

# Public Document Pack



## Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

Monday, 9 September 2024 at 6.30 p.m.  
Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn

S. Young

**Chief Executive**

### **BOARD MEMBERSHIP**

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

*Please contact Ann Jones on 0151 511 8276 or e-mail  
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The next meeting of the Board is on Monday, 11 November 2024*

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

**Part I**

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

**CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD**

*At a meeting of the Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 15 July 2024 in the Civic Suite, Town Hall, Runcorn*

Present: Councillors Logan (Chair), C. Plumpton Walsh (Vice-Chair), Begg, Jones, P. Lloyd Jones, Ratcliffe and Ryan

Apologies for Absence: Councillors Baker, Goodall, McDermott and Skinner

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: G. Cook, A. Jones, B. Holmes, C. Finch and K. Appleton

Also in attendance: Councillor T. McInerney, in accordance with Standing Order number 33

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

	<i>Action</i>
CYP1 MINUTES	
The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2024 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
CYP2 PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
The Board was advised that no public questions had been received.	
CYP3 EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
The minutes relating to the Children, Young People and Families Portfolio taken from Executive Board meetings held since the last meeting of this Board, were attached at Appendix 1 for information.	
CYP4 TOPIC GROUP UPDATE - VERBAL UPDATE FROM THE CHAIR	
Councillor Logan, the Chair of the Board, gave colleagues an update on the topic group he was participating in, in relation to the transformation of Children's Services.	

The Delivery Plan Topic Group had met three times so far and Councillors Logan, Jones, Ryan and P. Lloyd Jones were participating together with the Portfolio Holder Councillor T. McInerney. It was commented that plans had been made to address all of the existing issues identified so far and solutions had been found. Councillor Logan and the Topic Group were confident with the progress made so far.

RESOLVED: That the update be received.

### CYP5 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2024

The Board received a presentation on the development of Halton's new Children and Young People's Plan 2024-2027.

Initially three principle questions were asked – what is life like for this child for young person; what can I do to make it better; and would this be good enough for my child. Three priorities were identified as a result of these:

- Working well in partnership;
- Developing the workforce; and
- Raising our aspirations.

The presentation gave information on what would be done to address each of these priorities and how the identified 12 priority issues would go into these.

In conclusion it was noted that the PPB would monitor progress made against the 12 priority issues of the Plan, as these would be reflected in the quarterly monitoring reports and be used to plan for the 2024-25 academic year.

Following Members' questions and discussions the following information was provided:

- Individual consultation had taken place with young people from various organisations such as schools, colleges and the Youth Council where a wide range of views had been received;
- Regarding the 'numbers of children in need of additional help to keep them safe' – it was commented that every step was taken by all agencies to prevent them from entering the care system. This cohort, numbering 1,295 (at the time of the agenda publication), were looked after by the 'edge of care' team;
- Many children with SEND were presenting with more complex issues, including health issues. It was felt

that the NHS should be approached to assist with funding and other support for these children and work in partnership with the Council. Examples were given of the challenges faced due to timeframes and the availability of places in special schools becoming available. Also, due to competition from neighbouring authorities, a decision on placing a child requiring SEND must be made very quickly, or the place would be offered to another local authority, so there was very little time to consult with the NHS;

- Having said the above, it was reported that there were a number of children who did receive NHS funding (joint packages of care) from the ICB – Members stated that the extent of this support was not clear and requested more information. It was noted that the new Children and Young People’s Plan would be used to record these outcomes;
- It was recognised that a formal agreement was needed with the ICB regarding the sharing of funding, so that there was accountability between all partners;
- The rate of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP) requests in Halton was rising year on year and was above the regional and national average;
- Headteachers had been consulted on the Plan which had been positively received by them. They would also see the final Plan before it was published;
- Public Health were responsible for the recording of children’s height and weight and this was done by the Schools Health Improvement Team; and
- Clarity was provided over the use of and credentials of the consultant employed to help develop the Plan. He had worked with another local authority with very similar demographics to Halton. The cost of the exercise would be sought as it was not at hand.

RESOLVED: That the Board

- 1) note the report and presentation; and
- 2) approves the Children and Young People’s Plan 2024.

Executive Director  
of Children's  
Services

#### CYP6 CHILDREN'S SOCIAL CARE

The Board considered a report from the Executive Director of Children’s Services, which provided an update on the progress of improvements being made within Children’s Social Care Services.

In November 2023, Halton appointed a permanent

Director of Children's Services (DCS) and in January 2024, a permanent Director of Children's Social Care and Early Help was appointed. This had led to a re-focus for Children's Social Care and a request for corporate support to significantly improve services. The last 6 months had seen significant changes being implemented around culture and practice. It was recognised however, that there was still a significant journey of improvement required.

The report outlined some key areas of focus within the improvements as follows: recruitment and retention of staff; training, development and CPD; stabilisation of the management team; a service re-design project; children in care and care leavers; and local area partnerships and accountability.

Following discussions, the following responses were provided to Members questions:

- Examples were given of the not-for-profit organisations used in Halton for children's residential care and it was noted that these organisations charged less, as they did not profiteer from children's trauma;
- Conversations were currently taking place on how the Local Authority could invest and benefit from more use of these types of organisations;
- The recruitment of Newly Qualified Social Workers (NQSW's) was discussed and the steps being taken to support them as they started their careers. The Social Workers Academy was involved in the development of NQSW's in conjunction with the line manager;
- It was recognised by the Department for Education (DfE) that an inexperienced workforce could add pressure to the system, with supervision for example. It was commented that Halton was not alone in having a new workforce in the social work area and as mentioned earlier, support had been added that was not there previously. NQSW's also have the opportunity to work with experienced social workers within the teams;
- It was commented that not all NQSW's were youngsters as some had previous health, childcare and community worker experience to add to their roles;
- Further to the Ofsted inspection and critique regarding instances of neglect not being identified, it was reported that the legal processes had been strengthened in this area; and

- The Portfolio Holder invited the Board to visit the ASYE (Assisted and Supported Year in Employment) Programme, to see the value of the role they played.

Overall Members felt that the culture had changed positively since the establishment of the new senior management team and they were optimistic about the future. Officers' would provide this feedback to all the staff.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

Executive Director  
of Children's  
Services

#### CYP7 SEND IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

The Board received a report from the Executive Director of Children's Services, which outlined (1) the progress made against the targets set out in the Area Priority Action Plan, following the SEND Area Inspection in November 2023; and (2) provided an update of progress in improvement work following receipt of the Delivering Better Values (DBV) grant.

It was reported that the Area Priority Action Plan was developed in partnership with stakeholders from across the area, and was subsequently approved by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission. The Inspectorate identified 5 priority areas for improvement. The Board received updates on the progress being made against all 5 areas of the Priority Action Plan; the current risks to delivery; and the control measures in place to mitigate the risks.

In relation to the DBV programme, the report outlined the process of the grant application and bid and the subsequent successful award of a £1m grant for Halton.

The report presented how the grant would be split into two workstreams (1) Behaviour Support Change programme; and (2) Inclusion Framework, and described the objectives of each.

In response to Members questions, the following information was provided:

- Some areas of the Priority Action Plan were yet to start, as they involved working with other stakeholders – these generally related to strategy and policy work, so would not affect children in any way;
- Under the DBV Programme 'Thrive' would be implemented under workstream 2. This was discussed and it was clarified that schools

themselves become the practitioners via staff online training, but the child receives a face to face service;

- The list of participating schools that have taken up the Thrive Licensed Childhood Practitioner Training had grown since the publication of the agenda report; and
- One Member queried the status of the previous Nurture Programme – this had done its job and was now considered as embedded practice, so schools continue this to date.

It was recognised that the aim was to get as much value as possible from the £1m funding, which was a one off grant payment.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

#### CYP8 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR QUARTER 3 2023/24

The Board received the performance management reports for quarter 3 of 2023-24 (1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023).

The key priorities for development or improvement in 2023-24 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 Mockingbird Programme for Fostering and Family Hubs were discussed and update reports would be submitted to the Board at future meetings.

RESOLVED: That the quarter 3 2023-24 performance management reports be received.



CYP9 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR  
QUARTER 4 2023/24

The Board received the performance management reports for quarter 4 of 2023-24 (1 January 2024 to 31 March 2024).

The key priorities for development or improvement in 2023-24 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 increases in the numbers of young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEETS) in Halton was highlighted and discussed. This was higher than in neighbouring authorities and the possible reasons for this was being looked into. It was noted that the Council had a legal obligation to monitor this group of young people.

RESOLVED: That the quarter 4 2023-24 performance management reports be received.

*Meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.*

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	9 September 2024
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Chief Executive
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Public Question Time
<b>WARD(S)</b>	Boroughwide

## 1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE 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 **RECOMMENDATION: 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**

4.1 None identified.

#### 5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None identified.

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

##### 6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

None identified.

##### 6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

None identified.

6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

None identified.

6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

None identified.

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**

None identified.

6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

None identified.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 None.

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.

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	9 September 2024
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Chief Executive
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Executive Board Minutes
<b>WARD(S)</b>	Boroughwide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The Minutes relating to the relevant Portfolio which have been considered by the Executive Board are attached at Appendix 1 for information.

1.2 The Minutes are submitted to inform the Policy and Performance Board of decisions taken in their area.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the Minutes be noted.**

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 None.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 None.

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

6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

None.

6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

None.

6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

None.

6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

None.

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**

None.

6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

None.

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 None.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 None.

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.

**Extract of Executive Board Minutes relevant to the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board****EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 13 JUNE 2024****EXB6 FOSTERING & SGO CARERS UPLIFT FROM 22/23 & 23/24**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Children's Services, which advised on an uplift in payments to Foster Carers and Special Guardianship Order (SGO) Carers for 2022/23 and 2023/24. The request is for:

- all SGO Carers to be paid an uplift of 1% from 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023; and
- all Foster Carers and SGO Carers to be provided with an uplift of 2% to be backdated to 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024.

