in the new financial year and the service will need to be funded from the departmental budget. This will therefore be an additional pressure on the budget in 2023/24.

Supplies and Services expenditure is £1.222m above budget at the end of the financial year. A large proportion of this spend is due to increased court costs, which accounted for £0.511m of the spend for the year. Expenditure in relation to independent assessments is also high at £0.388m. It is hoped that assessment spend should reduce moving into the new financial year as some assessments will now be completed in-house, however it is likely to still be a pressure

Consultancy costs also contribute largely to this overspend and were £0.252m at the end of the financial year. The majority of these costs relate to the continuing work undertaken in relation to the in-house fostering project. This however, has been extremely successful, having increased the numbers of in-house foster carers and continuing to maintain high retention levels of existing carers.

Whilst this has enabled more young people to be accommodated in house, and thus reduced reliance on the Independent Fostering Agency (IFA) provision, the increasing numbers of children entering care has resulted in an increase on children placed within IFA provision. The graphs below illustrate the numbers in placement and the associated costs:





It is important to note, that whilst the number of in-house foster placements is still rising slowly, a number of foster carers and their placements have also converted to Special Guardianship Orders (SGO's). This has therefore lowered the numbers in foster care, but consequentially has increased the number of SGO placements. SGO's are long term placements for young people, where the carers are granted parental responsibility for the young people 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. Since April 21 the number of young people residing within an SGO placement has increased by 46 from 148 to 194 with this continuing to steadily increase. This has resulted in increased SGO expenditure with spend £0.429m over budget at the end of the financial year.

In House Fostering is £0.457m over budget. This is due to the increase of in-house foster carers and the ability to accommodate more young people in-house. 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. The ability to accommodate young people within in-house provision provides a substantial saving in comparison to IFA or residential care.

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 £1m for 2022/23 to alleviate the pressure, however residential care is £4.607m overspent at the end of the financial year. In 2021/22 residential care received COVID funding of £0.794m for the full financial year, but the absence of this funding has further increased the pressure on this budget.

The number of Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) currently placed in care has stabilised since the substantial growth in 2021/22, however numbers have increased from Quarter 3. The costs have reduced slightly due to a number of UASC being eligible to receive housing benefit, which contributes towards the costs of their placement thus reducing the costs for the Council. Home Office funding has been agreed for the vast majority of UASC placed in Council care and was sufficient this year to cover placement costs, reducing pressure in this area.

The table below breaks down the current residential placements based on costs and placement type:



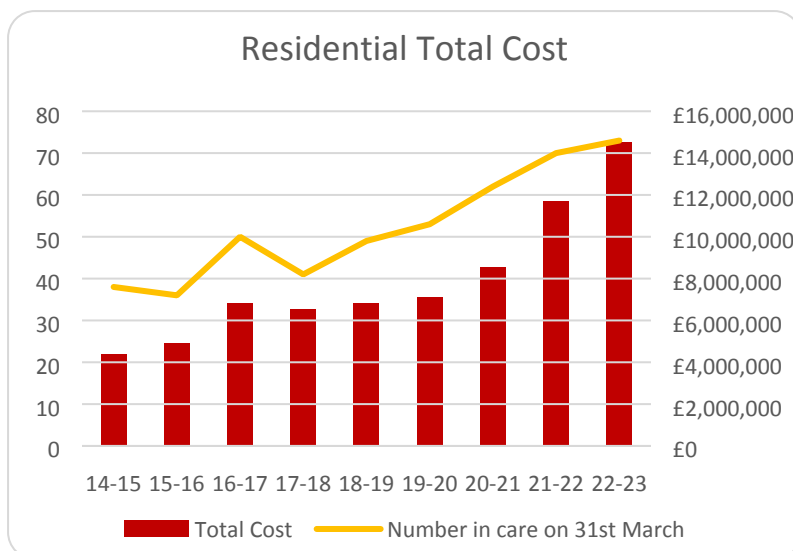
**Residential Care**

Provision	Weekly Costs	31st March 2023		31st December 2022	
		No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year	No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year
Residential	£2000 - £3000	6	429,036	3	383,836
Residential	£3001 - £4000	9	2,169,293	10	2,142,370
Residential	£4001 - £5000	12	2,809,768	9	2,186,163
Residential	£5001 - £9600	21	5,655,316	20	5,747,363
Secure	£6397 - £8137	1	379,458	1	379,458
Leaving Care	£443 - £8225	17	2,265,326	22	2,612,248
Parent & Child	£2000 - £4500	7	779,282	6	954,698
<b>Total:</b>		<b>73</b>	<b>14,487,478</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>14,406,136</b>

**UASC Residential Care**

Provision	Weekly Costs	31st March 2023		31st December 2022	
		No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year	No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year
UASC	£300-£500	52	814,771	46	848,747
UASC	£500-£5000	3	654,411	3	651,924
<b>Total:</b>		<b>55</b>	<b>1,469,182</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>1,500,671</b>

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.



The numbers of young people in residential care has increased slightly from Quarter 3, but leaving care numbers have continued to reduce mainly due to a number of young people leaving placements after taking on their own tenancies as they are now over 18. However, overall residential placement numbers are still high, with the costs of new placements significantly higher than previous years. 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 considerably over the last year, meaning that the level of spend is unsustainable at the current rate.

Work is continuing to identify those children able to step down from residential care, however this is proving difficult and is highly dependent on the needs of the young people in care and the ability to transition them into a suitable foster placement.

High Costs Placement Panel continues to review all high cost packages and endeavours to reduce costs wherever possible. The main focus is on high cost residential packages, however consideration of Leaving Care placements and their incorporation into the Care Leavers Accommodation Group (CLAG) is also included. This ensures young people transfer into their own properties as soon as possible and reduces the necessity for the continuation of placements beyond the age of 18. This is proving to be a successful strategy, with the relevant young people now moving on and placements numbers reducing as previously mentioned in the report.

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

- The new in-house Supported Lodgings service is working well and still recruiting for carers. 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.
- The two training flats for care leavers are now occupied and placed with support packages in place.
- The new in-house care leaver provision – Lavender House, has recently opened and there are three young people currently accommodated. This is a four bedroom property and a further young person will be placed in the near future.

The Early Years net divisional expenditure is £0.244m over budget at the end of the financial year. This is due to the underachievement of parental income due to income targets being based upon the Early Years provision having high occupancy levels. This underachievement of income would continue throughout 2023/24 and further pressure would also be placed on the Early Years budget moving forwards, attributable to the cost of living rises and significant increases in staffing costs resulting from the recent Local Government Pay Award and the 2023/24 proposed pay award. Due to the significant pressures associated with these settings and their inability to become self-sufficient a decision has been made to close them in August 2023. This will remove the current budget pressures caused by them, and the likelihood that these pressures would only increase further in future years.

Income is £0.050m under budget, primarily due to an income generation target that has been included for the new Leaving Care provision, Lavender House. 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 unlikely to be met.

Moving forwards improving the financial position for the Children and Families Department will continue to be challenging. The main concerns 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 level of spend cannot be sustained without resulting in significant financial harm to the Council and therefore a significant amount of work is now underway in order to address these pressures, both from within the service and from the newly established Transformation Team.

