

Children and Young People Priority Based PPB Report

Reporting Period: Quarter 1 2022-23

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress that have occurred during the period of the report towards the priority of Children and Young People (CYP). The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress is explained within Appendix 1 (section 8).
- 1.2 Please note initials have been provided to indicate which officer is responsible for the commentary to aid Members, as requested by the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board. A key is provided in Appendix 1 (section 8).

2.0 Key Developments

- 2.1 During the Easter Break, DFE released a White Paper with a vision to ensure the national education offer was for strong schools with great teachers for every child. The paper sets out the government's vision for education, which includes a range of programmes for teacher development and recruitment; additional support for schools to secure the fundamentals of behaviour, attendance and wellbeing for all including various interventions to target support to those who need it most. It also proposes that all schools will become a fully trust-led system with a singular regulatory body by 2030.
- 2.2 Halton have been identified as a Priority Education Investment Area (PEIA), one of 24 Local Authorities identified (12 being existing Opportunity areas) and 12 being newly identified, including Halton. This will bring some funding to the area (amount yet to be announced and signed off by ministers) to support improving outcomes particularly at Key Stage Two and Key Stage Four, but spend will be agreed by the Regional Directorate (Vicky Beer) through an independent strategic board. We propose to use the existing educational strategic board Halton Learning Alliance, this will now be chaired by DFE.
- 2.3 The 2022 green paper was also published during Easter break, focusing upon children and young people gaining the Right support in the Right place at the Right time. The paper sets out the government's proposals to ensure that every child and young person has their needs identified quickly and met more consistently. This includes establishing a single national special educational needs and disability (SEND) and alternative provision (AP) system that sets clear standards for the provision that children and young people should expect to receive. It identifies strengthened accountabilities and investment that will help to deliver real change for children, young people and their families. The aim is also to create a single national system that has high aspirations and ambitions for children and young people with SEND and those in Alternative Provision (AP), which is financially sustainable. Halton have also been included within the DFE "Delivering Better Values" (DBV) programme which will also secure a small amount of investment to address need by system change and will also be monitored and evaluated through DFE advisors.
- 2.4 Halton have been holding meetings with DFE during the summer holiday period as part of the DBV programme to share the region's strengths, position, challenges and opportunities in relation to SEND, AP and inclusion. As a region we are assigned to Tranche 3 where the delivery and implementation phase will start from summer 2023, although diagnostic work and data analysis may well start before this timeframe. A key target will be to reduce high needs overspend whilst meeting the needs of children and young people within borough and reduce out of borough placements for specialist provision.
- 2.5 The Virtual School has now appointed a substantive Head teacher of the Virtual School. The new Head teacher has previously been a successful, serving Head teacher and has also more recently worked for a Local Authority and understands the contexts, needs and strength of

Halton schools and multi-agency partners and will bring with him a drive to improve outcomes for Halton's Looked After Children. PEP completion continues to be high and going forward, the focus will be on improving the quality of PEPs and supporting and challenging education and social care colleagues to keep our looked after children a priority.

2.6 Care Leaver Accommodation

In relation to supporting our care leavers, we have a Supported Lodgings scheme within the service. We have placed 5 young people with hosts since July 2021 and 3 young people remain with their hosts. Lavender House, our commissioned service is operational. This is a 4 bedroomed group living property in Runcorn for 16 -18 years olds to support young people to develop their independence skills and live independently when they leave care. We also have two trainer flats which are commissioned from Social Landlords, one in Widnes and the second in Runcorn both of which are operational.

2.7 Practice Standards and a revised Supervision Policy have been launched across children's social care. These are vital documents in support of our improvement work in safeguarding children.

2.8 The Children's Services Workforce Development subgroup has been re-established to progress the strategy and key priority areas. A key aspect to this work is the commissioning of a basic safeguarding training referred to as 'Core Principles'. This is a mandatory course for social workers and frontline practitioners. The training will be starting in September with 120 plus staff enrolled

3.0 Emerging Issues

3.1 Increase of children and young people with special education needs and disabilities is evident. Increasing numbers of children are being placed out of borough with increasing placement and transport costs. In the Early Years the predominance is linked to communication and language and autism spectrum disorder (ASD), older concerns relate to Social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH). As an education system in its entirety, work is taking place to support schools and educational provisions to review their offer so that we can meet more children and young people's needs in borough. Meetings and workshops have been taking place with schools to identify how as a system we can meet need locally and successfully.

3.2 The SEND team have received the highest number of requests to date, to assess for an EHCP. At the same time, pressures on team capacity are significant due to vacant posts being held within the system due to HR pressures. Unfortunately, this is adversely impacting upon ability to assess within the statutory timescales and our compliance rates both for assessment and annual reviews are falling.

3.3 Summer term saw the retirement of many head teachers from the region, many being early retirements. During the last academic year, 22 head teacher appointment processes were carried out bringing new leaders to the area and promotion of existing senior leaders. Leadership development is a key area of work and whilst fresh ideas and innovation is welcomed, there are a significant number of new leaders across a range of school roles.

3.4 Statutory Assessments returned this year for the primary phase and return to exams for the secondary phase. Performance is being reported through a separate PPB report, but school communities are to be congratulated on the performance during what have been challenging times due to the covid pandemic.

3.5 Early Years providers are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit to staff within the profession. This is particularly evident in relation to childminders, with Halton now having just 62 childminders across the region and is a significant reduction since the start of the covid pandemic. Day-care and pre-school providers are also finding it challenging to recruit. This is due to Increased running costs from higher pension contributions; increased utility bill costs and staff leaving the profession for jobs in the retail sector with greater pay and less


responsibility. Whilst we are able to meet our childcare sufficiency duty currently, this is becoming an increasingly vulnerable area.