RESOLVED: That the uplift in payments to Foster Carers and Special Guardianship Order (SGO) Carers for 2022/23 and 2023/24, as outlined in the report be approved.

**EXB7 SERVICES FOR MISSING FROM HOME AND CARE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE ACROSS CHESHIRE FOR HALTON, CHESHIRE WEST & CHESTER AND WARRINGTON: REQUEST FOR WAIVER OF STANDING ORDERS**

The Board considered a report of the Executive Director, Children's Services, which sought approval for a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 iv of part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders, to allow the continuation of a contract with 'We are With You' to deliver on behalf of the Council, the Tri-Party Missing from Home and Care Service, for a period of one year from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

We are With You have been commissioned to deliver the PAN Cheshire Missing from Home and Care Service, since July 2018. The Service operated across Halton, Warrington and Cheshire West and Chester, and the contract was due to end on 30 June 2024. The reasons for the proposed one year contract extension to 30 June 2025 were set out in the report and the three local authorities had agreed to continue with a joint commissioning approach with Halton acting as the lead.

RESOLVED: That approval be given for a waiver in compliance with Procurement Standing Order 1.14.4 iv of part 3.1 and 3.2 of Procurement Standing Orders to allow the continuation of a contract with We are With You to deliver on behalf of the Council, the Tri-Party Missing from Home and Care Service, for a period of one year from 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Executive Director of Children's Services
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Children & Young People
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Annual Report 2023/2024
<b>WARD(S)</b>	All

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

- 1.1 To receive the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board's Annual Report for 2023/2024.

### **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 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

None identified.

#### **6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

None identified.



**6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

The annual report identifies the key actions taken by the CYP Policy and Performance Board and plans for 24/25.

**6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

None identified.

**6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future**

None identified.

**6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

None identified.

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

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 2023 – March 2024**

Children's services in Halton are undergoing a period of change and improvement. This is being led by a new leadership team who have quickly identified areas for improvement, strategies for this improvement and the operational necessities underpinning the strategies.

A topic group composed of members of the PPB has been meeting with the leadership team to scrutinise every aspect of the plan. Whilst this work was ongoing an ILACS report was published. The contents of this report were very disappointing.

However, within the report the inspectors noted that plans were in place to make the improvements necessary to ensure that we will be fulfilling our responsibilities to children, families and young people in the borough.

The PPB will continue to scrutinise existing plans and any plan that follows from the findings of the inspection report. The PPB has every confidence in the members of the new leadership team and the plans underpinning their work.

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 focus has been around the stability of senior leadership, securing a permanent workforce and the action taken following both the Local Area SEND Inspection and the Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services. Regular updates were also provided on the creation of the new Corporate Plan.

### **June 2023**

The Board received a presentation, on the approach being taken to 'The Big Conversation' which would underpin the formulation of a new corporate plan.

Clarity was sought on the engagement of Children and Young People in the formation of the plan and assurances were given on schools being integral to the 'conversation'.

A report was presented by the Operational Director for Children's Social Care detailing the work undertaken to date in relation to the Children's Services Improvement Plan, which was being refreshed to reflect latest findings. A priority relating to securing a more stable, permanent workforce was agreed.

The Board considered a report on the expansion of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision through the creation of new Resource Base Provision, as well as the development of a new SEMH free school, due to open in September 2024. Challenge was given around the number of places which this would provide, but clarity and assurances were provided on the other steps being taken alongside school leaders.

### **September 2023**

The board welcomed representatives from Halton Carer's Centre who provided a presentation and updates on the work of the centre and the impact it has on families. The board expressed concern for young carers welfare, those who are not identified as well as the high proportion of unpaid carers, and challenged leaders to ensure that action was taken to work with schools and wider services in resolving some of the areas identified.

An update was given on the leadership in Children's Services and the substantive appointments being made. The 12 week plan was shared and the action taken to date.

The unvalidated attainment outcomes for Halton's schools was provided,— with questions asked relating to foreign languages at GCSE, and the provision in borough for Post 16. The board received an update on the work on the Priority Education Investment Area and the proposals for the Delviering Better Value Grant.

### **November 2023**

The Board received the Annual Report of the Headteacher of the Virtual School, which provided the educational outcomes and achievements of Halton's Children in Care (CIC), the impact of the work of the Virtual School and the key areas of focus for the 23/24 academic year.

The Board received a presentation from the Chief Executive's Delivery Unit on the 'Big Conversation' and the responses received to date. Challenge was given on the how all areas of the borough were being engaged with to ensure an accurate picture was formed and concerns raised on the importance of not raising expectations when prioritising the use of limited funding.

The Board received the Sufficiency Duty Report for 2023-24.

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, particularly with the expansion of free childcare from April 2024.

**January 2023**

The Board received a presentation on the findings of the 'Big Conversation' and the publication of the Corporate Plan. A focus was placed on the engagement of young people and the percentage of respondents in the 16-19 year old category.

The Board considered a report and received a presentation, which summarised the key work taking place locally and at a regional level to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. The board noted and celebrated the work of the educational psychology service in Halton.

A report was presented on the work of the Family Hubs. The national context was shared alongside the work within Halton. Members, overall, were pleased to hear the success of the hubs and expressed an interest in further updates on the impact for families in the following cycle.

Following the validation of educational outcomes, a report was provided on the key performance measures. Questions were discussed around the cuts to Local Authority funding to support schools, and actions taken to engage Governors in the changes.

As part of its overview, the Policy and Performance Board also considered the Council's Executive Board 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>	9 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Executive Director of Children's Services
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Children & Young People
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Children's Social Care update
<b>WARD(S)</b>	Boroughwide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To provide a presentation on the progress against OFSTED findings and Agency staffing

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That**

**1) the report be noted**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 A presentation will be given during the meeting to share the progress made in the areas identified by OFSTED as areas for improvement, including workforce stability.

4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The areas identified for improvement will result in review of policies and processes within the council to ensure continued improvement.

5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Budgetary decisions will be required but after appropriate scoping of the improvement areas. Saving will be made across specific areas including; placements and agency staff.

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

6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

The improvement areas will positively impact on this priority

6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

The improvement areas will positively impact on this priority

6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

The improvement areas will positively impact on this priority

6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

The improvement areas will positively impact on this priority

6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**

NA

6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

The improvement areas will positively impact on this priority

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Progress against each of the priorities identified within the plan will be tracked and inform future reports to the Policy & Performance Board.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The improvements consider Equality and diversity issues.

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.

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Executive Director of Children's Services
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Children and Young People
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	SEND Improvement Plan and Parent Survey
<b>WARD(S)</b>	Boroughwide

## 1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To provide a presentation on the progress made against the Improvement Plan and findings of recent Parent Survey.

## 2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That**

- 1) the plan be noted; and
- 2) the Board determines actions following survey findings.

## 3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 A presentation will be given during the meeting to share the progress made against the SEND Improvement Plan and the findings of a recent parent survey.

## 4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The priorities identified within the plan are reflected within the Key Performance Indicators measured within the quarterly monitoring reports.

## 5.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Budgetary decisions over 2024-2027 will be informed by the priorities identified within the plan, alongside the work of within the Delivering Better Value project.

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

### 6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

The SEND Improvement Plan is informed by Halton's Children and Young Peoples Plan and includes all partners across the borough.

- 6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**  
The SEND Improvement Plan considers the opportunities within the borough for Preparation for Adulthood and meeting the needs of all learners.
- 6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**  
The SEND Improvement Plan is influenced by the findings of the recent Ofsted report and reflects the key priorities within the Children and Young Peoples Plan 2024-2027.
- 6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**  
The SEND Improvement Plan looks to support all Children and Young People with Special Education Needs or a Disability.
- 6.5 **Working Towards a Greener Future**  
None.
- 6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**  
The SEND Improvement Plan is informed by Halton's Corporate Plan and reflects its key priorities for a Safer Halton for Children and Young People.
- 7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**
- 7.1 Progress against each of the priorities identified within the plan will be tracked and inform future reports to the Policy & Performance Board.
- 8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**
- 8.1 None raised.
- 9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**
- 9.1 None Identified.
- 10.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**
- 10.1 None under the meaning of the Act.



**REPORT TO:** Children, Young People & Families PPB

**DATE:** 9<sup>th</sup> September 2024

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Executive Director of Children's Services

**PORTFOLIO:** Children and Young People

**SUBJECT:** Supporting Families Update

**WARDS:** Borough wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To provide an update of the Supporting Families Programme

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION:**

2.1 **The report be noted**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **3.1 Department for Education Update**

3.2 The programme from April 2024 has transferred to the Department Of Education from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) . This move forms part of the government's ambitious set of reforms to drive improvement in the way they support families and protect children, as set out in the Implementation Strategy for children's social care reform, Stable Homes, Built on Love. The transfer of Supporting Families to DfE will enable the Education Secretary to deliver a coordinated, whole system of support for children and families, as well as ensuring services are sustainable for local government. The programme's model of stepping beyond single policy agendas to drive local integration and whole family support will be key for the reforms around Family Help.

3.3 As yet the Department of Education has not confirmed if the supporting families programme will continue so as it stands the programme will therefore end on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

3.4 The redevise Supporting Families Outcomes Framework sets out ten headline outcomes. Below these outcomes sit descriptors of the family needs that make up the eligibility criteria for the Supporting Families programme, as well as suggested data sources for identifying families with these needs.

3.5 Each family must demonstrate a minimum of three eligibility criteria or family needs as set out in the national Supporting Families Outcomes Framework.