**EIP DEPARTMENT****Revenue Operational Budget as at 31 March 2023**

	<b>Annual Budget</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Variance (Overspend)</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	7,130	6,845	285
Premises	32	28	4
Supplies & Services	2,661	2,732	(71)
Transport	43	46	(3)
School Transport	1,338	2,052	(714)
Commissioned Services	1,771	1,612	159
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	1,380	1,435	(55)
Independent School Fees	6,875	6,875	0
Inter Authority Special Needs	359	359	0
Pupil Premium Grant	92	92	0
Nursery Education Payments	5,906	5,906	0
Capital Finance	2,271	2,271	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>29,858</b>	<b>30,253</b>	<b>(395)</b>
<b>Income</b>			
Fees & Charges Income	-93	-149	56
Government Grant	-5,348	-5,348	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-869	-822	(47)
Schools SLA Income	-358	-432	74
Transfer from Reserves	-1,047	-1,047	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-17,840	-17,840	0
Inter Authority Income	-421	-421	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-25,976</b>	<b>-26,059</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>3,882</b>	<b>4,194</b>	<b>(312)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>			
Premises Support	127	127	0
Transport Support	438	582	(144)
Central Support	2,308	2,310	(2)
Asset Rental Support	88	88	0
Recharge Income	-21	0	(21)
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>2,940</b>	<b>3,107</b>	<b>(167)</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>6,822</b>	<b>7,301</b>	<b>(479)</b>

**Comments on the above figures**

The net departmental expenditure for EIP is £0.479m over the approved budget at the end of 2022-23. The main variance being school transport and staffing.

Core funded employee expenditure is £0.285m under budget at year end. As in 2021/22 there were a number of vacant positions across the department. The most notable of these was the Operational Director position. This was recently filled (internally) which leaves a vacant Divisional Manager position. The vacant DM position is currently being acted up until end of August 2023. It had been forecast that the majority of these vacancies would be filled by the end of the financial year but there are still a number of vacant positions, which will be filled early 2023/24, resulting in a small one off saving during the new financial year.

As has been the case during the course of the financial year, 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 in borough schools and those attending out of borough schools. The demand for the School Transport service is increasing in line with the increasing number of pupils with SEN within the Borough.

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

	<b>2022-23</b>				
<b>Area</b>	<b>No. of Users</b>	<b>Budget £'000</b>	<b>Actual Spend £'000</b>	<b>Variance £'000</b>	<b>Average Cost per User £</b>
In Borough	384	944	1160	(216)	£3,021
Out of Borough	126	394	892	(498)	£7,079
<b>Total</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>1,355</b>	<b>2,052</b>	<b>(714)</b>	

The number of service users this financial year is 510, with the majority attending schools within the borough, 384 compared to 126 out of the borough.

It is worth noting that this situation is not unique to Halton, it is a pressure across all Councils nationwide. This area is £0.714m over budget at year end.

School SLA income has as expected over achieved against budgeted income by £0.074m in this financial year. Certain services such as Educational Psychology and Education Welfare are in high demand from schools. As a result they are generating higher levels of income than initially targeted.

**Capital Projects as at 31 March 2023**

<b>Capital Expenditure</b>	<b>2022/23 Capital Allocation £'000</b>	<b>Actual Spend to 31 March 2023 £'000</b>	<b>Total Allocation Remaining £'000</b>
Asset Management Data	6	3	3
Capital Repairs	1,155	1,046	109
Asbestos Management	29	19	10
Schools Access Initiative	36	23	13
Fairfield Primary School	20	0	20
Kitchen Gas Safety	1	1	0
Small Capital Works	124	66	58
Cavendish School	469	36	433
SEMH Free School	237	231	6
The Grange	0	8	(8)
Family Hubs	34	0	34
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>2,111</b>	<b>1,433</b>	<b>678</b>

**Comments on the above figures**

Asset Management (CAD plan updates and Condition Surveys) works, and small capital works will continue in 2023/24 in response or in line with any emergency Health and Safety issues.

The majority of the Capital Repairs works took place during the summer holidays. The remaining programmed works were mainly single glazing replacements, which will be progressed in 2023/24.

Asbestos management surveys are updated annually and remedial work carried out where necessary.

The Cavendish school project has not commenced as Planning permission has not yet been agreed.

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	11 September 2023
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Interim Executive Director Children
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Children, Young People and Families
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Performance Management Report for Quarter 1 2023/24
<b>WARD(S)</b>	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 April 2023 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 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 1 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 8).
- 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 8).

### 2.0 Key Developments

Since the Ofsted Inspection known as ILACS (March 2020) there has been a continuous circle of priorities and plans, audits and reviews, two Ofsted Focus Visits including one which led to the issue of a DfE Improvement Notice (Jan 2022) and the creation of a Children's improvement Board. Serial changes to senior staffing have introduced both turbulence and complexity. Covid contributed to the challenges faced by the service, as did rising numbers of cases coming through the Front Door. An increase in staffing levels, predominantly agency staff above establishment, helped mitigate rising caseloads to some degree but this created significant budget pressures. Placement costs for children and young people with complex needs have risen dramatically, both as a consequence of the lack of suitable placements regionally and nationally and due to the escalating degree of need presented by a small number of young people. Furthermore, the lack of educational provision for children and young people with SEND in the Borough adds transport cost pressures to the budget outturn as children travel out of Borough.

The turbulence associated with changes at senior level is stabilizing and the appointment of the new Director of Children Services, Zoe Fearon, who starts in late October provides the context for the creation of our twelve-week priority plan. This plan focusses our work in ensuring that children of the Borough are safe and that we know they are safe, distilled in three priorities

**see children, hear children, help children.**

- 2.1 Early years language and mathematics have been identified as areas for development and have been prioritised in the 'Priority Education Investment Area' Action Plan. WellComm Screening and TALK Boost intervention programmes are to be introduced into all Primary Schools. Bespoke training programmes designed to raise standards in mathematics are to be delivered in 21 targeted Primary Schools by the Maths Hub. All programmes to commence September 2023.
- 2.2 Early years communication and language have been identified as areas for development in the 'Home Learning Environment' strand of the Family Hubs agenda. Funding has been secured to deliver Early Talk Boost training to all Early years settings, commencing in September 2023.

- 2.3 The 'Team Around the School' project successfully launched in Q1 with visits to all secondary schools within the authority. 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. These meetings will continue throughout the new academic year but evolve 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.
- 2.4 The Priority Education Investment Funding has been determined and commissioning of services and providers is nearing completion 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. The attendance strand will be finalised in Q2 with targeted schools informed during Q2. All work is expected to conclude by March 2025.
- 2.5 The Halton Lea 'Right to Succeed' Project education strand continues to make good progress, with services and activities commissioned and agreed with all schools who have engaged in the programme, with delivery due to begin in Q2.
- 2.6 The Virtual School has worked with social care colleagues to improve the timeliness of new into care PEPs, with 100% of EY, Primary and Secondary New into Care PEPs completed within 20 days. The focus is to now increase the timeliness for Post 16 to be in line with the other cohorts. This will be supported by the introduction of a new grant to support the completion of P16 PEPs, as this has been identified as a national priority.
- 2.7 The Safeguarding Children in Education Officer began in January 2023 has continued to develop strong working relationships with school leaders, colleagues within EIP and multiagency safeguarding partners, including Early Help, Social Care and Health. An extensive offer of training to education settings has been offered and well attended by settings. The SCIE Officer has worked alongside Early Help Managers to co-deliver training to support education settings knowledge and skills in undertaking and navigating MAP assessments. Regular CPD workshops, network meetings and model policy and procedures are regularly shared with education settings in meeting their safeguarding responsibilities.
- 2.8 Education Officers have recently met with Liverpool Diocese regarding the Diocesan Academisation plan. The Diocesan plan is for schools within their Diocese who wish to convert to academy status would join a Liverpool Diocesan Multi Academy trust alongside schools in Warrington and a Knowsley School. Within Halton there are eight schools within this Diocese who could select this option moving forwards. To date, no schools have informed the Local Authority that they are planning to convert, although a couple of schools are potentially interested to learn more. If schools do plan to convert, the Local Authority would work in partnership with these schools, but there could be a potential loss of buyback to Local Authority of back-office services moving forwards. Halton have three other Diocese across the region with Chester Diocese providing a similar offer to their three Halton schools.
- 2.9 SEND Resource bases: The additional resource bases using DFE SEND capital funding have now been approved and over the next academic year (2023-2024) these will provide 97 new places of Resource base provision in borough. These will align with additional provision required as identified by the SEND sufficiency strategy.