- 3.6 There continues to be a rise in the number of requests for out of borough Non-Maintained/Independent Special Schools (NMISS) placements with 19 children referred in quarter 1 and a total of 53 children referred for a NMISS placement since September 2021. There are currently 20 open referrals where placements are being actively sought. For context there were 27 referrals for NMISS placements made between Sept 2020 and Aug 2021. This has resulted in a further increase in children placed at NMISS settings and at the end of quarter 1: 106 children were placed in 31 NMISS settings, a rise of 8 since last quarter 4 (2021/22) and 20 children since September 2021. It has been challenging as during this period many schools continued to report that they were at capacity for immediate placements and only able to consider a September start and a smaller number of schools reaching capacity for September 2022 provision. This is resulting in placements being accessed further away leading to increased travel and transport costs. Communication is taking place with providers expressing an interest in opening new provision in Halton. Work continues on a special educational needs and disability (SEND) Sufficiency Strategy being collated by the Divisional Manager Inclusion that will offer a number of opportunities in relation to types of provision locally available in Halton – it is planned this will in turn result in the reduced requirement for Out of Borough SEN placements.
- 3.6 Two Post 16 training providers have chosen to terminate their provision offer for September 2022, further reducing choice and diversity of offer for young people post 16. Discussions are ongoing with other providers to encourage expansion. One provider already delivering in Runcorn is keen to expand to deliver in Widnes but finding a suitable venue that is affordable is a significant barrier. Even Council owned buildings are unable to offer a price that is affordable for new provision to take the risk of starting up in a new area.
- 3.7 The national shortage of secure accommodation, independent fostering placements and residential placements has continued to impact upon where our children and young people are placed when requiring a move (or new into the care system). However, Children’s Social Care, Placements Team and the Virtual School have worked hard to minimise the disruption to the child or young person’s education. The Virtual School Interim Head Teachers attend the Placement Resource Panel so they are aware of any placement issues but also have the opportunity to challenge any decisions that would disrupt the child or young person’s education. However, when this cannot be avoided through emergency, then the relevant PEP and Progress Coordinator is fully included in the process and identifying appropriate provision in the area. If this cannot be facilitated at the same time, then a tuition package is provided whilst this is resolved.

4.0 Performance Overview



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

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

Ref	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED01 01	Increase the number of early help assessments (MAP/PRE MAP) health/education and other partners are leading on (financial year cumulative to end of quarter Val Armor)	484 MAP 1279 Intervention activity	N/A	565 EH Intervention 207 MAP (30 June)		N/A


Supporting Commentary: Val Armor

There has been a steady increase in early help assessments throughout the year, however we are yet to see high volumes from partners. A more detailed report on the MAP authors will be needed to target and challenge partners and this can be done through the safeguarding partnership group. The Principal Manager in iCART will work on this in September 22 to present to the group in October 22

PED01 02	Improve overall attendance at schools: Primary –Pri PRU – PRU Secondary – Sec Special – Spec Total	LA - 91.18% Primary – 93.25% Secondary- 88.92% Special 85.49% PRU 59.09%	95%	See actual		
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Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton

Overall attendance in Halton has decreased from 92.35% in 20/21 to 91.18% in 21/22. Secondary attendance has decreased slightly from 88.97% in 20/21 to 88.92% in 21/22 and primary attendance from 95.43% to 93.25%. Special school attendance has improved from 75.89% in 20/21 to 85.49% in 21/22 and also the PRUs attendance from 50.86% to 59.09% in 21/22. Covid has impacted again this year on attendance although it is more difficult to monitor due to Government changes in coding for Covid. Following Covid we have also seen an increase in children stating anxiety as a reason for absence and also a significant increase in parents taking children out of school for holidays in term time.

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED01a	Work with schools to maintain the level of attendance at Primary and Secondary Schools. Martin West / Debbie Houghton (March 2023)	


Supporting commentary: Debbie Houghton

Attendance has been significantly impacted following Covid, in particular anxiety and mental health concerns have increased and demand for support is high. As a result, the EWS is working with other agencies to support young people and we have restructured the support for children unable to attend school due to health needs to better support young people. There has also been funding sought to provide a pilot project working with children with anxiety over the school holidays. The Education Welfare Service is traded but is currently reviewing the support offered to schools to ensure we can meet new increased statutory responsibilities from September 23. However, we will continue to support schools and families to address attendance concerns through traded and statutory support alongside referrals where appropriate for additional support from other services such as health.

PED01b	Implement Pause project and support women to make positive choices, improving their relationships with their children and preventing further children being taken into care. (Val Armor March 2023)	
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Supporting commentary: Val Armor















Pause is coming up to 12-month anniversary and there is a partnership event to mark this in September. We will be working with partners in the coming months on a sustainability plan. The project is already having a significant positive impact on the lives of the women involved







PED01c	Revise Halton’s parental offer that will include further developmental of reducing parental conflict training (Val Armor March 2023)	
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Supporting commentary: Val Armor

Parenting officer has been in post since January and now all referrals for parenting go to one central point. This has made it much easier for partners to understand. There has been one parenting event so far in June and this will be on a rolling programme so partners in the borough are aware of all of the parenting offer. Talks are still in place with IT to develop our own parenting hub. The reducing parental conflict programme has been rolled out over the past 2 years and over 160 workers have been trained. The aim is to embed this work into the everyday work of frontline practitioners. A further nurture programme will be delivered in January to train any outstanding staff. There is a wide variety of parenting group offered through the children centres universal provision as well as a more targeted offer.