The framework also includes predetermined outcomes that must be achieved with all families before a successful family outcome is submitted. The 10 headline outcomes are:

- Getting a good education
- Good early years development
- Improved mental and physical health
- Promoting recovery and reducing harm from substance use
- Improved family relationships
- Children safe from abuse and exploitation
- Crime prevention and tackling crime
- Safe from domestic abuse
- Secure housing
- Financial stability

Safe from Domestic Abuse

Family Need	Data Source	Outcome	Evidence
Family affected by domestic abuse or inter-personal violence and abuse - historic, recent, current or at risk (victim)	Police data Notification via Operation Encompass (for affected children) Information from practitioner assessments, contacts and referrals, including self-referral	Domestic abuse has stopped  Victim has a clear safety plan in place and knows how to seek help, victim feels safe at home  <b>AND</b>  Victim has received (or is receiving) appropriate support	No incidents of domestic abuse in the month prior to closure, and no referral into services for 6 months following closure  <b>AND (at least one of the below)</b>  Victim engaged with local multi-agency partnership arrangements  Practitioner or self-assessment (e.g., DASH / reduction in risk tool)
Adult in the family is a perpetrator of domestic abuse	Police data Notification via Operation Encompass (for affected children) Information from practitioner assessments, contacts and referrals, including self-referral	Domestic abuse has stopped  <b>AND</b>  Perpetrator understands crime, and impact on the victim(s) (including children), and is engaging with perpetrator support	No incidents of domestic abuse in the month prior to closure, and no referral into services for 6 months following closure  <b>AND (at least one of the below)</b>  Where available, perpetrator engaged with specialist programmes  Perpetrator engaged with local multi-agency partnership arrangements  Practitioner or self-assessment (e.g., DASH / reduction in risk tool)
Child currently or historically affected by domestic abuse	Police data Notification via Operation Encompass (for affected children) Information from practitioner assessments, contacts and referrals, including self-referral	Domestic abuse has stopped  Child feels safe at home  <b>AND</b>  Child has received appropriate support	No incidents of domestic abuse in the month prior to closure, and no referral into services for 6 months following closure  <b>AND (at least one of the below)</b>  Child engaged with specialist/ therapeutic support

3.6 A refreshed Early Help System guide has been published in March 2025 following collaboration with local authorities and other government departments. It's a self-assessment tool to support discussion, reflection and action planning against key areas that influence the effectiveness of Early Help. It aims to provide a framework for local workshops, partnership conversations and strategic planning and to support prioritisation around Early Help.

### 3.7 Halton Position

- 3.8 For Halton, the practice commitment is still the same, supporting vulnerable families via whole family support from a lead professional where families are experiencing multiple complex problems. The partnership will continue to identify families in need of extra help, target services more effectively and track family level outcomes over the long term.
- 3.9 Halton's had previously submitted an Early Help system guide in 2022 at this time the self-assessment score was a 2 within the data model section. Given this benchmark Halton could only pick descriptors from the data section of the guide. These descriptors were around case management systems, having better ways to analyse our information to use data to commission services to in line with the supporting families programme. Work that was delivered during 2022 this included work with the eclipse team to ensure that all individual indicators and outcomes at an indicator level are embed from notification/ assessments to closure. Working with HBC IT to develop of a data warehouse to assist with data matching. We also recruited an additional data tracking officer to ensure capacity with the additional requirements on data collection and quality assurance. We also reviewed data to support commissioning decisions using the funds from the Supporting Families programme to commission services around domestic abuse, parenting support, and benefit and debt advice.
- 3.10 Halton in July 2023 submitted an new Early Help system guide which fed back on the progress of 2022 priorities and confirmed Halton's 2023 priorities which were:
- **Family engagement: We have well established mechanisms to gather and act on feedback from families and engage people with lived experience in service design, governance, and quality assurance.** A mature area has a range of methods to collect feedback from families (all children, young people, parents, carers and significant others) including but not limited to:
    - From families during and following support given as part of a Family Plan reflecting whole family working principles. This feedback relates to the work of all parts of the Early Help System.
    - From families who have not accessed support e.g. families who have been offered help and refused, those who needed help and weren't able to get it, and those who have needs but haven't come to the attention of services.
    - From families from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This feedback is used as learning to support changes in how the whole system works together.
  - **Access to support: We have evidence that families say they know how to navigate local services and how to get help.** A mature area has digital solutions such as a service directory, social media and also roles such as community connectors and service access points which provide accessible

opportunities for families to understand and access the support available. Each solution should take an approach which ensures there is 'no wrong door' for families accessing support.

- **We have a model of place-based or hub-based working in the community with a common footprint. Partners are integrated either virtually or physically in e.g. family or community hubs. The model helps underpin the principles of whole family working.** In a mature area families are able to easily identify where to go for help in their local community, when they make contact they experience a welcoming response where 'asking for help' is seen as normal. The response will enable the needs of the whole family to be explored and the family are helped to seamlessly access all the help they need, including a Lead Practitioner if needed. Where hubs exist they are a fundamental and fully integrated part of the Early Help System. The local offer is responsive to the diverse needs within the local community and is proactive in removing barriers to access to enable inclusion for all.

3.11 Halton has just undertaken a partnership session to work with managers and practitioners on what we have achieved so far with real examples so interventions to show the difference it has made. The session also looked forward at what was needed and how we would deliver on this in line with the priorities in the new Early Help Strategy also taking into account the family hub model. This information has been used to complete the early help guide for 2024 which was submitted on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024. It has been agreed that Halton will use the same descriptors from 2023 for the next 12 months to continue to support and embed the work of family hubs.

### 3.12 **Performance**

3.13 Halton has achieved targets set by the DLUHC across all phases of the programme, achieving 100% year on year since the start of the programme, enabling the Local Authority to maximise on the income available. The annual report published in Spring 2021 highlighted of the 140 areas that recorded PBR only 19% (27 areas) achieved 100% PBR of which Halton was one.

3.14 The Halton Supporting Families team continue to be supported by our internal audit team with selected audit days to dip sample 10% of the families that we highlighted have achieved successful outcomes in order to claim PBR. Halton has successfully achieved 100% PBR for 23/24 with an income of £283,200.

3.15 The national Supporting Families team will continue to conduct assurance visits to make sure that all areas are adhering to and progressing against the programme sign up conditions. Halton was visited by the Department of Education in July 2024 and feedback was positive.

### 3.16 **Financial Position**

3.17 Halton's funding agreement gives an indicative funding amount each year as a 'core' element to support the resourcing of the programme plus an 'target' for each year of the families that we can claim successful outcomes for under a payment by results (PBR) scheme, each successful outcomes relates to £800 per family PBR payment. The numbers for 24/25- 438 families, making a potential income of £301,600.

3.18 Due to the success of the programme in Halton with agreement from Management Team the PBR funds have been 'ring fenced' and the reserves rolled over to support key elements in line with the ethos of the programme. The funding has been mapped until March 2026 using the reserves not taking into account PBR payments for 24/25.

3.19 The funding is currently being used for:

- Support staff TF co-ordinator, 3 data officers, (0.5 is being used to support family hub work, 0.5 to support domestic abuse duty and relevant funds are used for these elements), 1.4 performance officers ( one on secondment from police, one on maternity leave)
- HBC 1 Parenting post and 0.5 of a parenting officer post ( 0.5 match funded with DWP funds for reducing parental conflict)
- HBC 2 FTE Drug & Alcohol Family workers
- Supply costs for training Power Bi domestic abuse Gateway, DASH training
- Risk Resilience Project for vulnerable young people
- Work to support the digital offer for family hubs including SEND.

3.20 **Commissioned Services**

- Children Missing from Home and Care- Tri Party Cheshire arrangement until June 2025. Funds are allocated for a service provision until 2026.
- 12 month Contextual Safeguarding pilot
- 12 month pilot for 2 community support worker posts for family network meetings.
- Top up funding to support Family Hub work for Dads Matter and Parents in Mind.
- Children's Domestic Abuse Service until May 2025 with option to extend to May 2026 ( in line with new DA duty - Supporting Families funds are allocated for the extension)
- Adult perpetrator provision until March 2025 ( in line with new DA duty)
- Early help employment, benefit advice service until March 2025

3.21 Due to the complexity of the identification of families as we as the volume, at this stage for this first time Halton is looking unlikely that we will achieve 100% PBR for this final year.

3.22 **Case study**

3.23 There is a Widnes family that consists of Mum, stepdad, 16yr old girl, 14yr old boy, 5yr old boy living in a Halton Housing property (HHT). The family

had previously been open to social care a number of years ago due to family breakdown. The family were highlighted through the different data criteria of the programme around ASB, education issues and the 16yr old missing from home incidents. The family information was passed for the locality team in order for a MAP to be completed to have that holistic approach to identify the needs of the whole family. The family engaged positively and welcomed the additional support to help address key issues. Outcomes that were achieved:

- CAB support around debt management
- 16yr old 1-2-1 work around missing and life skills. Reduction in missing incidents. Improved attendance
- 14yr old worked with YOS divert programme. Reduction in ASB. Improved attendance
- 5yr old in Nurturing programme at school with 1-2-1 support
- Stepdad was referred by HHT Customers into Employment
- 69% reduction in calls for service to the Police over a three-month period -estimated cost savings of £64K
- 87.5% reduction in Missing from home -estimated costs saving £7K
- 79% reduction in ASB incidents and arrests- estimated cost saving of £55k (using police national costs)

#### **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 The Supporting families programme will have policy implications for the future implementation and delivery of services. These implications will need to be evidenced within individual action plans where necessary.

#### **5.0 OTHER/FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The Supporting Families Programme funding is subject to Halton Borough Council's continued participation in the programme and commitment to the sign-up conditions. The sign-up conditions set out the expectations for achieving successful family outcomes; essential resourcing of the programme; commitment to use the Early Help System Guide (EHSG) to help integrate and transform local public services to embed whole family working and re-balance the system; to commit sufficient development and analytical resource to the programme; and to deliver the required milestones for increasing data maturity.

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

##### **6.1 Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

The programme will support people to access relevant services to improve their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

**6.2 Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

The programme is integrated with employment and learning based initiatives, this includes a Supporting Families employment advisor for DWP.

**6.3 Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

The Supporting Families programme is intended to address crucial factors for children and young people in challenging circumstances not meeting their potential.

**6.4 Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

The programme provides support to vulnerable young people and families to assist them to access appropriate service provision within their local communities. This links to satisfaction with services and overall perception of the area in which people live.

