

Children and Young People Priority Based PPB Report

Reporting Period: Quarter 4 2022-23

1.0 Introduction

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

2.0 Key Developments

- 2.1 The Virtual School have worked with Social Care and PA colleagues to establish a NEET panel to increase the number of CICCL progressing into education, employment, or training.
- 2.2 The Safeguarding Children in Education Officer began in January 2023. They have already established strong working relationships with school leaders, colleagues within EIP and multi-agency safeguarding partners, including Early Help, Social Care and Health.
- 2.3 Free School Provision Work around The Raise Academy Free School has started to make progress, with onsite build activity due to begin in Q1 23/24 for a September 2024 opening.
- 2.4 Team Around the School A pilot 'Team around the School' project has been established and will begin after the Easter Break. Involving numerous teams and support services, including the Virtual School, School Improvement Service, Halton's Educational Psychology Service, Specialist teachers, mental health services and Early Help, the team will visit schools on a rolling programme to discuss specific young people who are at risk of exclusion or have poor attendance (as well as more broadly at practice and training needs within each school).
- 2.5 Priority Education Investment Areas the PEIA's delivery plan has now received ministerial approval, with £1.8million allocated to Halton in order to improve educational outcomes at EYFS, KS2 and KS4, alongside improving school attendance. There is a strategic board in place, which is independently chaired and attended by representatives from schools, trusts, teaching schools and the LA.
- 2.6 SEND Staffing is at a satisfactory level. 2 additional Interim Assessment Coordinators are providing some additional capacity to the team working on annual reviews. They have also helped the team to recover the phase transfer position, which was vulnerable prior to their appointment. An interim Senior Operational Lead for SEND is in post, along with an Interim SEND Team Manager. An interim Tribunal Officer joined the local authority on 7th June. This additional capacity will become evident gradually in performance reporting but will take time whilst working through the large volume and backlog of applications. It is anticipated that accelerated improvement will be evident from September onwards. Schools are reporting an improved experience in terms of communication and responsiveness from the service.
- 2.7 Additional SEND Resource base capacity in Halton is in development aligned to the SEND sufficiency strategy. 9 expressions of interest were received, 8 are currently progressing with 5 undergoing statutory consultation. The two remaining proposals were expansion of existing provision therefore not requiring a statutory consultation process. Statutory consultations for 5 new resource bases closed on the 7th of June. The new resource bases and expansion programme will open in a phased approach across the academic year 2023/4.
- 2.8 **Family hubs** Excitingly Halton is one of 75 local authorities to be eligible for Family Hub funding to transform existing provision into family hubs model and framework. DM for early help is the strategic lead for coordinating this and working closely with all partners to deliver the new

model. A steering group has been set up and will progress the different work streams and feed into the group. Year one funding has been rolled over. Branding is currently in the consultation stage and the 1st Family Hub to be launched will be Kingsway on the 19th of July 2023. Governance structure of accountability has been suggested and ready for management sign off. The vision is that an Early Help Partnership board will offer scrutiny, challenge and support to many streams of work within early help and prevention including family hubs, supporting families, right to succeed, early help assessments, reducing parental conflict and parenting.

- 2.9 **Pause** in Halton is now well established, and the first graduation took place on 20th January. The programme works with women who have previously had 2 or more children removed from their care. In September the annual event and celebration was held with huge success. The project has already made significant impact on the women and really made a difference to their lives. Evidence already shows positive outcomes including women moving into adult education and gaining employment. After a sustainability report and constant persistence funding was finally secured in March 23 for another 12 months for the programme. Currently being funding 50/50 by LA and ICB. Divisional Manager for early help and PAUSE practice lead are meeting with partners over the next few months for further sustainability.
- 2.10 **Right to Succeed** – This project is part of the Steve Morgan foundation and working with Liverpool city region. Halton Lea was the ward that was identified 18 months ago to work in to improve outcomes for children and families. A hub model approach will be delivered and aligned with Halton’s family Hub model. The programme has completed the discovery phase and has now moved into dedicated steering groups looking at education and wider services. The DM for early help and the OD for education represent the borough on the regional board.