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

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED02 01	Monitor the rate of referrals to Children's Social Care per 10000 0–18-year-olds (Forecast annualised rate at end of financial year)	458	500 (Full year)	647		
<p>Supporting commentary: Liz Davenport <i>Referrals are slightly below national average and those of our statistical neighbours. Highest source of referrers is the police followed by schools. Slight decrease of 30 less referrals from previous month, however e referrals recorded at 22%, is a 2% increase from previous month. (180 within 12 months).</i></p>						
PED02 02	Monitor the rate of children in need (CIN) per 10000 0–18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	360	380	376		
<p>Supporting commentary: Liz Davenport <i>The rate of CIN plans started is higher than those that have ceased and either stepped down to Early help or closed. There is currently an audit of all CIN cases underway so it is anticipated this number may reduce for those children not requiring a service.</i></p>						
PED02 03	Monitor the rate of children subject to a child protection plan per 10000 0–18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	59	45	60.6		
<p>Supporting commentary: Susanne Leece <i>This is a slight increase with a category of neglect accounting for 62% of plans. Neglect is a persistent feature in those families involved in the child protection, including issues of domestic abuse, parental substance misuse, and mental health factors. Children subject to a repeat child protection plan is at 30%, some of these reflect when a child has been subject to a plan in a different LA there is a monthly Child Protection overview panel which provides additional scrutiny to those children on repeat plans.</i></p>						
PED02 04	Monitor the rate of children in care per 10000 0–18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	107	90	131		
<p>Supporting commentary: Sarah Riley <i>The scrutiny of a child entering care identifies the correct threshold is being applied to keep children safe, legal advice meetings gate-keep and OD delegated authority agreed before children enter care.</i></p>						
PED02 05	Reduce the number of children and young people who enter the care system (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	132	68	27		
<p>Supporting commentary: Liz Davenport <i>The discharge from care remains actively tracked and where assessed needs identify a discharge of a care order for SO or SGO these are tracked and progressed in reasonable timescales-subject to court timetabling</i></p>						
PED02 06	Reduce the average caseload in Children in Need Teams (snapshot end of quarter)	23	18	19		
<p>Supporting commentary: Liz Davenport <i>The average case load across CVIN/CP ranges between 18- 20, there are six social workers with a case load of 21 or over.</i></p>						
PED02 07	Increase the proportion of missing incidents where a return interview is completed (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	71%	85%	70		
<p>Supporting commentary: Clare Hunt <i>For this time period, there have been 107 return interviews completed with 69 young people by the commissioned service. 70% of young people completed a return interview and 55% were completed within 72 hours, this is a decline from the previous quarter and in main was due to delays in receiving notifications from the police which has now been addressed. This Declines for return interviews were 101 incidents by 37 young people over half were declined a point of contact.</i></p>						

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED02 08	Reduce the number of children who repeatedly run away in Halton (in last 12 months, snapshot end of quarter)	38	N/A	8		N/A
<p>Supporting commentary: Clare Hunt For this reporting period, there has been a total of 247 notifications. There have been 8 CYP with repeat missing incidents. These 8 CYP have made five or more incidents during the quarter, accounted for 30% of all missing incidents in the quarter. 8% of all CYP for the quarter are within the repeat cohort. All of the CYP that fit in this cohort received at least one return home interview during the quarter, there was one declined interview. The commissioned service has supported the repeat cohort to reduce missing episodes this quarter through direct work, taking a different approach both with face to face and virtual contacts.</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)	243	N/A	99		N/A
<p>Supporting commentary: Clare Hunt There has been an increase 22% of missing incidents from 192 to 247, as well as an increase of 7 young people. It continues to be the case that the majority (79%) of CYP reported missing are residing at home, following the trend seen in the previous quarters. However, in the repeat cohort, the converse is true with the minority (12%) of CYP reported missing living at home. The significant reasons that CYP reported as their main reasons/trigger for going missing this quarter were boundary issues (Home & Care), direct family conflict, substance misuse and issues at school. Where school issues have been identified, With You have liaised with education providers and Education Welfare Officers in order to address these issues.</p>						
PED02 10	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (snapshot end of quarter)	15	20	17		
<p>Supporting commentary: Liz Davenport The CSOG monitors the rate and level of risk with multi-agency plans in place to ensure the right level of risk is identified and acted upon. The process of this group is subject to current review to increase its scrutiny.</p>						
PED02 11	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (snapshot end of quarter)	36	12	41		
<p>Supporting commentary: Liz Davenport As above-CSOG monitor and record the children, whilst alert flags are identifies in the child's file and routine reporting available to identify and target such children</p>						



Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED02a	Embed a systemic model of social work practice across the whole service, social workers, managers and senior leaders. Peter Murphy (March 2023)	
<p>Supporting commentary: Peter Murphy The Service has engaged Warrington to support a review of the systemic practice model and the next phase of its implementation. The review is being completed in September with a view to an updated implementation plan being completed.</p>		
CFS Operational Director	Review and update Workforce Strategy in line with the Knowledge and Skills framework and the Professional Capabilities Framework. Developing the competencies, skills and knowledge of the workforce making them motivated, stable and ambitious will improve the outcomes for families and keep them at the heart of everything we do. Peter Murphy (March 2023)	
<p>Supporting commentary: Peter Murphy A social work workforce strategy has been completed and the action plan is being developed in line with this. It is focused on several priorities: recruitment, retention, professional development, including management and leadership. A dedicated officer will now have responsibility for delivering on the social work action plan, in particular focused on recruitment.</p>		
PED02c	Implement redevise structure for children and need service to ensure better resilience and management accountability to provide a safe and structured environment for social workers. (Peter Murphy)	
<p>Supporting commentary: Peter Murphy</p>		

Changes to the Children in Need structure have been completed. Further significant changes to the structure won't be considered until early 2023, in order for the Service to focus on the key priorities linked to the requirements set out in the Improvement Notice issued by the DfE.