**6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future**

None.

**6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

None.

**7.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 The change in the new Supporting Families criteria from September 2023 will make it a challenge for local authorities to identify and claim payment by results for successful outcomes.

7.2 The LA needs to consider the position of the Supporting Families programme as part of the early help offer so that we can continue to embed the necessary changes to recording and evidence the impact not just families but the progress of the programme.

7.3 Securing the commitments of partners is a key issue particularly around the use of data. We need to quickly implement this as a key part of the Early Help partnership

**8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 The Supporting Families programme will not impact upon any equality and diversity issues as all relevant protected characteristics would be unaffected by the programme.

9.0 **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None are applicable.

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

10.1 **'None under the meaning of the Act.'**



<b>REPORT TO:</b>	Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
<b>DATE:</b>	9 <sup>th</sup> September 2024
<b>REPORTING OFFICER:</b>	Executive Director of Children's Services
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Children & Young People
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Performance Management Report for Quarter 1 2024/25
<b>WARD(S)</b>	Boroughwide

## 1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE 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 2024 to 30 June 2024.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2024/25 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
- 1.3 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 **RECOMMENDATION: 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 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

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.

6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

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 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

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.

6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

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 **Working Towards a Greener Future**

None.

6.6 **Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

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 2024-25

### 1.0 Introduction

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

### 2.0 Key Developments

#### 2.1 **Childcare Expansion**

The childcare expansion is continuing to be rolled out. From April 2024, 2-year-olds of eligible working parents were entitled to 15 hours free early years education, the May 2024 headcount showed that 503, 2-year-olds took up places under this new entitlement. This extends to working parents of nine months olds from September 2024 and expands to 30 hours for all eligible children over 9 months old from September 2025. Our current forecast shows we have sufficient places for 2's and 3 and 4-year-olds across the borough to meet the demands for September 2024, thereby not negatively impacting the availability of spaces for disadvantaged eligible 2-year-olds. However, HBC forecast indicate there may not be sufficient places by September 2025. To monitor the uptake of the expansion and ensure sufficiency of places we will be looking to collect occupancy and vacancy numbers termly as the expansion rolls out. HBC communication team have supported promoting the childcare expansion to working parents, in addition to the recruitment campaign for childminders and pilot financial incentive scheme for new and return employees to the sector to support workforce development. Communication resources including posters, banners and digital media are being distributed to Early Years Providers, Schools, Family Hubs, Riverside college and other key local areas. Schools and Providers have been asked to make an expression of interest for a Capital Grant to aid with the expansion of early years and wraparound childcare. Communication will be sent out in the Autumn term with further application details.

#### 2.2 **Wraparound Programme**

Following the recruitment of Wraparound Care Co-ordinator and Strategic Wraparound Care Co-ordinator, work has begun to engage schools and settings with the programme. Initial online briefings were held in May (attended by 18 schools and settings), information was shared at the Headteacher briefing in June and one-to-one meetings have taken places with 21 schools and settings, with a further 5 arranged for July. Expressions of interest were sought from all school and settings - 24 expressions of interest have been returned to date. In line with DfE deadlines the Wraparound Delivery Plan was submitted to Childcare Works/DfE on 12th June, we are currently awaiting approval of the plan. Once DfE approval of the Delivery Plan is received the Grant Funding Application process will begin.

#### 2.3 **Discharge of Child in Care Order Team**

Following successful recruitment campaign, Children in Care Service are now in process of onboarding one fixed term Practice Lead and two fixed term Social Workers. Go 'live' planned for September 2024.

This new team will proactively work to identify children who could be discharged from care, hold a review to establish whether a care order is still needed or whether another type of support can best meet their needs, and then take the appropriate action.

The team will aim to:

- Increase the number of children able to live a safe and normal life at home, without the stigma attached to being a child in care.
- Mitigate the costs associated with a child in care able to be discharged.
- Reduce the number of children in care overall.

#### 2.4 **Children Services Residential Estate Redesign**

Halton County Council has a statutory duty to ensure there is a range of provision available, sufficient to meet the needs of the children and young people in the care of the local authority. Nationally there are significant challenges around adequate provision, and something that is recognised as a challenge in Halton.

There is no single solution to address this challenge. Nationally, and within Halton, there is a focus on supporting children to remain safely with their families and increasing local foster carer provision. As outlined in Halton's Children's Services Directorates Placement Sufficiency Strategy 2024- 2027 the option to develop in-house children's home provision forms part of the overall solution. Currently within Halton we have limited accommodation options with only a respite provision in Inglefield and a semi-independent accommodation in Lavender House.

Halton's Placement Sufficiency Strategy, along with the TDU Provision, Services & Placements workstream sets out an ambition that supports the directorate to deliver inclusive services, that meet the needs of Halton's children and young people, through the commissioning of a diverse range of accommodation, by implementing a co-production model that engages with our children and families to ensure provision that meets the needs of local children. The ambition of the service is to ensure that by continuing to improve accommodation provision within the borough, it will contribute to improving educational outcomes, aspirations and job opportunities for our children and contribute to Halton's young people becoming happy, safe and successful adults within the area they live rather than out of borough.

To do this work has been undertaken to scope, identify and address immediate, medium and long term accommodation needs and to develop and put in place specific project plans to develop the identified provision. Halton that children deserve the opportunity to have the right placement in the right place, which is in their best interests.

The programme of work to increase internal provision across Halton is a joint initiative with collaboration between the Children in Care Service, Halton Borough Council Commissioning Team and the Transformation Delivery Unit (TDU).

- 2.5 **Family hubs:** Halton has launched first Family Hub with Kingsway Family Hub which was launched in July 2023 and In October 2023 we launched Runcorn Family Hubs. Warrington road and Ditton hubs will be launched towards the end of September 2024. Excitingly, Halton is one of 75 local authorities to be eligible for Family Hub funding to transform existing provision into family hubs model and framework. Early help leads coordinate the hub

offer and working closely with all partners to deliver the new model. A steering group has been set up and will progress the different work streams and feed into the group.

Branding is now in place which was coproduced with children and families. Governance structure of accountability has been suggested and ready for management sign off. The vision is that a starting well strategic governance 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. Halton Family Hubs has been recognised nationally due to the innovative practice and progress made on the family hub offer. We have been commended for the infant feeding work and the perinatal baby showers, In January 2024 we had a visit from the Secretary of State of Education the right honourable Gillian Keegan MP. This highlights the dedication and hard work of all the partnership working.

## 2.6 **Family Hubs Digital**

The family hubs online launched in July 2024; this is a one stop shop of information guidance advice for all families to be able to access. There is also an APP available to download giving families information at their fingertips. The digital platform has been co produced with families in particular young people. The platform has been now running for 3 weeks and early indication are exceptional with almost 12,000 hits on the site in the first 5 days. The information will expand over the coming months.

## 2.7 **Cradle to Career**

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 Multi-Disciplinary team (MDT) will work from Halton lea library. The programme has completed the discovery phase and has now moved into dedicated steering groups looking at education and wider services. The Right to Succeed education strand continues to make good progress, with services and activities commissioned and agreed with all schools and delivery successfully underway in 100% of identified schools within the region, A report will go to SLT at the end of July to integrate social care into the Multi-disciplinary team.

## 2.8 **Development of Café opening in Brookvale Family Hub**

An opportunity has arisen to re-open the café at Brookvale family hub using community resources.

By establishing the Brookvale Family Hub kitchen, schools and young people in Halton can benefit immensely through practical skills development, work experience, and community engagement, ultimately contributing to breaking the cycle of poverty and social deprivation in the area, Schools, Colleges and services have expressed an interest in supporting this venture including:

- Cavendish High Academy
- Riverside College
- Ashley High School
- Halton Borough Council Supported Internships
- Halton Borough Council Adult Learning

We envisage that there will be additional opportunities for other schools and services to become involved at a later date including Children in Care and Care Leavers.

### **Opportunities and benefits for schools include;**

**Enhanced Curriculum** – Practical Skills Integration: Incorporate culinary skills into the curriculum, providing hands-on learning experiences that align with food technology and life skills subjects. Cross-disciplinary Learning: Use the kitchen for math lessons (measuring ingredients), science (chemical reactions in cooking), and health (nutrition education)

**SEND Inclusion** - Tailored Programs: Develop specific programs catering to the needs of SEND students, ensuring inclusivity and personalised learning experiences. Individual Support: Provide additional support staff or specialised trainers to assist SEND students in the kitchen.

**Community Engagement** - School-Community Projects: Develop projects where students cook for community events, enhancing their sense of contribution and civic responsibility. Parental Involvement: Engage parents in workshops and events, fostering a stronger school-community connection.

**Structured Placements:** Offer structured work experience placements for students, giving them a real-world context for their learning. Career Pathways: Create pathways into catering and hospitality careers, partnering with local businesses for further opportunities.

**Opportunities and benefits for Young People include:**

**Skill development** - Culinary Skills: Learn practical cooking skills that are essential for independence. Life Skills: Gain essential life skills, such as budgeting, planning, and teamwork. Employability Skills: Develop employability skills including time management, communication, and customer service.

**Work Experience** - Real-World Experience: Gain firsthand experience in an industrial kitchen setting, enhancing their resumes. Career Exploration: Explore various roles within the culinary and hospitality industry.

**Community Connection** - Social Inclusion: Build connections with peers and community members, reducing isolation and promoting social skills. Community Service: Participate in community service projects, fostering a sense of responsibility and pride in their contributions.

**Personal Development** - Confidence Building: Increase self-esteem and confidence through mastering new skills and receiving positive feedback. Independence: Foster greater independence, particularly valuable for SEND students preparing for adult life

**Health and Well-being** - Nutrition Education: Learn about healthy eating, which is crucial in a deprived area where nutritional knowledge may be limited. Mental Health Benefits: Engaging in structured activities can improve mental health and provide a sense of routine and purpose.