Delivering Better Values- Halton are part of the DE Delivering Better Values programme. Data analysis as part of the discovery phase has been happening from May 2023 onwards and training is occurring throughout August. Stakeholder consultation events will be held throughout the Autumn term and will be used to identify and inform future plans. Once key areas have been identified, Halton will have the opportunity to apply for up to £1 million funding to address systemic change and reduce high needs DSG overspend in relation to SEND.

#### 2.10 **Family hubs**

##### **Halton has launched first Family Hub – Kingsway Family Hub 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. DM for early help is the strategic lead for coordinating this 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 co-produced 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 in October 23.

2.11 **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.

2.12 **Right to Succeed** – 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 DM for early help and the OD for education represent the borough on the regional board

#### 2.13 **Staff Redeployment**

The local authority has taken the decision to close 2 full DayCare provisions due to the financial cost of both settings. Since neighbourhood nursery money expired, the LA have attempted to maintain the provisions however at a financial loss. The settings will close in August 23. However, after a very difficult and challenging few months the divisional manager for early help has successfully re deployed 13 members of the staff into Team around the Family to support the early years function in the family hub model. All staff are excited with their new roles and look forward to their new roles commencing in September 23. This offer will widen the universal and targeted offer to families in the community.

2.14 **Nursery School Wrap around provision:** Following the decision to close Local Authority Day care provisions, two maintained nursery schools are developing extended provision so that families in the Warrington Road and Ditton region have access to wrap around care. This extended provision will be opening from September 2023.




### 3.0 Emerging Issues


- 3.1 **National Childcare changes:** In the Spring Budget 2023 the Chancellor announced the single biggest changes to childcare policy ever seen in England. 30 hours childcare for every child over the age of 9 months will be available for working parents by September 2025, where eligibility will match the existing 3-4 year old 30 hours offer. This offer will be introduced in phases, with 15 hours childcare for working parents of 2 year olds coming into effect in April 2024 and 15 hours childcare for working parents of 9 months to 3 year olds, in September 2024. These changes will bring challenges to the Early Years Sector, with an increasing number of places needed and an increasing number of appropriately qualified staff. Early Years officers are working with all stakeholders, including Early Years settings, DfE and wider LCR colleagues to address both the needs of the sector and the challenges to the sector, in order to enable us to be ready and prepared to deliver the new entitlements effectively and efficiently.
- 3.2 **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 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 will be shared in Q2, with a launch by the end of Q4.
- 3.3 **School Attendance:** The Secretary of State for Education has written to all Local Authorities requesting a renewed focus upon attendance in educational provision. Post pandemic nationally, attendance has declined with more pupils accessing less education as a consequence and increases in pupils identified as having persistent absence and severe persistent absence. This concern not only impacts educational opportunities and potential future education, employment and training opportunities, it can also be a safeguarding concern and can affect vulnerable pupils disproportionately. In order to improve attendance for all, Halton will be working with all stakeholders to ensure that "Attendance is everyone's business." Over this next academic year, services across health, social care, education, council, local employers, schools, colleges and childcare will all be driving this key message and supporting parents/carers to promote children and young people attendance and engagement at school/college. Whilst childcare is non statutory, developing strong attendance habits and valuing the benefits of education is key. The attendance strategy and attendance initiatives will be promoted and developed to support this and are also a significant priority within the Priority Educational Investment Area action planning.
- 3.4 **Section 175 audit:** All schools have recently submitted their Section 175 audits to the Safeguarding Partnership. The three key themes as an area of focus are:
- develop the confidence of education settings in the use of professional challenge and escalation with safeguarding partners.
  - develop education settings knowledge and understanding of CE and the screening tools to support young people with CE concerns.
  - Increase the number of Early Help Plans and Assessments (MAPS) led upon by education providers.



## 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 114 PRE-MAP		N/A
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Val Armor</a>            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. 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.</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 – 91.64% Pri– 93.89% Sec- 89.09% Spe – 87.83% PRU – 54.66%		
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Debbie Houghton /Scott Middlehurst</a>            The 22/23 data column is attendance data until end of the spring term 23. The current data is from Synergy for full academic year 22/23 including the summer term until end of July 23. For primary schools attendance has further improved from 93.86% to 93.89% and special schools attendance has further improved from 87.62% to 87.83%. Attendance data for the PRU has also increased from 54.61% to 54.66%. Secondary school attendance is showing as decreasing from 90.38% to 89.09%, however the overall attendance will include data for year 11, many of whom will have been on study leave for exams for part of the summer term which will have impacted on the overall attendance figure.</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><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <a href="#">Debbie Houghton</a>            From September 23 the governments new guidance 'Working together to improve school attendance' comes into effect. This sets out that attendance is everyone's business and that all agencies must work together with schools and families to improve school attendance. We will be running a high-profile publicity campaign in Halton to raise the profile of school attendance in September. The Guidance increases the statutory support provided to schools from the Education Welfare Service alongside their traded offer and very much focuses on support for children and families to address barriers to school attendance. In addition, Halton has been allocated some additional funding from the DfE to target priority schools and cohorts of children where attendance is of a particular concern.</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>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 over 50% of the women have already signed up to the programme.</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>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 will be recruited to by July 23. The borough continues to embed nurture principles through all of our parenting work across the workforce.</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)	619		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <b>Claude Madembo</b>  <i>We are strengthening the understanding and application of thresholds at the front door to ensure that only children is need of support and intervention at tier 3 and 4 progress to referrals. We are also working closely with Early Help/ Intervention to prevent children entering statutory services who do not need to. 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	481		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <b>Claude Madembo</b>  <i>We will visit children more frequently and make decisions early during assessments ensuring that cases do not unnecessarily drift or stay open. 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	69		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <b>Claude Madembo</b>  <i>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 are also strengthening the quality of our assessments and intervention to reduce number of cases escalating to CP. Practice Improvement Lead and CIN Reviewing Officer will support managers in iCART/ DAT 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	129		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <b>Liz Davenport</b>  <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 June-23 there were 20 UASC. There has been an increase in the CLA numbers April-23 to June-23</i></p>						
PED02 05	Reduce the number of children and young people who enter the care system (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	147	68	128		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <b>Raj Bharkhada</b>  <i>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. Those children that are within the CIN service robust and clear plans monitored in a timely fashion will need to be in place. A 6 week and a 12 week plan has started which requires us to visit children more frequently and provide clear plans for those children ensuring better outcomes. Supervision will need to focus specifically on ensuring that plans are adhered to and outcome focused for the children that we work with.</i></p>						