PED02d	Implement redevised quality and assurance framework to monitor improvements in practice (Peter Murphy)	
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Supporting commentary: [Peter Murphy](#)
 Revised performance and quality assurance arrangements were implemented in August 2022. A team of auditors received training in July 2022 and there is now in place a programme of monthly auditing across the Service, that is supplemented by bespoke pieces of work. Additional capacity has been commissioned for the next 6 months with the recruitment of an LGA Quality Assurance officer who is working closely with the Service.



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

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED03 01	Reduce the number of children who are placed in residential care (snapshot at end of quarter)	35	20	39		



Supporting Commentary: [Sarah Riley](#) / [Sam Murtagh](#)
 Young people who are 12 years old and below are regularly reviewed in terms of potential for them to be placed in a fostering placement. The increase in residential numbers is echoed across the neighbouring local authorities and in line with the increase of children and young people entering care. A review of the local authorities Sufficiency Strategy began in Q1 2022/23, this will include other more localised residential options operating as a Community Interest Company linked to the Liverpool City Regional Market Reform Programme. Within Halton 2 sites for children's homes are being explored along with some joint work with the Community Land Trust. The Permanency Planning Framework is operational in respect of reviewing placements for children and young people. There are two focus areas, those children in residential care with a plan to return to a fostering family placement and secondly, those young people aged 16 and over who require pathway and transition planning through to full independence. A number of children and young people are in the targeted cohort where placements and regional events are sought to support children moving back to a fostering family. Furthermore, the Care Leavers Accommodation Group continues to meet on a monthly basis to discuss all referrals for those young people aged 17 plus who require their own accommodation in line with their Pathway Plan. The increase in residential numbers is echoed across neighbouring local authorities and in line with the increase of children and young people entering care. The overall numbers represent a reduction of 2 since quarter 4

PED03 02	Reduce the number of children who are placed in independent fostering agencies (snapshot at end of quarter)	35	35	65		
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Supporting Commentary: [Sarah Riley](#) / [Sam Murtagh](#)
 All placements are tracked through the resource and placements meeting where sourcing Halton's mainstream foster carers is a primary focus. The current level of sufficiency due to increase of looked after children is resulting in the use of Independent Fostering Agencies, and in some circumstances residential, however as foster carers approvals are also tracked there are means to place with in house carers planned



PED03 03	Maintain the percentage of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (snapshot at end of quarter)	99%	95%	100%		
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Supporting Commentary: [Sarah Riley](#) / [Sam Murtagh](#)
 The Care Leavers Accommodation Group is embedded within the Service with registered landlords being part of the meeting. The meeting is held on a monthly basis and is chaired by the Divisional Manager for CIC and Care Leavers. The meeting reviews and tracks all young people aged 16 and older who require accommodation in preparation for leaving care. The meeting also provides the opportunity for an early alert in respect of young people who may be experiencing difficulties within their accommodation. Referrals to this group are coordinated and tracked via the Placements Team. We have an embedded Supported Lodgings scheme within the service. We have placed 3 young people currently placed with hosts. Lavender House, our commissioned service is operational. This is a 4 bedroomed group living property in Runcorn and we currently have 3 young people placed in this provision. We also have two trainer flats which are commissioned from Social Landlords, one in Widnes and one in Runcorn both of which are operational. A Care Leavers Support tender was recently commissioned which will also provide suitable accommodation – the contract was awarded to P3. Care Leavers have started to move into the newly commissioned service this quarter.

PED03 04	Increase the percentage of Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training (snapshot at end of quarter)	51%	65%	54%		
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Supporting Commentary: [Sarah Riley](#)

Strong links have been established with the Virtual School to provide advice and support to care leavers in relation to engaging in education, training or seeking employment options. Pupils Causing Concerns meetings are held on a monthly basis where the Virtual School and Managers from CIC and Care Leavers Team attend and discuss all children and young people up to the age of 25 to share information in respect of education and any placement or accommodation difficulties. This meeting also extends to include reviewing the EET status for all care leavers over 18 to ensure that those who are NEET are provided with targeted support to enable them into education, training or employment.

PED03 05	Benchmarking year – Percentage of CIC Residential and Leaving Care placements that have received a Quality Assurance Visit from the Placements Team within the previous 12 months (cumulative from April to end of quarter)	N/A	N/A	46% of all placements		
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Supporting Commentary: [Sam Murtagh](#)

The increase in Children In Care numbers have continued to increase impacting on the increased numbers of placements being required at the same time as taking more team resource to placement search for young people with complexity. This in turn impacts on the requirement for a quality monitoring visit as well as some previously visited providers now requiring a further annual visit. Performance has slightly dipped this quarter primarily due to the intensity of the placement searching function needing to be prioritised – this is also echoed regionally from discussions with colleagues. The Placement team have prioritised visits for the coming quarter to increase the % with each Officer completing a minimum of 2 visits each month. Currently 46% of current Residential placements have received a quality monitoring visit with a total of 8 visits planned for quarter 2 (2022/23). In terms of Leaving Care provision 63% have received a quality assurance visit. It's expected that these % figures will rise in the coming quarter as the team has had it confirmed that Admin Support will be available which will free up a little capacity to focus on the visits with higher intensity.