**Opportunities and benefits for the community include:**

Family support - Access to Affordable Meals: Provide affordable or free meals to families in need, alleviating some of the financial burdens of the cost of living crisis. Cooking Classes: Offer cooking classes to parents and guardians, promoting healthy eating and budgeting. Engagement opportunity for families coming into the environment in a discreet and non-stigmatising way.

Community Hub - Meeting Place: Establish the kitchen as a community hub where people can gather, learn, and support each other. Resource Centre: Provide additional resources and support services, such as food banks, job search assistance, and educational workshops.

Local Economy - Job Creation: Potentially create jobs within the hub for community members, boosting the local economy. Business Partnerships: Form partnerships with local businesses for supply chains and sponsorships, fostering a stronger local economy.

- 2.9 **Mockingbird** fostering programme is a project across 8 LA's designed to give greater support to carers in order to reduce the risk of placement instability for children. The LA is in the process of recruiting to the constellation carer. The constellation carer will offer support to other carers in the hub which includes emotional support, advice and guidance and respite. The LA has successfully recruited to the Practice Lead post for the constellation hub offering management oversight to the Constellation. The DFE awarded grant of 2.3 million is being split in its investment to support carers and children and improve recruitment of carers across the pilot footprint.

### 3.0 Emerging Issues

#### 3.1 Early Help and support

The lack of partnership approach to early help and support has led to a high majority of workload in locality teams and early help in family hubs led by LA. This has led to increased caseloads for staff and the service which has managed well in the past but is now stretched to full capacity.

#### 3.2 Post 16 Provision

Lack of Post 16 provision in Halton for young people who need a small environment, part timetables or to access provision part way through an academic year has been an emerging issue for over 12 months. An application for additional provision was made to the Department for Education in May 2024 prior to the announcement of the general election. On submission of the application an outcome was anticipated by June. Since the election was announced the Department for Education have been unable to give a timeline for when we will receive a decision.

#### 3.3 Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children

Kent County Council has recently notified the Northwest Regional Strategic Migration Partnership that they have triggered the 'Emergency Response Plan' (ERP) which is in place as part of the High Court judgement in [ECPAT]. Therefore, it is expected very high numbers of arrivals over the next couple of days/weeks.

This means Halton Children's Social Care are likely to be asked to make advance offers of accommodation to meet demand.

### 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	23/24 Actual	24/25 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr. Prev Year	Quarterly Progress
PED01 01	Increase the number of early help assessments & interventions health/education and other partners are leading on	69	N/A	103	N/A	N/A
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Val Armor</i>            There are currently 103 MAPs open externally however all of these are for school and no MAPs are currently being led by Health. This will be scrutinised and challenged in the new Early Help Partnership Board. There is still much work to be done about the partnership approach to early help and support for families. Training is continually offered by locality teams to help and support partners with MAP's however there is still reluctance to engage in the lead professional role. The HOS for early help and Director of SC &amp; EH will address and monitor this closely over the next 6 months and to grow and develop the partnership in their role in early help and support to our Halton families .</p>						
PED01 02	Improve overall attendance at schools: Primary – Pri PRU – PRU Secondary – Sec Special – Spec Total			Primary 94.28% PRU 54.64% Secondary 90.48% Special 87.54% Total 92.33%	N/A	N/A
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton /Scott Middlehurst</i>            A number of schools have moved to from SIMS to Arbor software* from their School management Information Service system, since late May 2024 we have not had attendance data from these schools. The SIMS team and Arbor are working to resolve this. (*Ditton Primary, Kingsway Academy, St Michael with St Thomas, St Augustine's, Halton Lodge, The Cavendish, Blessed Acutis)</p>						

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED01a	<b>Work with schools to maintain the level of attendance at Primary and Secondary Schools.</b> Debbie Houghton (March 2024)	<b>U</b>
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Debbie Houghton</i>            Attendance is currently 94.28% in primary, 90.48% in secondary, 87.54% for special schools and 54.64% in the PRU. Some schools have switched to a different attendance data system so their data is not included. The Government have introduced changes for schools and the local authority under the Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance with a support first model to address attendance concerns but increased penalties if attendance continues to be a concern.</p>		
PED01b	<b>Implement Pause project and support women to make positive choices, improving their relationships with their children and preventing further children being taken into care.</b>	<b>U</b>
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Val Armor</i>            PAUSE in Halton is now 2 years old and we have celebrated an annual event highlighting the superb work that is being carried out. The project is already having a significant positive impact on the lives of the women involved. Funding for a further 12 months have finally been secured in March 2024. A plan is now in place to secure further funding from partners for 3-5 years. The new cohort of women for 24-25 have been contacted and are in the engagement process of the programme 90% of the women have already signed up to the programme. The HOS early help and Director hold quarterly monitoring meetings with the PAUSE team.</p>		

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
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 regular parenting events so far in June 2022, January 2023, April 2023, January 2024, June 24 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 two 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.</p> <p>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 five parenting assistants have now been recruited to, this will enhance the reducing parental conflict agenda. The borough continues to embed nurture principles through all of our parenting work across the workforce. The parenting team has made significant contribution to the development of the family hubs online journey where parents can get information advice and guidance at the click of a button. This will also enable parents to have better access to parenting support and be able to book online to parental groups.</p>		



Objective: Keeping Children and Young People safe by improving practice (PED02)						
Ref:	Measure	23/24 Actual	24/25 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Year	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)	600	500 (full year)	664		
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> Sarah Ellison</p> <p>The current target set is an old target which is due to be reviewed.</p> <p>The current data reflects that the authority is receiving more referrals for Child Assessment compared to last year. We are still below our statistical neighbours whose rate is 737 however we are above the England rate of 545. We know from speaking to partner agencies such as Police they have seen an increase in demand, and they are our main referrer. We are continuing to see children referred for assessment that have had no Multi Agency Plan (MAP) in place prior to referral despite the concerns raised in the referral. This is an area of work which the Early Intervention board will be focusing on as some referrals for statutory intervention could have been avoided through partner agencies coordinating a MAP at an earlier stage. The board will also look at step downs as some partner agencies are reluctant to lead on a MAP which creates challenges when they are best placed i.e. have the relationship with the child / family.</p> <p>The Duty &amp; Assessment team continue to work closely with the locality and early years teams to support with step downs to MAP and we are starting to see the benefits of this work with an increase in step downs to locality teams and children and families accessing the family hubs. This means that children and families receive timely and targeted intervention and are less likely to be referred / re referred for statutory intervention.</p>						
PED02 02	Monitor the rate of children in need (open cases including care leavers) per 10,000. 0-18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	457 (prov)	500	370		
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> Jamie Pope</p> <p>See below for CIC</p>						

Ref:	Measure	23/24 Actual	24/25 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Year	Quarterly Progress
PED02 03	Monitor the rate of children subject to a child protection plan per 10000 0–18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	54 (prov)	45	50		
PED02 04	Monitor the rate of children in care per 10000 0–18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	139 (prov)	90	137		

*Supporting commentary: Jamie Pope*

*Our rate per 10,000 of Children in Care is at 137.2 (378 children). The updated benchmarking rate for Stat Neighbors (22-23) is now at 125 per 10,000. To achieve this rate, we would need to reduce our CIC population to 344 Children, and to be in line with the updated England rate 71, we would need to reduce our CIC population 195. 6% of our CIC population are Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children.*

*It is encouraging CIC population continues to reduce, it is envisaged with the development of an 'edge of care' service and discharge of care order team further reduction in CIC population is likely, bringing us in line with our Statutory Neighbors.*

PED02 05	Reduce the number of children and young people who enter the care system (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	203 (prov)	68	22 (Q1)		
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*Supporting commentary: Andrew Jones*

*This quarter has shown positive results, with a reduction in the number of children entering the care system compared to the previous year. We are placing greater emphasis on entering pre-proceedings to help divert children from needing care. For those who do enter the system, by frontloading we aim to make permanence decisions more quickly – however it is too soon to say confidently that the frontloading is consistently effective.*

*We are also rethinking our approach to cases where care proceedings might historically have been initiated, often resulting in care orders that are likely to result in children staying at home. This is a culture shift thinking about how we hold and manage risk differently and providing support without resorting to court interventions.*

*To sustain and build on these improvements, implementing support services is critical, including an "edge of care" services and employ family network coordinators. Additionally, establishing a dedicated contact team/service will allow existing community support workers to engage more directly with children and families, preventing issues from escalating.*

*It is noteworthy that we are also addressing legacy issues, such as children experiencing extended periods under Child Protection Plans (CPP), sometimes on multiple occasions. Where appropriate and proportionate in these cases, swift action is taken, which may involve accommodating under Section 20 or initiating care proceedings. As we continue to shift our culture, address legacy issues, and await the implementation of additional support services, we anticipate fluctuations between quarterly reporting over the next 12 months.*








PED02 06	Reduce the average caseload in Children in Need Teams (snapshot end of quarter)	19	18	20		
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*Supporting commentary: Andrew Jones*

*Due to the recent reduction in children entering the care system and the ongoing regional and national challenges related to the duration of care proceedings, some children and young people who might have transitioned to other services remain in the Children in Need (CIN) category. Additionally, there are children and young people awaiting transfer to the Children in Care (CIC) service in the coming weeks and months.*

*To better manage the increasing complexity of cases and divert children from needing care or care proceedings, it is crucial to introduce roles and services such as edge of care, family network coordinators, and contextual safeguarding. While these measures may not directly reduce caseload numbers, they will provide social workers with the necessary support and additional capacity to effectively manage their workload.*


*Furthermore, there are a number of ASYE's due to start within the service in coming weeks and months given the inexperience they will have the increasing complexity of the work, we will need to think about the number of SW posts, whilst they are skilled up. This will support with average caseloads and skill up ASYE's effectively.*