Ref:	Measure	22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
PED02 06	Reduce the average caseload in Children in Need Teams (snapshot end of quarter)	21	18	19.5		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <a href="#">Raj Bharkhada</a></p> <p>The process of reducing the number of children has already begun. Nearly 100 cases have been closed and we are monitoring closely those cases that could be stepped down into Early Help. We also plan to involve Early Help in cases that are currently in Children in Need Services so that we are able to return children to community and universal services. For this to materialise closer working relationships will need to be formed with Early Help services. Additionally, a member of staff has been appointed who will be reviewing all Children in Need cases at the front door prior to them being transferred to Children in Need services. We anticipate that this will result in fewer cases escalated to CIN Services and thereby eventually reduce the numbers coming into care.</p>						
PED02 07	Increase the proportion of missing incidents where a return interview is completed (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	70%	85%	55%		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <a href="#">Clare Hunt</a></p> <p>For this period, there have been 106 return interviews completed with 68 young people by the commissioned service. 55% of all incidents have had a return interview and 82% were completed within 72 hours, this is an increase from the previous quarter. The Declines for return interviews were 108 incidents by 53 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	5		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <a href="#">Clare Hunt</a></p> <p>For this reporting period, there has been a total of 240 notifications from the commissioned service. There have been five young people with repeat missing incidents. These five young people have made five or more incidents during the quarter, accounted for 28% of all missing incidents in the quarter. The repeat cohort was made up of 2 males (1 20 miles I Care) and 3 females (1 Care, 20mile, 1 home). With You's engagement rate with this cohort is 80%, with 4 out of 5 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	143		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <a href="#">Clare Hunt</a></p> <p>There has been an increase of 29% of missing incidents from 186 to 240, as well as an increase of 57% young people from 91 to 143. The number of incidents remains significantly lower than the figures seen pre-covid, with 326 incidents in Q1 of 2019, compared to 240 in Q1 of 2023, a 26% reduction. In contrast, the number of CYP in Q1 of 2023 (143 CYP) is 27% higher than in Q1 of 2019 (113 CYP). This is indicative of a significantly smaller repeat cohort of CYP and therefore a comparative increase in the number of First Time missing incidents. It continues to be the case that the majority (50%) of CYP reported as their main reasons/trigger for going missing this quarter were boundary issues (Home &amp; Care), direct family conflict, substance misuse and issues at school. Looking at the professional reasons identified within the RHI alongside this, these reasons were largely agreed with, however peer pressure was identified by the professional completing the RHI as a key trigger for CYP going missing.</p>						
PED02 10	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (snapshot end of quarter)	13	20	19		
<p><b>Supporting commentary:</b> <a href="#">Raj Bharkhada</a></p> <p>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.</p>						



Ref:	Measure	22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
PED02 11	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (snapshot end of quarter)	34	12	19 Low 20 Med 10 High (U18's only)		


**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.

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED02a	Embed a systemic model of social work practice across the whole service, social workers, managers and senior leaders.	


**Supporting commentary:**

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.	
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**Supporting commentary:**

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.	
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**Supporting commentary:**









The Service structure supporting Children in Need is currently under review.

PED02d	Implement redevise quality and assurance framework to monitor improvements in practice	
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**Supporting commentary:**

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	42	 39 Q1 22/23	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Liz Davenport</a></p> <p>A review of the Local Authorities Sufficiency Strategy been concluded which provided information to consider and take forward in reducing the number within residential placements. Within Halton two sites for children's homes are being explored along with some joint work with the Community Land Trust. This will enable more placements more locally based and also increase the number of placements with the not-for-profit sector as opposed to the independent sector.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Care Leavers Accommodation Group continues to meet on a monthly basis 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	85 (Prov)	 65 Q1 22/23	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Liz Davenport</a></p> <p>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 carers.</p>						
PED03 03	Maintain the percentage of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (snapshot at end of quarter)	94%	95%	93%	 100% Q1 22/23	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Liz Davenport</a></p> <p>The Care leaver accommodation group continues to meet monthly and track young people alongside sourcing appropriate accommodation for them to transition into. The number in unsuitable has been affected by one care leaver entering custody which is recorded as unsuitable accommodation.</p>						
PED03 04	Increase the percentage of Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training (snapshot at end of quarter)	57%	65%	56%	 54% Q1 22/23	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Liz Davenport</a></p> <p>The leaving care team are currently recruiting five further Personal Advisors and a Practice Lead post making ten Personal Advisors and two Practice Leads to support care leavers. This increase in capacity will allow for further joined up working with the virtual school in sourcing appropriate EET opportunities and supporting Care Leavers to access them. One of the Personal Advisors will be developing into a role whereby they will be education lead PA and they will have a focus on developing the service to make links with education providers locally and alongside the virtual school.</p> <p>Monthly NEET meetings with the Virtual school are in place to target those Care leavers who are not in education, employment or training.</p>						

Ref:	Measure	22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
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	TBC	N/A	N/A



**Supporting Commentary:** [Sam Murtagh](#)

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 (SM)

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		
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**Supporting Commentary:** [Liz Davenport](#)

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.	
PED03b	Ensure that Safeguarding Unit escalate any delays or concerns using escalate policy	

**Supporting Commentary:** [Susanne Leece](#)









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. Thus far 156 children and young people have been presented and tracked through the panel







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.



During Q1 2023/2024 there were 129 escalations recorded in the system by IRO's for Children in Care and 39 for Children subject of a Child Protection Plan.





Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
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	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Sam Murtagh</a></p> <p>Work remains ongoing within the Liverpool City Region framework for Fostering and Residential placements. The Team continues to work with colleagues across the Council to identify further properties for residential purposes within Halton, to assist in driving costs down. As well as the identification of landsites to develop local Childrens Homes. A financial due diligence exercise has been completed recently with the Social Enterprise Juno who would be the provider to deliver the Childrens Homes staffing - the outcome of which was positive. This workstream is linked to a 6-month project plan with the Transformation team that is being discussed. It is likely that further commissioning work will come from the revised Sufficiency Strategy as well as the work linked to the Edge Of Care service and diversionary work to avoid children becoming looked after Discussions have also took place with a local voluntary provider to support local families to avoid children coming into care (SM)</p>		
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><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Ben Holmes</a></p> <p>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. Internal Moderation of PEP judgements have been established and will be expanded to include partners in the process in Q2. 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 conference planned for Q2 in 23/24, which will further develop the quality of PEPS. The focus on the timeliness of 'new into care' PEPs has seen a dramatic increase in their completion within 20 days with 100% of EY, primary and secondary completed in time ensuring swift action and support is in place. 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 in the new academic year will be 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).</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%	37.2%	 56.5% Q1 22/23	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <i>Charlotte Finch</i> (completed by Jill Farrell)  <i>SEND assessment team are working in a recovery mode following significant increase in volume of applications and significant absence and vacancy. Staffing and recruitment have been resolved, processes refined and weekly reporting and monitoring of data show week on week improvements.</i></p>						
PED04 02	Reduce the number of incidents of fixed term Suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	1218	500	1866	 1021 Q1 22/23	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <i>Debbie Houghton/ Scott Middlehurst</i>  <i>We have seen a significant increase in suspensions from 1218 to 1866. This is a particular concern as it impacts significantly on the pupils missing school due to suspension but also other pupils whose learning may be disrupted by behaviour in the classroom. The local authority have established a multi-agency group to work with schools to identify pupils at risk of exclusion with a view to advising on support and strategies to avoid permanent exclusion. The group meets every week at a different school to look at support and processes in place at each school and any pupils raised at risk of exclusion. We have seen an increase in suspensions following Covid. This includes younger primary children in Reception and Year 1 with behavioural issues possibly due to limited experience of Nursery provision due to Covid and also lack of transition support when starting in primary. We have also seen increases in behaviour concerns in early secondary years again possibly due to lack of transition support. During Covid there was also lack of face to face support for families and children which again may have had an impact. During Covid the gap in learning for some children has widened from their peers which has impacted on self esteem, engagement with school and behaviour.</i></p>						
PED04 03	Reduce the number of children subject to fixed term suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	552	350	741	 457 Q1 22/23	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <i>Debbie Houghton/ Scott Middlehurst</i>  <i>This year we have seen a significant increase in children subject to suspensions from 552 to 741. With the number of suspensions there has been an increase across Halton we are also seeing the number of children being suspended increasing. The target of 350 hasn't been met.</i></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	54 (52 children) (2 children received 2 permanent exclusions)	 30 Q1 22/23	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <i>Debbie Houghton/ Scott Middlehurst</i>  <i>There has been a significant increase in permanent exclusions of pupils from schools particularly at KS3 to 54 in academic year 22/23. The local authority established a multi-agency group is working with schools to identify pupils at risk of exclusion with a view to advising on support and strategies to avoid permanent exclusion. The rise in permanent exclusions reflects the rise in suspensions with a significant majority being for persistent disruptive behaviour. The multi-agency group is working with schools to better understand what behaviours are seen in schools and any patterns of behaviour and interventions in place looking to identify areas of good practice and share with other schools.</i></p>						