PED03 06	Report on the budget spent on independent and out of borough placements for Children in Care (Forecast end of year) (Sarah Riley/Sam Murtagh)	Projected spend forecast for 2022/23 Residential £13,805,604.33 IFA £2,713,219.28 UASC Residential £1,550,840.21 IFA £189,878.55	Projected 9,583,822			
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Supporting Commentary: [Sarah Riley](#) / [Sam Murtagh](#)

In order to address these rising costs, the following initiatives have been introduced help to reduce spend in this area: Residential Step Down, Supported Lodgings, Care Leavers Training Flat, In House Care Leaver/Edge of Care accommodation. Since the start of the last financial year there has been over a 10% increase in the numbers of Residential placements, a 6% increase in the use of IFAS (Independent Fostering Agencies) and a significant increase in the numbers of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children. There is also ongoing work to build a children's home within the borough to be operated by a social enterprise to begin reduce reliance on the private Residential sector. The increase in budget costs is directly linked to the increase in the Children in Care overall numbers. Currently 2 land sites in the borough are being explored for this purpose with recent feedback received from both planning colleagues as well as from legal. The average placement costs per young person remain around the regional average. Work has also started with the Community Land Trust relating to a proposed development in Runcorn to incorporate a 4 bed children's home operated by the social enterprise to enable move children in care to be placed more locally

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED03a	Ensuring all children in care achieve permanency in a timely way. (Sarah Riley March 2023)	

Supporting Commentary: [Sarah Riley](#)


The progress of long-term matching to achieve permanency is tracked on a monthly basis. For those children and young people, where a plan of Special Guardianship Order to their foster carers is also tracked on a monthly basis. When adoption is the child's plan, monthly tracker meetings are held to identify children within care proceedings to enable earlier tracking and to review and prevent any delay in family finding for those children who are subject to a Placement Order.

PED03b	Ensure that Safeguarding Unit escalate any delays or concerns using escalate policy (Susanne Leece March 2023)	
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Supporting Commentary: [Susanne Leece](#)

The Independent Reviewing Managers (IRM) escalate concerns about delay through the dispute resolution process. There is a recording process built into Eclipse to support this with extractable performance data. These data reports are used in monthly Performance Management Meetings with the IRMs, where patterns in individual IRM activity is scrutinised and

discussed. There is a challenge to show how this is contributing to improvements in care planning and ultimately outcomes for children. From Q1 2022/23 quarterly reports detailing the number and type of escalations, including good practice notifications will be shared with SLT. This will help to identify impact of improvement activity and areas for further development.





PED03c	Review and quality assure the commissioning of services for Children in Care and Care Leavers to ensure that they meet the needs of Halton's population and inform future commissioning decisions (March 2023 Sam Murtagh)	
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Supporting Commentary: [Sam Murtagh](#)
 A Liverpool City Region framework for Fostering the Residential placements has now been fully implemented. Work has now been completed on a procurement for a Halton based Leaving Care group and individual support provider – Care leavers were directly involved in the provider interview stages as well as evaluating the final outcome. Work also continues with the LA Assets team and Regeneration team regarding the potential development of a children's home on a development site in Runcorn as well as a scoping exercise of all available land sites in the borough for Residential purpose – currently 3 sites have been highlighted for possible development. Work is planned for the next quarter to review the local authorities Sufficiency Strategy in terms of attempting to ensure more placement availability and localised placements for Halton's children in care. Recently discussions have taken place with 3 providers who are developing local services – these were instigated as part of the planning application process in order that they reflect totally the local needs. One of the providers will be opening a children home locally that will primarily concentrate on supporting younger children to be placed within a foster care family.



PED03d	Through the quality assurance of Personal Education Plans (PEP), identify areas of need and support to improve outcomes for individual Children in Care (March 2022 Peter McParland and Jo Lloyd)	
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Supporting Commentary: [Ben Holmes](#)
 At the end of the Spring term 2022 percentage PEP completion was as follows: Early Years 100%; Primary 100%; Secondary 92%; Post 16 82%, meaning that overall, 93% of children and young people in care had a PEP completed, this is an increase in completion since last year. Of the PEPs completed the percentage rated as at least good were as follows: Early Years 92%; Primary 84%; Secondary 77%, Post 16 88%. As can be seen from the data above there is still more work to be done in terms of quality. The quality of PEPs across all phases has improved since last year, however, due to the change of system, expectations around quality have risen and therefore the data shows that more PEPs have become RI. There has been an increase in the number of outstanding PEPs in Secondary. Post-16 has also shown an increase in those that are good or better. This term there has been various team members leave which has impacted capacity in the team, therefore further internal moderation and scrutiny of the PEPs will be taking place next term. Termly Designated Teacher network meetings are continuing to take place to address any common themes we see in the PEPs. Our new PEP Leads are continuing to develop our toolkit which will support the creative use of Pupil Premium Plus.

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



Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED04 01	Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plan assessments completed within 20 weeks (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	78.9%	75%	56.5%		
Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach The first half 2022 has seen the highest number of referrals for needs assessment ever seen for EHCPs. At current referral rates Halton expect to receive over 350 requests to assess this calendar year, a 40% increase in demand. Caseloads per Assessment co-ordinator currently stand at 170, a 60% increase in workload since 2018. Due to the ongoing demands and the current constraints in the LA's budget position and restraints in recruiting to vacancies within the team it is forecast that completion rates will begin to fall back to 50% by the end of the calendar year.						
PED04 02	Reduce the number of incidents of fixed term Suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	535	500	1021 incidents to end of Quarter (1022 in full academic year)		
Supporting Commentary: Behaviour Team / Scott Middlehurst						

There has been an increase in suspensions following Covid. This includes younger primary children in Reception and Year 1 with behavioural issues possibly due to limited experience of Nursery provision due to Covid and also lack of transition support when starting in primary. We have also seen increases in behaviour concerns in early secondary years again possibly due to lack of transition support. During Covid there was also lack of face-to-face support for families and children which again may have had an impact. During Covid the gap in learning for some children has widened from their peers which has impacted on self-esteem, engagement with school and behaviour.