3.0 Emerging Issues

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


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

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

4.0 Performance Overview









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










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



Ref	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED01 01	Increase the number of early help assessments (MAP/PRE-MAP) health/education and other partners are leading on (Val Armor)	484 all MAP	N/A	674 all MAP (prov)	N/A	N/A
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Val Armor</i> <i>The number of early help assessments have increased overall however over 80% of these are led by LA staff in locality teams. There has now been a principal manager dedicated to this work to help and support schools engage with the process of leading on assessments. Also, the nurse role in iCART has now returned to work and will help engage health colleagues with advice and support on assessments. The early help partnership board will oversee this work in terms of accountability.</i></p>						
PED01 02	Improve overall attendance at schools: Primary – Pri PRU – PRU Secondary – Sec Special – Spec Total	LA - 91.18% Primary – 93.25% Secondary- 88.92% Special 85.49% PRU 59.09%	95%	*LA – 92.12% *Pri-93.86% *PRU- 54.61% *Sec- 90.38% *Special- 87.62%		
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton</i> <i>There has been an improvement in school attendance across primary and secondary schools from 21/22. The overall attendance for Halton has gone up from 91.18% to 92.12%. The improvement is seen across all schools with the exception of the PRU with primary up from 93.25% to 93.86%, secondary up from 88.92% to 90.38%, special schools up from 85.49% to 87.62%, the attendance at the PRU decreased from 59.09% in 21/22 to 54.61% in 22/23.</i></p>						
	Milestones					Quarterly Progress
Ref:						
PED01a	Work with schools to maintain the level of attendance at Primary and Secondary Schools. Debbie Houghton (March 2023)					
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Debbie Houghton</i> <i>For the latest DfE data release for Autumn 22/23 attendance in Halton was 92.1% which was similar to Halton’s statistical neighbours and the Liverpool City Region attendance at 92%. However, Halton was below the northwest average of 92.7% and the England average of 92.5%. However, the 95% Halton target set for 22/23 has not been met but this is reflected nationally in the average for England at 92.5%. Following Covid, we have also seen an increase in children stating anxiety as a reason for absence and also a significant increase in parents taking children out of school for holidays in term time.</i></p>						
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)					
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Val Armor</i> <i>PAUSE in Halton is now over 12 months old and we have celebrated an annual event showcasing the superb work that is being carried out. The project is already having a significant positive impact on the lives of the women involved. The first cohort of women graduated on 20th Jan 23 at a wonderful ceremony highlighting their achievements over the last 18 months. Funding for a further 12 months have finally been secured in March 23. A plan is now in place to secure further funding from partners for 3-5 years. The new cohort of women for 23-24 have been contacted and are in the engagement process of the programme.</i></p>						

PED01c	Revise Halton's parental offer that will include further developmental of reducing parental conflict training (Val Armor March 2023)
<p>Supporting commentary: 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 two parenting events so far in June 2022 and January 23 and this will be on a rolling programme so partners in the borough are aware of all of the parenting offer. Talks are still in place with IT to develop our own parenting hub. The reducing parental conflict programme has been rolled out over the past 2 years and over 160 workers have been trained. The aim is to embed this work into the everyday work of frontline practitioners. A new partnership with Amity (training provider) has been established and the parenting coordinator will become a train the trainer and roll this programme out in the next quarter. The success in this parenting role has resulted in the need to look for further funding to have an assistant parenting role to help with the delivery and coordination of the parenting hub. This funding will be aligned with Family Hubs transformation and two scale 5 parenting assistants will be recruited to by July 23. The borough continues to embed nurture principles through all of our parenting work across the workforce.</p>	