Ref:	Measure	22/23 Actual	23/24 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Yr	Quarterly Progress
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%	15%		
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Charlotte Finch</a>  <i>There has been an increase in the number of applications for an EHCP and an increase in numbers of EHCP's. Whilst more children with an EHCP are attending mainstream provision, there has also been an increase in numbers placed out of borough. Some of this is due to the DFE delay in the building and opening of an SEMH Free School. Further resource base provision will be opening in borough during the academic year 2023-2024</i></p>						
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			
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Sam Murtagh</a>  <i>The overall budget is projected to be £160,000 less than last year  There has been an increase in placements with 114 children placed in non-maintained and independent special school placements at the end of June 2023. The average placement cost is £56,732 with Halton using 32 schools. Work is continuing as an individual authority and collaboratively with the Liverpool City Region and Warrington to mitigate the uplift requests from providers settling around 7%.  Thirty-two referrals for NMISS placements were received in quarter 1, of these, 5 were parental requests for a consultation with a NMISS setting. Of the 32 referrals: - 25 were male; 7 female; 12 have a primary need of SEMH, 9 Communication and Interaction, and ASC; 9 Cognition and Learning, and ADHD; 2 Sensory and/or Physical</i></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%	36.8%		N/A
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Charlotte Finch</a>  <i>Halton closer to the national average in terms of school inclusion.</i></p>						
PED04 08	Monitor the percentage of Special Schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	100%	100%	100%		N/A
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Jill Farrell</a>  <i>All special schools are rated good or outstanding and provide high quality, inclusive educational provision</i></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
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Charlotte Finch</a></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><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Charlotte Finch</a>  <i>Due to significant absence and vacancies within SEND, this has been delayed due to focus being placed upon increased volume of statutory assessments; recruiting staff and building service capacity and developing provision within borough aligned to the SEND sufficiency strategy. This will be developed in consultation with stakeholders across the next academic year.</i></p>		
PED04b	Review the current framework of support for children and young people with disabilities, including short breaks provision	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <a href="#">Sam Murtagh</a></p>		

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
<p>Children accessed 1498 hours of short breaks in quarter 1, compared to 1352.5 in quarter 1 last year, which is an increase of 145.5 hours. 159 children engaged with activities (22 of the 159 accessed two types of break and 3 accessed 3 types of breaks), which is a further increase on the average of 140 children during 2022/2023. Quarterly and bi-annual meetings are taking place with providers to monitor provision and a provider meeting took place in quarter 1 – this was well attended. A further forum is planned for September which will be attended by procurement colleagues to support providers with funding bids.</p>		
PED04c	Review direct payments with all recommissions co-produced with parents and young people.	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> <b>Val Armor</b> 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> <b>Charlotte Finch</b> Weekly reporting and monitoring is showing week on week improvements in timeliness. There are still some cases over timescale which are being developed, but it is evident that timeliness trajectory is improving</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> <b>Sam Murtagh</b> The 2 monitoring visits for NMIS in quarter 1 were completed. Of the 32 schools currently commissioned, 13 have been monitored which encompasses 56% of pupils placed. Updated process of monitoring will be rolled out for autumn term 2023 reflecting some of the learning to date from the process.</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> <b>Charlotte Finch</b> The SEND Sufficiency Strategy has been consulted upon with schools. It led to submissions of expressions of interest for additional resource bases, which resulted in the development of additional resource base places during the academic year of 2023-2023. These will address needs in the areas of SLCN, SEMH, ASC and complex needs. 25 SEMH places will also be created at the shared free school, scheduled for opening in September 2024. We continue to explore additional satellite bases across the LA, to add capacity at both Brookfield and Cavendish Schools. Scoping is underway to explore adding capacity at a special school.</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%	 91% Q1 22/23	
<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%	89%	 89% Q1 22/23	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell / Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson</i> The current 89% figure is based on national data published in the LAIT. This figure has remained the same as previous quarter as LAIT figures have not been updated. This figure has also remained constant for the past two years. Using the PCT GP registration data and the summer headcount of 3 &amp; 4 year old funded children, 91.7% of 3 &amp; 4 year olds are accessing a funded place. There are sufficient places for all 3 &amp; 4 year olds who require a place. The Early years team continue to actively market places, via media channels, posters shared with EYs 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	96%	 86% Q1 22/23	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell / Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson</i> 3.85% of early years settings are graded 'Requires Improvement'; and no settings are graded 'Inadequate'. There are currently 10 settings who have not yet been inspected and 14 who are 'meeting the requirements' (this is the judgement awarded to Child minders and Out of School Clubs who have an inspection when there are no children present).</p>						
PED05 04	Monitor the percentage of Primary schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	76%	Dependent on Inspection dates	74%		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</i> Based on the latest data published, 100% maintained nurseries and 74% primaries are graded good or outstanding. A high number of schools were inspected over the summer term, including several graded inspections, but not all reports have yet been published. With published reports, there is a dip of 2%, as one more school has dipped to being graded 'requires improvement' based on published outcomes in Q1. 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%	 50% Q1 22/23	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</i> 50% of secondaries, 100% special schools and the Pupil Referral Unit are graded good or outstanding. One school retained its outstanding rating, while another moved from inadequate to Requires Improvement – both of which are fantastic achievements.</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><i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i>  <i>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 directors briefing and through governor briefings to enable them to fulfil their duties.</i>  <i>The Virtual School tracks the outcomes for Looked After Children and during 23/24 will expand this to also track Children with a Social Worker.</i></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><i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i>  <i>No longer tracked directly as foci has shifted post pandemic.</i></p>		
PED05c	Review the process of risk assessment for schools and settings to target support and drive improvement	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</i>  <i>The School Improvement Team risk assess schools termly and adjust targeted support to meet needs of schools. In Q1 all school gradings were reviewed ready for implementation in Q2. 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.</i></p>		
PED05d	Build engagement, capacity and governors understanding of the strategic roles and responsibilities	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</i>  <i>Governor training and briefings were well attended in Q1 during which 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 Q2 for Governors. Peer reviews are being carried out in partnership with school leadership teams and SEND governors.</i></p>		
PED05e	In partnership with schools, review and design an effective educational vision for the region that meets pupils needs whilst raising ambitions	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</i>  <i>The Halton Learning Alliance has been paused to enable a 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 commissioning actioned during Q1, with delivery beginning in Q2.</i></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><i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i>  <i>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.</i></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%	6.2%	 4.6% Q1 22/23	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <b>Háf Bell</b>  <i>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. In addition, there are a greater number of young people who are not in education, employment or training this year. Since March 2023 there has 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%	0.6%	 0.6% Q1 22/23	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <b>Háf Bell</b>  <i>If young people (and/or their families) refuse to disclose the young person's activity or where they are currently living meaning 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 current situation is comparable 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%	72.4%	 74% Q1 22/23	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <b>Háf Bell</b>  <i>The increase in the number of young people who are not in education employment or training and not available to the labour market also affects this figure as those young people are not ready to accept an offer of learning.</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%	86.7%	 88.2% Q1 22/23	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <b>Háf Bell</b>  <i>The increase in the number of young people who are not in education employment or training 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><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> <b>Háf Bell</b>  <i>Ongoing analysis takes place to respond to need and ensure the resources available are being targeted appropriately. For summer term 2023 work has been targeted at raising the lack of provision issue with the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority and discussing the support for young people with poor mental health with the Health Improvement Team and the Mental Health in Schools team.</i></p>		
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.	