PED04 03	Reduce the number of children subject to fixed term suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	308	350	457 children to the end of Quarter (457 in full academic year)		
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Supporting Commentary: Behaviour Team / Scott Middlehurst

There has been an increase in children subject to suspension from school. However, the Behaviour Team have continued to support children with behavioural concerns and supported school staff to manage behaviour in school, through one-to-one support and training.

PED04 04	Reduce the number of children subject to a permanent suspension (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	15	30	30 children to the end of Quarter (32 in full academic year)		
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Supporting Commentary: Behaviour Team / Scott Middlehurst

We are only slightly above the target for number of permanent exclusions. As suspensions have increased it is through the support from schools, the Behaviour team, Education Welfare and SEN that permanent exclusions have not risen in line with the increase in suspensions. 47% of children permanently excluded have SEN either at SEN support or have an EHCP and 87% are on free school meals, 62.5% are male and 19% are open to Child in Need or Child Protection. Three permanent exclusions were at primary schools, with the majority 72% at KS3. We will continue to work together to support children in schools at risk of exclusion.

PED04 05	Report on the proportion of children subject to Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) placed in independent and out of borough provisions (snapshot end of quarter) – long term target is to reduce	7.4%	3.6%	8%		
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Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach

As highlighted in the report for PED04 06 continued place pressure in the borough coupled with high demand for places has made reducing the reliance of OOB specialist provision challenging. The announcement of capital grant funding for SEND places and the opening of the SEMH special school in Sept2023 will allow the improvements in place sufficiency locally to reduce these numbers over the next 3-5 years.

PED04 06	Report on the budget spent on independent and out of borough (OOB) provision for SEND (Forecast end of year)	Overspend £1,108,429	£250000 reduction	Budget £5,759,220 Projected spend (year-end) £6,355,989 Overspend projected £596,769(*)		
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Supporting Commentary: Sam Murtagh

There continues to be a rise in the number of requests for out of borough Non-Maintained/Independent Special Schools (NMISS) placements with 19 children referred in quarter 1 and a total of 53 children referred for a NMISS placement since September 2021. There are currently 20 open referrals where placements are being actively sought.


For context there were 27 referrals for NMISS placements made between Sept 2020 and Aug 2021. This has resulted in a further increase in children placed at NMISS settings and at the end of quarter 1: 106 children were placed in 31 NMISS settings, a rise of 8 since last quarter 4 (2021/22) and 20 children since September 2021.

It has been challenging as during this period many schools continued to report that they were at capacity for immediate placements and only able to consider a September start and a smaller number of schools reaching capacity for September 2022 provision. This is resulting in placements being accessed further away leading to increased travel and transport costs. Communication is taking place with providers expressing an interest in opening new provision in Halton. Work continues on a special educational needs and disability (SEND) Sufficiency Strategy being collated by the Divisional Manager Inclusion that will offer a number of opportunities in relation to types of provision locally available in Halton – it is planned this will in turn result in the reduced requirement for Out of Borough SEN placements

(*) the overspend will increase significantly due to the current active placement searches and is likely to outstrip last year's overspend at year end


PED04 07	Increase the percentage of children subject to EHCP placed in mainstream provision (snapshot end of quarter)	44.6%	65%	36.4%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach</i>						
PED04 08	Monitor the percentage of Special Schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	xx	100%	100%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> <i>No further inspection activity since last quarter across special schools</i>						
PED04 09	Increase the percentage of Education Health and Care plans for Child Protection and Children in Care completed in 16 weeks (academic year cumulative to end of quarter) (Adrian Leach)	N/A	75%	To follow		N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach</i> <i>This target remains aspirational in addition to our statutory targets. Lack of staffing and the current surge in demand for EHC assessments has prevented significant progress against this measure during the reporting period</i>						

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED04a	Develop and Implement the Social Emotional and Mental Health Strategy (SEMH) by March 2022. Impact to be monitored through the action plan. (Adrian Leach)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach</i> <i>SEMH is one of four areas of need recognised by the 2015 SEND Code of Practice. Halton has experienced a significant rise in SEMH needs over the last few years in line with many other local authority areas. Because of the central importance in identifying early pupils SEMH needs and helping schools to meet them effectively the objectives and outcomes for pupils with SEMH needs are fully embedded into the local areas SEND Strategy 2021-25. In particular the Inclusive Education Priority focused on understanding the causes of SEMH needs and the associated behaviour and identifying them and managing them more effectively.</i>		
PED04b	Review the current framework of support for children and young people with disabilities, including short breaks provision (Sam Murtagh March 2023)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Sam Murtagh</i> <i>All Short Breaks Provision contracts have been recommissioned in quarter 3 informed by feedback from SEND Parent / Carer forum and children. Applications were invited for Sports, Arts and Crafts, Trips and Visits and Swimming Lessons, a Play Service, a Youth Support Service and a new service to support families to recruit their own PAs as this an area of need. Sixteen bids were received, 22 Parents and Carers and 28 children were involved in evaluating the small grant applications (this is the highest number of participants we have seen to date) and awards have been made for 6 small grants:- in pool/wet play sessions; a monthly outdoor activity program; monthly digital and creative media workshops; art lessons; trips and visits during school holidays and swimming lessons together with a reshaped play service that offers weekend play groups for 50 weekends of the year and a 2 week summer play scheme, a reshaped weekly youth support service (previously fortnightly) and a PA Service. Feedback from families has been extremely positive in terms of the new services commissioned.</i>		
PED04c	Review direct payments with all recommissions co-produced with parents and young people. (March 2023 Val Armor)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Val Armor</i> <i>This has been reviewed in terms of commissioning to get the best offer and value for parents and carers. The current commission is now in place until march 23</i>		
PED04d	Improve quality and timeliness of Education Health and Care Plans. (March 2023 Adrian Leach)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach</i> The first four months of 2022 have seen the highest number of referrals for needs assessment ever seen for EHCPs. Halton received over 340 requests to assess in 2022/23, a 40% increase in demand. Caseloads per Assessment co-ordinator currently stand at 170, a 60% increase in workload since 2018. Due to the ongoing demands and the current constraints in the LA's budget position it is forecast that completion rates will begin to fall back to 50% by the end of the calendar year. The decline in timeliness is compounded by the fact that that SENAT are currently operating below		