Ref:	Measure	23/24 Actual	24/25 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Year	Quarterly Progress
PED02 07	Increase the proportion of missing incidents where a return interview is completed (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	60%	85%	66%		
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> Clare Hunt</p> <p>For this period, there have been 133 return interviews completed with 82 young people by the commissioned service. 66% of all incidents have had a return interview and 79% were completed within 72 hours, this is an increase from the previous quarter. The Declines for return interviews were 98 incidents by 30 young people.</p>						
PED02 08	Reduce the number of children who repeatedly run away in Halton (in last 12 months, snapshot end of quarter)	23	N/A	20		
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> Clare Hunt</p> <p>For this reporting period, there has been a total of 290 notifications from the commissioned service. There have been 20 young people with repeat missing incidents. These young people have made three or more incidents during the quarter, accounted for 62% of all missing incidents in the quarter. The repeat cohort was made up of 9 males and 11 females. The repeat cohort continues to have good engagement with the MFH service and will mainly engage with Return Home Interview's (RHI). For those who continue to decline RHI's, With You case workers have identified alternative ways to engage CYP including joint visits with social workers/lead professionals and offering alternative locations/methods of completing RHIs. The repeat cohort are known to Children's Social Care and other services due to having trigger meetings to discuss their individual circumstances and a plan of support for these CYP. Where RHI's have been declined, the attempts made have been clear on the decline form and a request for social worker to complete instead.</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	112		N/A
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> Clare Hunt</p> <p>The total missing incidents this quarter have increased by 70, with the total missing individuals also increasing from 100 to 112. The gender of CYP being reported missing remains equal in both age cohorts. Despite the increase of total missing individuals, caseworkers were able to complete 44% more return home interviews with individuals than quarter 4. During this quarter, caseworkers have focussed on completing return home interviews within 72 hours, which stands at 79% 2% increase from last quarter. The main reasons young people said they went missing this quarter was due to boundary issues at home or care, family conflicts or relationship issues. Caseworkers also identified further reasons of substance misuse, peer pressure, older peers, or mental health.</p> <p>The main things that young people said they experienced while away was poor safety planning, which is consistent with caseworkers' views along with substance misuse. For Young People who said that substance misuse or mental health was their reason for going missing, onward referrals were offered to support. For any young person with Child Criminal Exploitation/Child Sexual Exploitation indicators, the appropriate screening tools have been completed/contributed to and discussed in risk meetings. Advice &amp; information has been given to young people following return home interviews around these factors to prevent further missing incidents, including the use of portable chargers or the risks and dangers of having their phones switched off.</p>						
PED02 10	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) (snapshot end of quarter)	7 (prov)	20	21		
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> Andrew Jones/Jamie Pope</p> <p>There has been an increased focus on identifying and addressing the risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), as reflected in the latest data. However, further work is needed at the safeguarding partnership level to ensure that all agencies and services are consistently identifying and responding to CSE cases effectively. This issues has been flagged with the contextual safeguarding sub-group.</p> <p>It is also crucial to align local authority (LA) performance data with Child Sexual Exploitation and Online Grooming (CSOG) data to ensure consistency and accuracy in reporting. This alignment remains an ongoing focus.</p> <p>To strengthen our approach, we have recruited a contextual safeguarding coordinator, however they are at the early stages of the recruitment process, however once in post will support best practices in this area. Additionally, we are in the process of recruiting two Community Support Workers with a specific focus on contextual safeguarding. These roles will be instrumental in improving the identification of and support for young people at risk of CSE and CE.</p>						

Ref:	Measure	23/24 Actual	24/25 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Year	Quarterly Progress
PED02 11	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) (snapshot end of quarter)	39 (prov)	12	54		


*Supporting commentary: Andrew Jones/Jamie Pope*

*As above – other than to add CCE is better identified across the partnership/community.*

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


*Supporting commentary: Katherine Appleton*

Embedding the systemic social work model of practice has been hindered by previous staff instability and high rates of agency staff and therefore the core principals of systemic practice are utilised in Halton whilst the recruitment of permanent staff is being progressed. Warrington as a SLIP partner supported Halton to drive systemic practice across services and this has been complimented by a trauma informed approach to support. Trauma informed approaches to working with children and families has been delivered across the LA and included foster carers and schools, which compliments the development of the thrive model in our local schools.

PED02b	<b>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.</b>	
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*Supporting commentary: Katherine Appleton*

The workforce strategy has been reviewed and its core principals and outcomes to be achieved are being overseen by the workforce board. The SWA has completed a training needs analysis with the support of individual teams, and this will inform our training programme. Halton has improved the training offer to staff and is promoting the use of research in practice to support CPD's and build confidence across services implementing an approach of lunch time briefings and reflection sessions. The SWA has developed a training and support programme in line with the improvement plan targets, utilising a model of audit, train, review and targeted support. Additional training to a cohort of staff around assessment intervention and moving on for children who exhibit harmful sexual behaviour this is known as AIMs assessments, training is specific and balances the presenting behaviours of children whilst seeking to understand their experiences.

PED02c	<b>Implement redevised structure for children and need service to ensure better resilience and management accountability to provide a safe and structured environment for social workers.</b>	
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*Supporting commentary: Katherine Appleton*

The senior leaders are reviewing the delivery model for children's social care as a whole scale approach to service delivery rather than focusing on one area. A whole scale change in service delivery is required in order to improve outcomes for children and families in need of additional support. The TDU are supporting with the timelines and the senior managers. The whole scale re-design is required to ensure Halton is able to fulfil the identified requirements from the social care review completed in 2023. Whilst Halton are reviewing the model of delivery Senior managers have developed and improved the governance arrangements across the service providing more scrutiny around decision making to ensure appropriate and strengthened planning and support for children. The changes implemented have seen positive results with court proceedings reducing from 130 to 76 in just 4 months ensuring the right plans for children we work with.

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED02d	<b>Implement redevised quality and assurance framework to monitor improvements in practice.</b>	



Supporting commentary: Susanne Leece  
 Our Quality Assurance (QA) & Learning Framework enables us to robustly relate performance management data with quality assurance with three simple interrelated questions:  
 How much did we do? (Service activity),  
 How well did we do it? (Quality),  
 Did we make a difference to children’s lives? (Is anyone better off?).  
 Measuring the impact of our work at all levels across children’s services is crucial in closing the quality assurance loop and demonstrating the difference our services make to improving children’s outcomes. Each month we present the findings of our QA activity in an overview report, the purpose of this report is to support each service area to develop effective practice improvement responses and to provide measurement of previous improvement activity. There is peer scrutiny of service responses via our Aiming High meetings and findings are also presented to the Improvement Board to offer assurance about the quality of our practice.  
 During June and July 2024, we have been offering refresher training and additional support to Early Help and Children’s Social Care managers who are responsible for audit activity, this is delivered in 1:1 sessions with an independent auditor affiliated with the Local Government Association.

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

Ref:	Measure	23/24 Actual	24/25 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr. Prev Year	Quarterly Progress
PED03 01	Reduce the number of children who are placed in residential care (snapshot at end of quarter)	50	20	51		

Supporting Commentary Jamie Pope  
 Halton County Council has a statutory duty to ensure there is a range of provision available, sufficient to meet the needs of the children and young people in the care of the local authority. Nationally there are significant challenges around adequate provision, and something that is recognised as a challenge in Halton.  
 There is no single solution to address this challenge. Nationally, and within Halton, there is a focus on supporting children to remain safely with their families and increasing local foster carer provision. As outlined in Halton’s Children’s Services Directorates Placement Sufficiency Strategy 2024- 2027 the option to develop in-house children’s home provision forms part of the overall solution. Currently within Halton we have limited accommodation options with only a respite provision in Inglefield and a semi-independent accommodation in Lavender House.  
 Halton’s Placement Sufficiency Strategy, along with the TDU Provision, Services & Placements workstream sets out an ambition that supports the directorate to deliver inclusive services, that meet the needs of Halton’s children and young people, through the commissioning of a diverse range of accommodation, by implementing a co-production model that engages with our children and families to ensure provision that meets the needs of local children. The ambition of the service is to ensure that by continuing to improve accommodation provision within the borough, it will contribute to improving educational outcomes, aspirations and job opportunities for our children and contribute to Halton’s young people becoming happy, safe and successful adults within the area they live rather than out of borough.  
 To do this work has been undertaken to scope, identify and address immediate, medium- and long-term accommodation needs and to develop and put in place specific project plans to develop the identified provision. Halton that children deserve the opportunity to have the right placement in the right place, which is in their best interests.  
 Review of those children and young people who are identified as in need of a residential placement continues to ensure that only those children and young people who require this type of placement access / remain in such placements. Regular care planning and review meetings take place to ensure appropriate timely plans are in place for young people in order to achieve



permanence and independence as well as reviewing progress. As previously started, the newly formed cross departmental Resource Panel is now established and sits weekly. Panel now has standing member from the Finance team and Early Help which is providing additional scrutiny and enabling more thorough discussion and creative thinking. Next steps are for chair of panel to become standard member of continuing health care panel and link into other panels such as 'education' to ensure synergy between these decision-making panels becomes more robust and to identify opportunities for more joint and tripartite funding arrangements.

PED03 02	Reduce the number of children who are placed in independent fostering agencies (snapshot at end of quarter)	94	35	88		
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**Supporting Commentary:** Jamie Pope

Placement requests are authorised and tracked through a range of forums i.e. Resource Panel / Legal Gateway where sourcing Halton's mainstream foster carers is a primary focus. The current challenges with sufficiency are not unique to Halton and are the experience of all other Local Authorities across the UK .



All requests for a fostering placement on Eclipse go to the internal fostering team to ensure best use of resources as well as tracking against new applicants at an early stage and only after this is a referral made to the independent sector. This remains an ongoing area of focus and the fostering team are looking to strengthen their fostering recruitment for in house carer by being apart of Foster 4 and we are also now working collaboratively across the region and with the DfE & The Fostering Network to implement 'Mockingbird' a global award winning and pioneering programme to deliver sustainable foster care. It is an evidence-based model structured around the support and relationships an extended family provides. The model nurtures the relationship between children, young people and foster families supporting them to build a resilient and caring community.