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: <b>Háf Bell</b></i>                      Work is ongoing with schools and data still being collected and analysed.</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: <b>Háf Bell</b></i>                      This work will begin with institutions when the academic year 2023/24 begins.</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: <b>Háf Bell</b></i>                      Significant provision issues this year with two Post 16 providers losing contracted provision with little notice. A resolution was found for one and is being investigated for the second provider. 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.</p>		

**5.0 Financial Summary**






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**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 <b>same period last year</b> .
Amber		Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the <b>same period last year</b> .
Red		Indicates that performance is worse compared to the <b>same period last year</b> .

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 June 2023**

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	7,414	1,906	1,851	55	280
Premises	130	36	36	0	0
Supplies & Services	1,297	928	938	(10)	(87)
Transport	6	1	0	1	0
Schools Transport	1,588	157	364	(207)	(961)
Commissioned Services	1,654	44	44	0	0
Grants to Voluntary Organisations	10	0	0	0	(65)
Independent School Fees	6,728	1,642	1,642	0	0
Inter Authority Special Needs	604	131	131	0	0
Pupil Premium Grant	220	21	21	0	0
Nursery Education Payments	7,467	1,726	1,726	0	0
Capital Financing	1	0	0	0	0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>27,119</b>	<b>6,592</b>	<b>6,753</b>	<b>(161)</b>	<b>(833)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges Income	-207	-60	-61	1	21
Government Grant Income	-856	-214	-214	0	0
Schools SLA Income	-445	-146	-146	0	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	0	0	-40	40	40
Transfers from Reserves	-134	-25	-25	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-18,731	-4,683	-4,683	0	0
Inter Authority Income	-483	-113	-113	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-20,856</b>	<b>-5,241</b>	<b>-5,282</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>6,263</b>	<b>1,351</b>	<b>1,471</b>	<b>(120)</b>	<b>(772)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	281	70	70	0	0
Transport Support	441	108	108	0	0
Central Support	1,612	404	404	0	0
Asset Rental Support	17	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>2,351</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>582</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>8,614</b>	<b>1,933</b>	<b>2,053</b>	<b>(120)</b>	<b>(772)</b>

## Financial Position

The net Departmental expenditure is £0.120m over budget at the end of quarter one, based on available information. The forecast outturn for 2023/24 is currently an overspend against budget of £0.772m. The main variances being school transport and staffing.

Core funded employee expenditure is forecast to be £0.280m under budget at year end. As in previous years there are a number of vacancies across the department. The most notable of these is the Executive Director position. This is currently being covered by Interim agency staff, with position likely to be filled Autumn 23. There are a number of vacant positions across the department that are being acted-up/covered by agency staff. It is hoped that the majority 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.

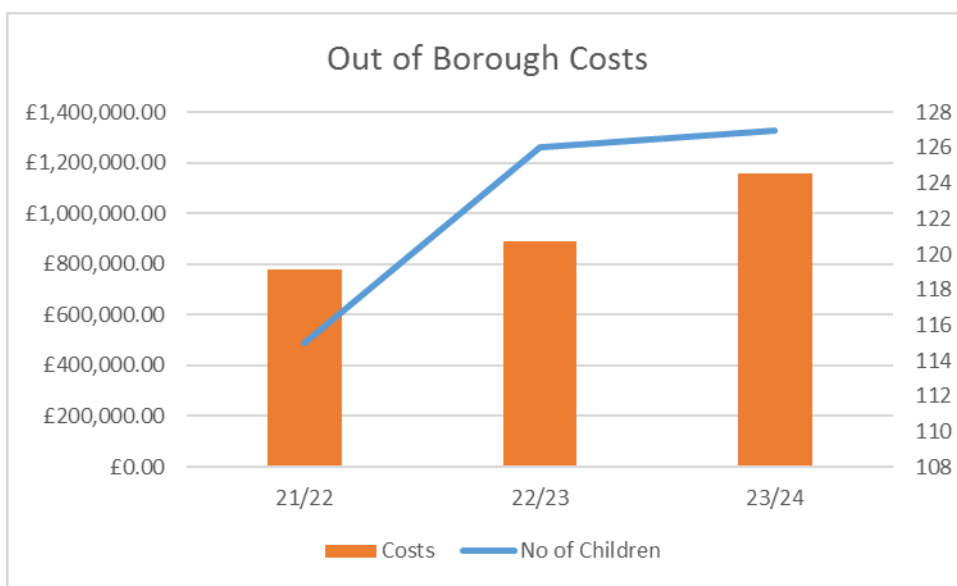
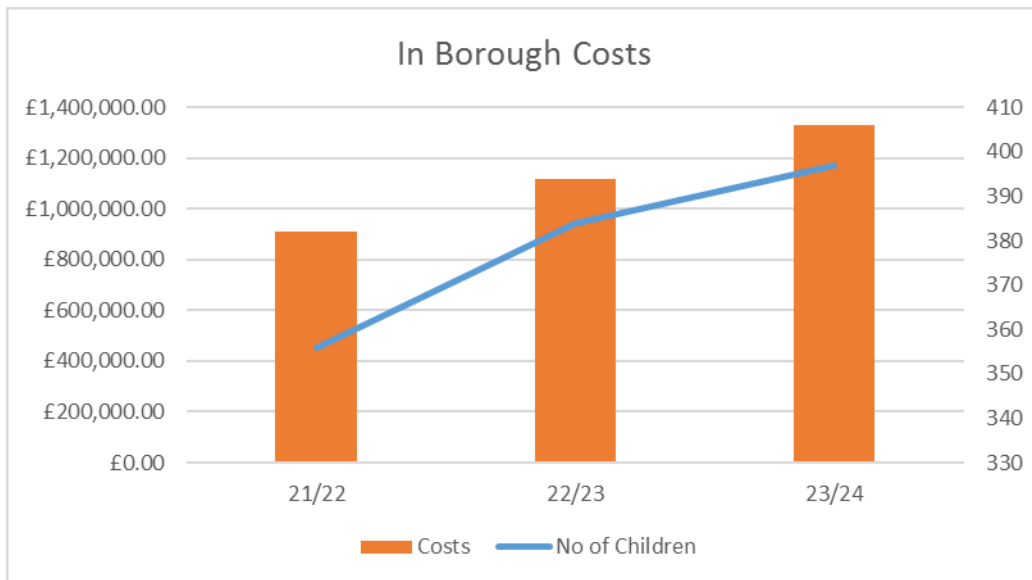
Supplies and services costs are forecast to be over budget at year-end by approximately £0.087m due to licence costs. All spend in this area is essential spend only and the budget holders across the Department closely monitor all spend.