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
	capacity with a number of vacancies in the team that are looking to be filled over the Autumn period. Work is underway to look at how additional capacity can be allocated to the team within the current stringent budget restraints.	
	The ongoing presence of the DCO for Halton is improving the quality of health advice in plans and better partnership working with the local authority. There remains a gap in QA and oversight of care and social care advice, however it is hoped that this will be addressed as capacity grows in the system to support more integrated working. A new manager for the SEN assessment team has started with accelerating and imbedding the quality improvements as a key priority	
PED04e	Quality assure all provision currently being utilised to ensure that provision meets the needs of our children and young people (March 2023 Sam Murtagh)	

Supporting Commentary: [Sam Murtagh](#)






Monitoring visits have continued in collaboration with the SEN Team and Designated Clinical Officer resulting in 11 of 31 schools receiving a monitoring visit, which encompasses 58.5% of children placed in NMISS settings. We continue to work closely with the Safeguarding Children In Education (SCIE) Officer.



PED04f	Review in borough specialist provision and revise to meet the needs of Halton's children and young people (March 2023 Adrian Leach)	
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Supporting Commentary: [Adrian Leach](#)

Work continues in the development of SEND provision in Halton. The delayed SEMH free school is still scheduled to open in September 2023 and this will cut by 50% the borough's out of borough requirement for SEMH places for children and young people 11-16. Despite an absence of capital funding available in the reporting period additional places have been funded at all 4 special schools who continue to work with the local authority in meeting local demand. Additionally, resource base provision in mainstream schools continues to be developed with an additional class for KS2 pupils with ASD funded at The Grange and provision expanded for 2022/23 at Simms Cross. Growth in demand however continues to place pressure on places. A SEND Sufficiency Strategy will be published over the summer identifying our projected provision gaps and calling for expressions of interest from local schools. The development of provision will be supported by the SEND Capital Grant (£3.3 million for 2022-25).

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









Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED05 01	Ensure all eligible children for the vulnerable 2-year-old funding access quality EY provision (internally collected termly information – may not match to published data from Jan census)	91	100% of eligible	91		
Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell Belinda Yen/Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson						
The DfE provided a target of 559 children to be placed. Halton have placed 495 (not including 7 Out of Borough (OOB) settings) which equates to 91%. This number is slightly higher than usual; process of placement continues as normal; however, some places were declined until parents felt more comfortable for their children to return/commence due to the effects of the pandemic. 100% of day care and pre-school settings are good or outstanding; funded two-year-olds are only placed in good/outstanding Childminders provision 44.						
PED05 02	Increase the take up of Early Years Entitlement for 3- to 4-year-olds.	89%	96%	89%		
Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell Belinda Yen/Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson						
The current 89% figure is based on national data produced from the January annual census as recorded in 'Education provision: children under 5 years of age, Source: https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/education-provision-children-under-5/2022 , Published 30th June 2022' This does not include any quarterly breakdown and as take up increase throughout the year with Early Years children this is not a fully reflective view of spring and summer term increases. Previous figures were based on local quarterly information which is not currently available so there is no drop from the actual figure as it was a different source and measurement. There has been some decline in uptake due to parental anxiety of sending children to provision during the Covid-19 pandemic. This encouragement and marketing of the benefits of accessing free early years entitlement is being promoted across a range of early years and multi-agency team						
PED05 03	Monitor the percentage of Early Years settings (pre-schools, day care, out of school clubs,	94%	N/A	86%		N/A


	childminders) with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding (snapshot end of quarter)					
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell Belinda Yen/Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson</i> 86% of all our Early Years settings, who have been inspected by Ofsted, are graded 'Good' or 'Outstanding'; 3.8% are graded 'Requires Improvement'; and 1.9% are graded 'Inadequate'. There are currently 10 settings who have not yet been inspected and 11 who are 'meeting the requirements' (this is the judgement awarded to Child minders/Out of School Clubs who have an inspection when there are no children present).						
ED05 04	Monitor the percentage of Primary schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	81.6% (As of 30th April 2022)	N/A	To follow		N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> Ofsted paused school inspections during Covid and then gradually reintroduced inspections focusing upon remote learning offer during the pandemic. Full inspection frameworks returned from 1st September 2022, although Ofsted have many school inspections to carry out nationally and are limited in capacity to carry out, therefore many schools are awaiting an inspection.						
PED05 05	Monitor the percentage of Secondary schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding (snapshot end of quarter) N.B. 7 out of the 8 schools are academies. (snapshot end of quarter)	50% (as of 30 th April 2022)	N/A	50% (as of 30 th April 2022)		N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> Saints Peter and Paul Catholic College inspected July 2022. Awaiting publication of report						