PED03 03	Maintain the percentage of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (snapshot at end of quarter)	96%	95%	98%		
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**Supporting Commentary:** Jamie Pope

Accommodation suitability for the 17/18-year-old Relevant/Former Relevant Care Leavers has increased.

The Care leaver accommodation group (CLAG) continues to meet monthly and track young people alongside sourcing appropriate accommodation for them to transition into.

PED03 04	Increase the percentage of Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training (EET) (snapshot at end of quarter)	59%	65%	59%		
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**Supporting Commentary:** Jamie Pope

Halton's Leaving Care Service has experienced Principal Manager, Practice Lead, 10 Personal Advisors

A review of Care Leaver Service and offer is currently underway which includes informal consultation and formal two visit from Dfe National Advisor Care Leavers (Oct 2024). We are also in the process of introducing a second Practice Lead and Pathway Plan Independent Reviewing Officer.

Continued focus on working with the virtual school in sourcing appropriate EET opportunities and supporting Care Leavers to access them remains ongoing.

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	Residential 54% Leaving Care 96.8%	N/A	N/A
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**Supporting Commentary:** Kevin Greaves




Over the past 6 months there have been resource constraints in the placements team that has impacted on the ability to complete some planned quality monitoring visits. As a result, the team have prioritised accordingly and have scheduled in as many visits as possible on a rota basis and in relation to any specific need or issues. In addition to the planned visits there have been a number of responsive visits that have taken place linked to quality concerns from Professionals and in addition to the result of OFSTED inspection outcome reports. In March 2024, the vacant post of Placement Officer was successfully recruited which will provide the capacity required to deliver a more consistent quality monitoring function across a larger cohort of placements. As of June 2024, the team became fully resourced and is now in a position to deliver a more equitable service across placements. By the end of Q1 2024/25 these developments will have started to become embedded as the new placement officer starts to deliver this new way of working.

Ref:	Measure	23/24 Actual	24/25 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr. Prev Year	Quarterly Progress
PED03 06	Report on the budget spent on independent and out of borough placements for Children in Care (Forecast end of year) (Sarah Riley/Lucy Freaney)	Projected spend forecast for 2022/23. Residential £13,805,604.33 IFA £2,713,219.28 UASC Residential £1,550,840.21 IFA £189,878.55	Projected £9,583,822	£2,362,764	N/A	N/A



**Supporting Commentary:** Kevin Greaves

Several initiatives are being implemented to effectively manage and reduce spend on placements:

- Comprehensive market development exercise being undertaken to test the feasibility of new models of care across supported accommodation, children's homes & UASC provision.
  - Focused interrogation of the highest cost placements via a targeted cohort approach whereby an agreed selection of young people can be tracked in relation to spend and interventions at review.
  - Greater engagement with providers to understand the cost base of placements and how this is matched against need to determine best fit.
  - Staff training
  - Supported Lodgings, Commissioned Care Leavers Group and Training Flats
  - Reviewing 'CARE Cubed' model alongside Salford colleagues in peer support group.
- Consistent work being carried out with support from the Transformation & Delivery Unit to review cost.






Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED03a	<b>Ensuring all children in care achieve permanency in a timely way.</b>	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> Sarah Ellison</p> <p>A multi-agency permanence panel is now in place inclusive of social care, health, and education. The first meeting was held on the 26.04.24. The meetings were paused during May due to Ofsted however have resumed and continue to meet on a fortnightly basis. The panel have identified some children who are thriving in their parent's care which suggests they do not need to be in the care of the Local Authority. Assessments are being updated to reflect the multi-agency, child and family view and the family court will be invited to consider discharge from care.</p> <p>The panels focus remains children placed with parents and children who are S20. In the coming months we will broaden our focus to children on care orders.</p>		
PED03b	<b>Ensure that Safeguarding Unit escalate any delays or concerns using escalate policy.</b>	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> Susanne Leece</p> <p>The Safeguarding Unit use the dispute resolution process to ensure timely and effective planning for our Children in Care and for our 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 have not led to satisfactory resolution/progress in planning for an individual child.</p>		
PED03c	<b>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</b>	
<p><b>Supporting Commentary:</b> Kevin Greaves</p> <p>The children's commissioning team are visiting all existing providers as part of a targeted review programme to ensure value for money and adherence to performance indicators and quality assurance. In addition to this and as part of a new 'sufficiency approach' several new providers are being engaged who are new to Halton to develop greater choice in the market, drive down cost and improve quality. This work is being used to inform the development of the HBC Commissioning Strategy. The team is now fully resourced which will improve both the frequency and volume at which quality monitoring visits take place. This is a key step forward for the placement service.</p>		












Ref:	Milestones						Quarterly Progress
PED03d	<b>Through the quality assurance of Personal Education Plans (PEP), identify areas of need and support to improve outcomes for individual Children in Care</b>						
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Ben Holmes</p> <p>At the end of the Spring term, 93% of PEPs were completed, this is slightly lower than the previous term, Autumn 2023. By the end of Q1 we are on track to improve upon this for the summer term. Following our second multi-agency moderation during the summer term, PEPs continue to be graded consistently, which was corroborated by Ofsted during the ILACS Inspection.</p> <p>Overall, the PP+ spend continues to be mostly focussed on 1:1 tuition or social and emotional support. An analysis of PP+ spend linked to outcomes has been completed for the academic year so far and will be reported in the VS Annual Report 2023-24. This evidences that the identified areas of need are being supported through PP+. It also evidences that our year groups of most need, also have the highest spend, with progress being made in their outcomes. The roll out of the 2-year-old PEP has been successful, and whilst in its infancy, we are beginning to see the benefits of the Virtual School being included in care planning meetings to identify areas of need earlier.</p>							
<b>Objective: Improve the offer for children and young people with disabilities and those with Special Educational Needs (PED04)</b>							
Ref:	Measure	23/24 Actual	24/25 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr. Prev Year	Quarterly Progress	
PED04 01	Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plan assessments completed within 20 weeks (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	20%	75%	64.4%			
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Charlotte Finch</p> <p>The trajectory of improvement in this area continues. Our 12-month rolling improvement figure is above the national average. We are confident we will hit our 75% target, unless unexpected external factors impact on service. Delivery. All indicators are positive, and performance is improving on a week-by-week basis. Weekly monitoring and strong oversight and management supports this improvement.</p>							
PED04 02	Reduce the number of incidents of fixed term Suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	1489	500	2083	N/A	N/A	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Debbie Houghton/ Scott Middlehurst</p> <p>Data is 01/09/2023 to 30/06/2024</p> <p>Number of incidents of suspensions has increased from 1489 in 23/24 to the current figure of 2083. Team around the school meetings are continuing and data has showed a decrease in exclusions and suspensions for the children discussed but overall suspensions are increasing.</p>							
PED04 03	Reduce the number of children subject to fixed term suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	635	350	786	N/A	N/A	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Debbie Houghton/ Scott Middlehurst</p> <p>Data is 01/09/2023 to 30/06/2024</p> <p>The number of children suspended has increased from 635 to 786 and whilst suspensions have decreased for children discussed at team around the school, overall numbers are increasing with some children receiving multiple suspensions.</p>							
PED04 04	Reduce the number of children subject to a permanent suspension (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	44	30	62	N/A	N/A	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Debbie Houghton/ Scott Middlehurst</p> <p>Data is 01/09/2023 to 30/06/2024</p> <p>Number of permanent exclusions has increased from 44 at this point last academic year to 62 currently. Unfortunately, we are seeing a year-on-year increase in permanent exclusions and this year we have seen an increase in both primary and special school exclusions, whilst secondary has remained similar.</p>							

Ref:	Measure	23/24 Actual	24/25 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr. Prev Year	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	7.6% As of end of Q4	3.6%	7.5% As of end Q1		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Charlotte Finch</i> Our Delivering Better Value action plan is targeting this particular work stream, and we hope to see a reduction in this area by 2026, but realistically it is not likely to start to reduce before then.						
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	£227,577	N/A	N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary: Kevin Greaves/Claire Gurney</i> Numbers in-learning at NMISS settings has risen, with 123 pupils placed at 33 non-maintained and independent schools at the end of Q1, an increase of 4 children since Q4. The average placement cost has maintained at £61,047. Of the children on-roll their Primary Needs are: - 41 Cognition and Learning or ASC; SEMH – 70; Speech, Language and Communication – 5, and Visual Impairment – 7. Key Stages are: - KS1: 5, KS2: 17, KS3: 44, KS4: 45, KS5: 12. In Q1 2024/25 – 27 new non-maintained and independent special school search requests were received, of these 11 were parental requests. There are currently 33 open searches for NMISS schools, of these 8 are parental requests to consult with a NMISS school. CG						
PED04 07	Increase the percentage of children subject to EHCP placed in mainstream provision (snapshot end of quarter)	55.2% 668 of 1210 school aged as of Q4	65%	53.4% 668 of 1251 school aged as of end Q1		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Charlotte Finch</i> The number of children with EHCPs in Halton placed in mainstream settings is growing. We are not yet in line with our statistical neighbours, with a high number of children attending specialist settings, both in and out of borough						
PED04 08	Monitor the percentage of Special Schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	100%	100%	100%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</i> This continues to be an area of strength within Halton, with 100% of special schools graded good or outstanding.						
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)	100%	75%	Refer comment	N/A	N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary: Charlotte Finch</i> We continue to maintain our significant improvement in this area. Whilst we are unable currently to monitor assessment data for Children Subject to a Child Protection Plan children, we are closely monitoring the assessment performance of children in care. Performance has significantly improved in this area.						