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 an In Borough School 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 Q1				
Area	No. of Users	Budget £'000	Projected Spend £'000	Variance £'000	Average Cost per User £
In Borough	397	1,104	1,330	(226)	£3,350
Out of Borough	127	426	1161	(735)	£9,142
<b>Total</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>1,530</b>	<b>2,491</b>	<b>(961)</b>	

At Q1 there are currently 524 service users, the majority of which attend schools within the Borough, 397 compared to 127 out of the Borough. As can be seen both areas are overspending compared to budget. However, the Out of Boroughs overspend is far greater than the 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.



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

Grants to Voluntary Organisations is forecast to be over budget by £0.065m at year end. This is due to the Positive Behaviour Service. The department pays a contribution to this service each year, however, the cost is significantly higher than the budget. This has been covered in previous years by utilising grants available, such as Dedicated Schools Grant.

Reimbursements and Other Grant Income has generated £0.040m above budget in Q1. 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 schools 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 be achieved, 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 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 £9,142 in the first quarter of the current financial year.

Supporting Families has a large surplus reserves balance (£745,413 as at 31.03.23), which is expected to increase to £788,464 by end of 2023/24. It has been suggested that this be utilised to fund core activity.

**Capital Projects as at 30 June 2023**

	<b>Annual Capital Allocation</b>	<b>Allocation to Date</b>	<b>Actual Spend</b>	<b>Total Allocation Remaining</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Asset Management Data	12	0	0	12
Capital Repairs	904	78	67	837
Asbestos Management	12	0	0	12
Schools Access Initiative	30	0	0	30
Basic Needs Project	279	1	0	279
Fairfield Primary School	283	1	0	283
Cavendish School	23	6	0	23
SEMH Free School	232	1	0	232
SEND capital allocation	3,200	80	73	3,127
SCA unallocated	84	0	0	84
Family Hubs	56	0	0	56
<b>Total Capital</b>	<b>5,115</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>4,975</b>

**Comments on the above figures**

The majority of the SEND works are taking place over the summer holiday as are the majority of the Capital repairs.

Cavendish School remodelling should be starting on site shortly now that planning consent has been received.

Fairfield project is still at feasibility stage.




Asbestos management surveys are updated annually and remedial work carried out 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		To be reviewed
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		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		On target to be achieved
<b>Total Education, Inclusion and Provision Department</b>				<b>100</b>	<b>280</b>	<b>0</b>		



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

	Annual Budget	Budget to Date	Actual Spend	Variance (Overspend)	Forecast Outturn
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Expenditure</b>					
Employees	11,460	2,495	3,404	(909)	(2,902)
Other Premises	476	124	108	16	58
Supplies & Services	1,084	214	406	(192)	(869)
Transport	113	8	47	(39)	(195)
Direct Payments	1,016	246	243	3	11
Commissioned services to Vol Orgs	224	56	52	4	15
Residential Care	13,505	1,402	2,036	(634)	(2,602)
Out of Borough Adoption	30	8	0	8	30
Out of Borough Fostering	3,050	298	460	(162)	(681)
In House Adoption	461	25	27	(2)	(11)
Special Guardianship Order	2,221	513	554	(41)	(193)
In House Foster Carer Placements	2,670	611	639	(28)	(73)
Lavender House	230	36	36	0	0
Home Support & Respite	340	85	81	4	25
Care Leavers	256	60	65	(5)	(22)
Family Support	53	13	7	6	31
Contracted services	3	1	1	0	0
Early Years	275	117	145	(28)	(97)
Emergency Duty	124	0	0	0	(60)
Youth Offending Services	255	0	0	0	(85)
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>37,846</b>	<b>6,312</b>	<b>8,311</b>	<b>(1,999)</b>	<b>(7,620)</b>
<b>Income</b>					
Fees & Charges	-31	-1	0	(1)	(4)
Sales Income	-4	-1	-1	0	(3)
Rents	-76	-16	-15	(1)	(4)
Reimbursement & other Grant Income	-539	-97	-41	(56)	(248)
Transfer from reserve	-47	-47	-47	0	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-50	0	0	0	0
Government Grants	-7,556	-1,881	-1,881	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-8,303</b>	<b>-2,043</b>	<b>-1,985</b>	<b>(58)</b>	<b>(259)</b>
<b>Net Operational Expenditure</b>	<b>29,543</b>	<b>4,269</b>	<b>6,326</b>	<b>(2,057)</b>	<b>(7,879)</b>
<b>Recharges</b>					
Premises Support	339	85	85	0	0
Transport Support	15	3	3	0	0
Central Support	3,290	822	822	0	0
Asset Rental Support	0	0	0	0	0
Recharge Income	-1,124	-281	-281	0	0
<b>Net Total Recharges</b>	<b>2,520</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Net Departmental Expenditure</b>	<b>32,063</b>	<b>4,898</b>	<b>6,955</b>	<b>(2,057)</b>	<b>(7,879)</b>

The net departmental expenditure is £2.057m over budget at the end of the first quarter of the financial year, with the majority directly relating to Social Care Services. Additional growth budget was provided in 23/24 of £6.054m, with the majority £4,052m allocated to residential care placements. A savings target of £0.058m leaves a net growth increase of £5.997m.

The longer term position through to 31 March 2024 forecasts that the department net spend will be £7.879m over the approved budget.

Employee costs are £0.909m above budget at the end of Quarter 1. A continued heavy reliance on long term agency staff to fill Social Worker, Practice Lead and Divisional Manager vacancies is the cause of this overspend, along with a number of agency staff appointed over and above the budgeted establishment structure. 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 1 is £1.365m or 55% of employee budget to date.