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED05a	Monitor and evaluate educational outcomes of all pupils, vulnerable pupils (CIC: EHCP etc.), disadvantaged pupils and the impact of funding streams (including Free EY Entitlement, Catch Up funding, Pupil Premium, Sports Premium etc.) to raise achievement for all and diminish the difference between vulnerable groups and their peers (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	Refer comment
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> Case studies and qualitative information is shared at the disadvantaged working group network and with Associate School Improvement Advisors. Quantitative pupil outcomes data is not currently available as statutory assessments were paused and this year's results will not be available until late summer.		
PED05b	Monitor and evaluate the impact of COVID-19 lockdown and remote learning offer on all pupils and vulnerable pupils learning (March 2023, Jill Farrell)	Refer comment
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> Impact of remote learning was shared as qualitative information with Associate School Improvement Advisors (ASIA's) and effective practice shared across the sector. Whilst schools still provide a remote offer if young people have covid but are well enough to work, most schools are operating on a more typical offer onsite now Covid measures and lockdown have been eased.		
PED05c	Review the process of risk assessment for schools and settings to target support and drive improvement (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	Refer comment
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> Schools are risk assessed on a range of information shared across services including safeguarding; inclusion; educational performance/outcomes; governance; leadership and management stability; leadership experience and other strengths/vulnerabilities.		
PED05d	Build engagement, capacity and governors understanding of the strategic roles and responsibilities (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	Refer comment
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> Ongoing training, CPD, online learning is available through SLA with Entrust Governor services and school improvement team bespoke work and wider governor briefings and conferences. There has been a turnover of governors during the pandemic so also requires recruitment into governor roles.		
PED05e	In partnership with schools, review and design an effective educational vision for the region that meets pupils needs whilst raising ambitions (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	Refer comment
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> Educational vision for the region has been coproduced through Halton Learning Alliance. Whilst this was launched and shared virtually during the pandemic, progress and further updates will be shared with stakeholders in early autumn term		
PED05f	Launch Halton Learning Alliance Strategic Partnership to develop an inclusive, ambitious approach developing contributing, successful citizens locally, nationally and globally. All educational	Refer comment

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
	stakeholders and community members acting with morale purpose for Halton children, young people and community members (March 2023, Jill Farrell)	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> The strategic board is to be relaunched in early October and will be Chaired independently by DFE. A refined strategic board will drive forward the priorities aligned to the Priority Education Investment area.</p>		

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

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED06 01	Maintain the percentage of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (snapshot end of quarter, end of year information February)	3.7%	4.0%	4.6%		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> June 2021 performance was 3.8%, Quarter 1 2022 is a significant increase from last year's position. There are more young people not available to the labour market due to illness, including mental health issues, in 2022 compared to this period in 2021, which is affecting the results. In addition, there are a greater number of young people who are not in education, employment or training this year. All are allocated to a worker to support them, although not all do want support from the team.</p>						
PED06 02	Maintain the percentage of 16-17 year olds whose activity is not known (snapshot end of quarter, end of year information February)	0.3%	0.3%	0.6%		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> June 2021 performance was 0.7%. The opportunity to visit young people at home is more appropriate now that all National restrictions have been lifted so we have made progress in ensuring we make contact with young people.</p>						
PED06 03	Increase the percentage of 16-17 year olds with an offer of learning (September guarantee)	96.6%	98%	74%		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> June 2021 performance was 72%. Whilst we have an increase from last year we are already aware of young people in the cohort whose current circumstances mean they are not looking to receive an offer for September. For this reason we anticipate not meeting the target in September 2022.</p>						
PED06 04	Increase the percentage of 16-17 year olds participating in education or training that meets the Government definition of full participation (known as Raising the Participation Age)	90.9%	92%	88.2%		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> Young people who progress to employment without training are defined as not meeting the duty to participate in education or training and therefore not counted in the Raising the Participation Age figures. We saw an increase of academic age 17 year olds progressing into employment without training in September 2021 and this has been sustained through the academic year, affecting this performance measure. There will be a new cohort counted in the measure from September 2022, at this stage we don't know what impact the new cohort's activity will have on our ability to meet the target.</p>						

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED06a	Closely monitor the cohort of young people not in education, employment or training and identify common patterns/issues to inform actions, guide the effective use of resources and to identify any future commissioning needs (Háf Bell) (March 2023)	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> Ongoing analysis takes place to respond to need and ensure the resources are being targeted appropriately. For summer term 2022 work is targeted towards those in Year 11 who are at risk of not progressing to provision in September 2022.</p>		

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED06c	Work with schools, the College and training providers to review the post 16 offers of learning made to young people and increase the amount of offers made before the end of an academic year. (July 2023) (Háf Bell)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> This work will begin with institutions in the 2022/23 academic year.		
PED06d	Work with schools, the College and training providers to report where young people progress to Post 16 as quickly as possible so those who haven't progressed can be identified and contacted to offer support (Háf Bell)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> This work will begin with institutions in the 2022/23 academic year.		
PED06d	Work with Post 16 education and training providers in the borough to support the development of provision that does have clear progression opportunities (March 2023) (Háf Bell)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> Post 16 providers in the borough came together in June 2022 to hear about each other's programmes, identify progression routes and identify gaps in provision. Unfortunately, since the event, two providers have withdrawn their provision offer in Halton leaving a gap in choice of provision for young people.		

5.0 Financial Summary



Children and Families
Q1 22-23 Final.docx



EIP Q1 22-23
Final.docx

6.0 Appendix I



6.1 Symbols are used in the following manner:

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

6.2 Direction of Travel indicator

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

Green		Indicates that performance is better compared to the same period last year.
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Amber		Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the same period last year.
Red		Indicates that performance is worse compared to the same period last year.
N/A		Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.

6.3 Key for responsible officers:

JF Jill Farrell, Interim Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision Service

PM Peter Murphy Operational Director, Children and Families Service