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.	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Charlotte Finch</i> SEMH remains the second highest area of need in Halton. The Strategy on SEMH requires revision following the successful establishment of additional resource bases for SEMH and the opening of the new Free School. In addition to this, we		


Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
<p>recently secured a Delivering Better Value (DBV) grant of £1m, and our action plan focusses heavily on SEMH, and contains many new initiatives to support this group of vulnerable learners, such as Thrive and Team Teach. We believe our DBV work will transform the offer for SEMH learners exponentially. This will need to be reflected in a refreshed SEMH strategy</p>		
PED04b	<p><b>Review the current framework of support for children and young people with disabilities, including short breaks provision</b></p>	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Claire Gurney  Short Breaks – monitoring visits to Short Breaks funded providers continues in collaboration with Short Breaks for Disabled Children’s Service, with the Saturday Friendship Group monitored in Q1 2024/25. Positive feedback was gathered from children and families during the visit. Q1 2024/25 performance information continues to be submitted, however final 2023/24 information shows that there has been an increase in the number of short breaks activity hours delivered rising from 5898 hours delivered in 2022/23 to 6473 hours in 2023/24. 2024/2025 is the last year of the current contracts and work has started to gather feedback on these services, with consultation events and a questionnaire being publicised during quarter 1 to gather feedback, which will inform the development of service specifications for April 2025. CG</p>		
PED04c	<p><b>Review direct payments with all recommissions co-produced with parents and young people.</b></p>	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Val Armor  All direct payments and recommission have been routinely reviewed with parents and carers. The current contracts are due for re commission in March 2025. Parental surveys have already been sent out on the effectiveness and impact of the current services. Workshops and provider days help the service to determine the offer and its effectiveness. All this will feed into the parent carer forum and re commission will commence in September in co production with families and service providers.</p>		
PED04d	<p><b>Improve quality and timeliness of Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP).</b></p>	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Charlotte Finch  The trajectory of improvement in this area continues. Our 12-month rolling improvement figure is 61%, which is above the national average. We are confident we will hit our 75% target, unless unexpected external factors impact on service Delivery. All indicators are positive, and performance is improving on a week-by-week basis. Weekly monitoring and strong oversight and management supports this improvement.  We are now launching Invision 360, which adds a robust level of Quality Assurance to the EHC assessment process and EHCPs. We are confident this will allow us to accelerate our improvement in this area and also will provide data which will allow us to evidence the improvement in quality.</p>		
PED04e	<p><b>Quality assure all provision currently being utilised to ensure that provision meets the needs of our children and young people.</b></p>	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Kevin Greaves/Claire Gurney  Non-Maintained and Independent Schools - at the end of Q1 2024/25 there were 123 children and young people in-learning at 33 non-maintained or independent schools. 75% of children placed are at a school that has been monitored. Of these settings - 30 schools have been inspected by either Ofsted or by the Independent Schools Inspectorate as outstanding, good or meets the Independent Schools Inspectorate standards; two schools require improvement, but meet the independent school standards, and one school meets the independent school standards, but awaits a graded inspection. CG</p>		
PED04f	<p><b>Review in borough specialist provision and revise to meet the needs of Halton’s children and young people</b></p>	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary:</u> Charlotte Finch  The first phase of the SEND Sufficiency Strategy has been delivered. Phase two of the strategy is now being coproduced with stakeholders. An additional 117 specialist places have been developed in partnership with our schools and settings. A new SEMH Free School will open its doors in September 2024, providing up to 36 additional specialist school places across Halton and St Helens. This will increase to 64 places in total by Sept 2026. Phase 2 of the SEND sufficiency strategy will look at the development of additional resource base places at secondary phase, in order to provide smooth transition from primary aged resource base. We are now in possession of forecasting data from data analytics company, MIME, which will allow more forensic planning in the next phase of the sufficiency strategy.</p>		

**Objective: Raise achievements across Early Years and all key stages, and diminish the difference between vulnerable groups and their peers (PED05)**

Ref:	Measure	23/24 Actual	24/25 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr. Prev Year	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)	93%	100% of eligible	92%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Sarah Campbell</i> 400 eligible 2-year-olds out of DFE target of 438 have been placed with an Early Years provider, including 5 children placed out of borough.						
PED05 02	Increase the take up of Early Years Entitlement for 3- to 4-year-olds.	89.9%	96%	87.6%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Sarah Campbell</i> 3- & 4-year-old uptake is currently 87.6% based upon May 2024 Headcount and NHS GP Registration data (May 2024) with DOB between 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2019 & 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2021.						
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)	97%	N/A	97.94%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Sarah Campbell</i> Published inspections as of 8 <sup>th</sup> July 2024 shows 97.94% of Early Years providers are good or outstanding or met. Out of these, 9 providers are outstanding, 75 providers are good and 11 are met. 1 Pre-School and 1 childminder have received a requires improvement judgement following inspection and are being supported by the Early years team.						
PED05 04	Monitor the percentage of Primary schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	76%	Dependent on Inspection dates	81.6% as of end Q1		N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</i> The number of primary schools graded good or outstanding continues to increase across Halton. The 18.4% of schools graded as inadequate or requires improvement are receiving support through the LA, via DfE 'Priority Education Investment Area' funding and through Multi-Academy Trust support.						
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%	Dependent on Inspection dates	62.5% As of end Q1		N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</i> Following a recent inspection report publication, the number of secondary schools graded good or outstanding has increased to 62.5%, with the 3 below this grading receiving intensive support through their Academy trusts.						
Ref:	Milestones					Quarterly Progress
PED05a	<b>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.</b>					
<i>Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes</i> ASIA Link Officers to maintained and faith schools who buy into the School Improvement SLA, as part of their termly visits, hold leaders to account for educational outcomes and progress of all pupils, especially disadvantaged and SEND. The Vulnerable Learners Partnership Board has been established to ensure there is strategic scrutiny and challenge to removes						

barriers to learning for our most vulnerable children and young people. The group also holds reflective to reviews to identify where improvements can be made.

Guidance is provided to school governors through the director's briefing and through governor briefings to enable them to fulfil their duties. The Virtual School tracks the outcomes for Looked After Children and during 23/24 will continue to expand this to also track Children with a Social Worker. Schools have also engaged with Peer to Peer SEND Reviews, including those with SEND resource base provision.


PED05c	<b>Review the process of risk assessment for schools and settings to target support and drive improvement.</b>	
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Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes

The SLA for school improvement was successfully launched in Q1. The SLA model has been developed in collaboration with school leaders and will launch from 1<sup>st</sup> April. We now have a school improvement website to support our new offer.


<https://haltonschoolimprovement.co.uk/>

From September, a new QA process will be launched with all schools, incorporating the attendance tracking meetings required through 'Working Together to Improve School Attendance 2024'

PED05d	<b>Build engagement, capacity and governors understanding of the strategic roles and responsibilities.</b>	
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Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes


Governor training and briefings were well attended in Q1. During workshops the governor roles and responsibilities were promoted in relation to being confident about their roles in relation HR and academisations. Further training from Ofsted is scheduled for 24/25 for Governors in Q2.

PED05e	<b>In partnership with schools, review and design an effective educational vision for the region that meets pupils needs whilst raising ambitions</b>	
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Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes

We have a continued focus on the work of the Priority Educational Investment Area plans. Key priorities include Early Years development, improving outcomes in reading and maths through all key phases and improving attendance. A focus of inclusion runs throughout all key priority themes.



The Children and Young People's Plan 2024-2027 will be published in Q2, which will drive our progress moving forwards as a collective partnership.

PED05f	<b>Launch Halton Learning Alliance (HLA) 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</b>	
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Supporting Commentary: Ben Holmes

The HLA has been paused for 23/24 to enable focus on the PEIA across the authority. Schools have now been clustered to ensure all benefit and develop greater collaboration between neighbouring schools. The HLA will be considered in the creation of the CYP Plan.







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





Ref:	Measure	23/24 Actual	24/25 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Year	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)	5.5%	5.5%	8%		

Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell

The number of young people not accessing education, employment or training continues to grow in Halton. This growth is greater than seen in other local authorities. Lack of post 16 provision in the borough impacts this and we are awaiting a decision from the Department for Education to commission a new Post 16 provider in Halton.

All young people who are not in education, employment or training are offered support via a Young People Caseworker, the scale of growth in the NEET cohort means the team caseloads are too high to support all individuals in a timely manner.

Ref:	Measure	23/24 Actual	24/25 Target	Current	Direction of Travel compared to same Qtr Prev Year	Quarterly Progress
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%	0.4%		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i>  <i>Good relationships with other services and making home visits to young people has allowed us to maintain contact with the cohort, resulting in a very small number of young people whose activity is not known to the local authority.</i></p>						
PED06 03	Increase the percentage of 16–17-year-olds with an offer of learning (September guarantee)	94.7%	94.7%	72.3%		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i>  <i>Whilst the current figure matches last year, if the gap in provision in the borough continues without a decision from the Department for Education, it is likely to result in fewer offers of learning for young people.</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)	88.5%	88.5%	86.1%		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i>  <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	<b>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</b>	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i>  <i>The monitoring allowed us to provide the evidence base to make an application for Post 16 provision to the Department for Education, giving a strong indication of need.</i></p>		
PED06c	<b>Work with schools, the College and training providers to review the post 16 offers of learning made to young people and increase the number of offers made before the end of an academic year.</b>	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i>  <i>Work is ongoing with schools and individuals without an offer of learning discussed. Lack of suitable provision is the barrier to increasing the number of offers made before the end of the academic year.</i></p>		
PED06d	<b>Work with schools, the College and training providers to report where young people progress to Post 16 as quickly as possible so those who have not progressed can be identified and contacted to offer support</b>	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i>  <i>This work will begin with institutions when the academic year 2024/25 begins.</i></p>		
PED06d	<b>Work with Post 16 education and training providers in the borough to support the development of provision that does have clear progression opportunities</b>	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i>  <i>The result of the application for Post 16 provision to the Department for Education will have a significant impact on planning and progression routes in Halton. Awaiting the outcome.</i></p>		

5.0 Financial Summary

Not yet available




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:

**CF/BH** Charlotte Finch/Ben Holmes, Acting Directors, Education, Inclusion and Provision Service

**KA** Katherine Appleton, Director, Children and Families Service.