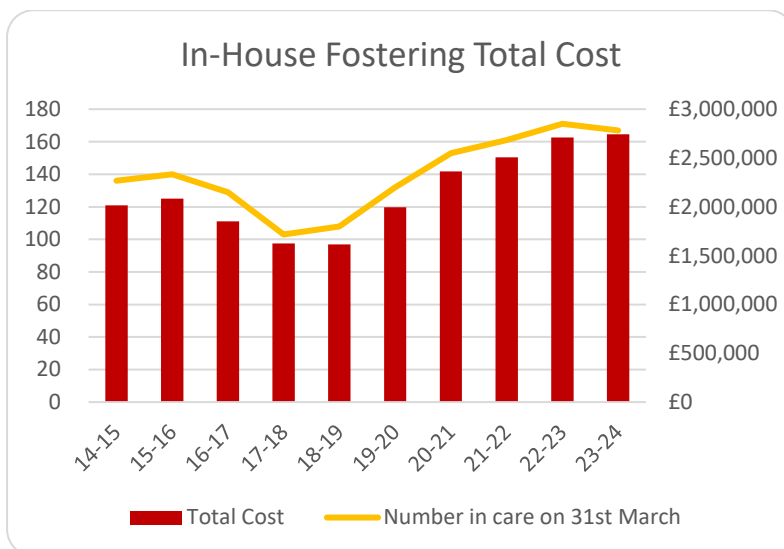
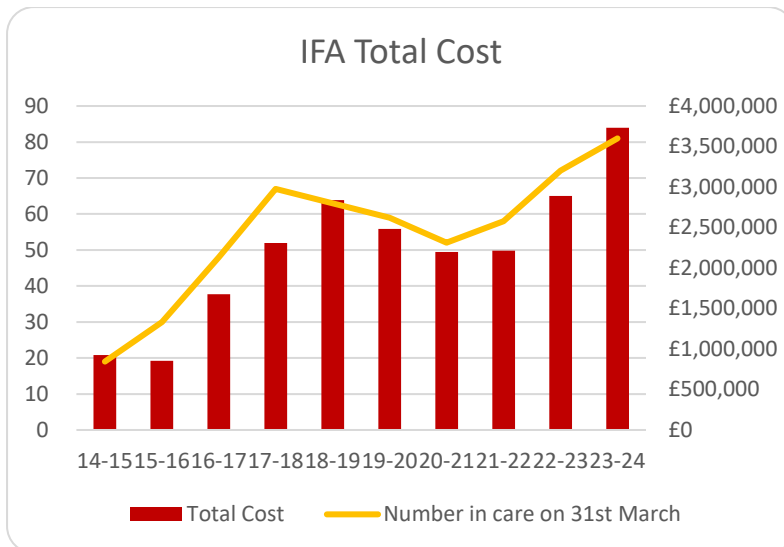
The final outturn for employee costs is expected to be £2.902m over the approved budget. There are various workstreams currently in place to target the difficulties in recruitment and reduce the volume of agency staff, including a new Local Offer for employees offering recruitment and retention payments 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 £0.039m over the approved budget with an anticipated outturn of £0.195m 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 £0.192m above budget at the end of Quarter 1 with a forecast outturn of £0.869m. Additional growth was provided of £0.314k to cover the increase in court costs and related legal spend. However, supplies and services usage is diverse and high levels of spend relating to a number of areas including nursery fees, translation costs, equipment and travel are adding pressure to this budget. Consultancy costs also contribute largely to this overspend and are expected to be £0.166m over budget at the end of the financial year. The majority of these costs relate to the continuing work undertaken in relation to the in-house fostering project which has worked to develop the in-house fostering service and increase capacity over the last few years.

Although in-house 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 £0.681m with spend in this area expected to be around £0.840m more than 22-23.



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 £0.634m overspent at the end of Quarter 1 with an anticipated outturn of £2.602m over budget at the end of the year. Overall it is estimated spend for residential placements will be £1.290m higher than in 22/23.

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 June 2023		31st March 2023	
		No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year	No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year
Residential	£2000 - £3000	6	876,000	6	429,036
Residential	£3001 - £4000	7	1,306,075	9	2,169,293
Residential	£4001 - £5000	9	1,942,736	12	2,809,768
Residential	£5001 - £13720	24	8,946,076	21	5,655,316
Secure	£6397 - £8137	0	0	1	379,458
Leaving Care	£443 - £8225	17	2,175,930	17	2,265,326
Parent & Child	£2000 - £5500	4	530,234	7	779,282
<b>Total:</b>		<b>67</b>	<b>15,777,052</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>14,487,478</b>

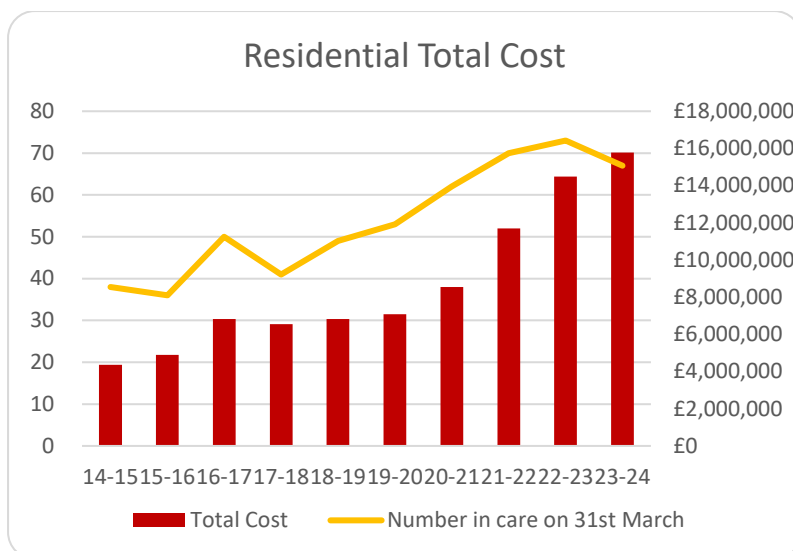
The number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) currently placed in care remains high but stable. Home Office funding has been agreed for the vast majority of UASC placed in our care, however it is currently not sufficient to cover the costs of the UASC accommodated, with a shortfall of £0.103m. This is due to a large population of UASC reaching 18, an age when the funding for UASC reduces from £1,001 per week to just £270. It is expected that UASC move onto their own tenancy once they have been granted leave to remain, however a shortage of available properties unfortunately means that they remain in placement longer at a cost to the authority. In this situation however, placement costs do reduce as once leave to remain is granted, housing benefit can be accessed which can be offset against the costs of the placement. It is expected that this will cause the shortfall of funding to reduce, however it is not possible to predict which placements this will affect and so forecasts are made based on current placements costs in order to maintain a prudent approach.

### UASC Residential Care

Provision	Weekly Costs	30th June 2023		31st March 2023	
		No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year	No. Placed	Estimated cost for the year
UASC	£300-£500	53	815,543	52	814,771
UASC	£500-£5000	3	500,964	3	654,411
<b>Total:</b>		<b>56</b>	<b>1,316,508</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>1,469,182</b>

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.

The High Costs Placements Panel is working to reduce these costs and has so far avoided additional costs of £1.141m by the timely transfer of placements to lower priced Leaving Care packages, reducing additional support packages where possible, and reunification of young people with their families where appropriate. The High Costs Panel continues to meet regularly with the aim of reducing the costs of placements whilst still ensuring the needs of the young people placed are met. It is hoped that this 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 Lavender House, a four-bedroom property has two young people currently accommodated and a further two young people identified who will be placed in the near future.

In House Fostering is £0.028m over budget with an expected outturn of £0.073m 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.

Special Guardianship Order (SGO) costs are currently £0.041m over budget at the end of Quarter 1, with an expected outturn of £0.193m 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 £0.028m over budget at the end of the Quarter 1, with a forecast outturn of £0.097m 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. As there is no possibility that they could become self-sustaining and would therefore continue to be a significant budget pressure going forwards into future years, a decision has been made to close the Early Years Centres from August 2023. Therefore they will present no further pressure on the budget moving forwards.

Income levels are £0.058m under the budgeted target at the end of Quarter 1 with an estimated outturn of £0.259m under budgeted targets. This is due to income targets for those residential care packages joint funded with health not being met in year. Those young people previously eligible for joint funding have now turned 18 and therefore are no longer accommodated within children's. There is also an income generation target for the Leaving Care provision, Lavender House. 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 unlikely to 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 details of progress towards achieving budget efficiency savings agreed by Council in February 2023.

**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 will be closing in August 23. The 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		Initial indicators suggest saving likely to be made, but awaiting further clarification from Divisional Manager

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
<b>Total Children &amp; Families Department</b>				<b>58</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>22</b>		