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



Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED02 01	Monitor the rate of referrals to Children's Social Care per 10000 0-18-year-olds (Forecast annualised rate at end of financial year)	458	500 (Full year)	616 (prov full year)		
<p>Supporting commentary: Linda Evans</p> <p>ICART managers are continuing to review each referral coming through for Early Intervention / Safeguarding screening. The data is reflecting that just under half of children referred and screened by social workers in ICART are sent for a child and family assessment. Audit is reflecting management oversight at the point of allocation to social worker as well as at the point of authorisation. Thresholds have been appropriate.</p>						
PED02 02	Monitor the rate of children in need (open cases) per 10000 0-18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	360	380	426 (prov)		
<p>Supporting commentary: Linda Evans</p> <p>Overall Children in Need (including CP & CLA) trend started to decrease to Mar-22 to Jun-22. In the six months to Mar-23 to Halton rate has been steadily rising by 10% overall. The Mar-23 rate; 404.6 is similar to the Mar-22 rate 407.4. Figures have been updated to include Care Leavers and refreshed back to Mar-22. Halton are below all comparators. CIN open to the service has decreased overall since Mar-22, falling below our 2021/22 outturn since Aug-22. The Mar-23; 577 figure is 13% lower than the Mar-22; 662 figures. The six months previous average to Mar-23 is 2% lower than the six months previous average to June-22 and below the 21/22 outturn.</p>						
PED02 03	Monitor the rate of children subject to a child protection plan per 10000 0-18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	59	45	70 (prov)		
<p>Supporting commentary: Susanne Leece</p> <p>The number of CP cases has fluctuated over the 13 months to Mar-23 (202). The rate for Mar-23 is at 70.0. The average for Halton over the last three months is now in line with statistical neighbour rate of 69.9. The trend for those CYP starting a CP Plan shows to be increasing over the 13 months to Mar-23 (9). The trend for those CYP ending CP Plan although falling slightly, remains stable over the 13 months to Mar-23 (19). Category of Abuse for the 13 months to Mar-23 show a drop of 20% for Neglect, from 79% in Mar-22 to 55% in Mar-23. Physical abuse shows a steady rise of from Mar-22 (8%) to Mar-23 (25%) with an increase of 15% over the 13 months. Emotional and sexual abuse remain stable over the 13 months.</p>						
PED02 04	Monitor the rate of children in care per 10000 0-18-year-olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	107	90	133 (prov)		
<p>Supporting commentary: Liz Davenport</p> <p>Halton's rate of CLA has remained above all comparators for the past 13 months. 133.1 for Mar-23. The number of children in care has been impacted by the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) as an LA. In Mar-23 there were 18 USAC accounting for 5% of Halton's CLA population. There has been a 3% increase in the CLA numbers Mar-22 (372) to Feb-23 (384) The linear line for numbers of children ceasing in period of care remains stable for the 12-month period. Mar-23;</p>						

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
	seven ceased with an average of 14 ceasing per month for the 13 months to Mar-23. Those starting a period of care is showing a small increase for the linear line to Mar-23; five. On average each month over the last 13 months 14 children started a period of care.					
PED02 05	Reduce the number of children and young people who enter the care system (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	132	68	147 (prov)		
	<i>Supporting commentary:</i> Linda Evans 133.1 for Mar-23. The number of children in care has been impacted by the number of Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) as an LA. In Mar-23 there were 18 USAC accounting for 5% of Halton's CLA population. There has been a 3% increase in the CLA numbers Mar-22 (372) to Feb-23 (384). The linear line for numbers of children ceasing in period of care remains stable for the 12-month period. Mar-23; seven ceased with an average of 14 ceasing per month for the 13 months to Mar-23. Those starting a period of care is showing a small increase for the linear line to Mar-23; five. On average each month over the last 13 months 14 children started a period of care.					
	Reduce the average caseload in Children in Need Teams (snapshot end of quarter)	23	18	21 (prov)		
	<i>Supporting commentary:</i> Linda Evans The caseloads continue to remain relatively high on average. This is increasingly more so in the DAT service area. There is currently a review of CIN plans and an emphasis on step down and more robust scrutiny on transfer to manage caseloads. The Service are working towards social workers having on average caseloads of 18 children per full time equivalent social worker.					
PED02 07	Increase the proportion of missing incidents where a return interview is completed (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	71%	85%	70%		
	<i>Supporting commentary:</i> Clare Hunt For this period, there have been 83 return interviews completed with 64 young people by the commissioned service. 70% of young people completed a return interview and 78% were completed within 72 hours, this is an increase from the previous quarter. The Declines for return interviews were 65 incidents by 30 young people.					
PED02 08	Reduce the number of children who repeatedly run away in Halton (in last 12 months, snapshot end of quarter)	38	N/A	21 (full year)		N/A
	<i>Supporting commentary:</i> Clare Hunt For this reporting period, there has been a total of 186 notifications. There have been three young people with repeat missing incidents. These three young people have made five or more incidents during the quarter, accounted for 32% of all missing incidents in the quarter. 3% of all young people for the quarter are within the repeat cohort and was made up of 2 males (1 Home, 1 OLA) and 1 female (1 Care/20mile). With You's engagement rate with this cohort is 100%, with an overall RHI acceptance rate of 58%.					
PED02 09	Reduce the number of children who go missing in the year (number of children recorded as missing in last 12 months, snapshot end of quarter)	243	N/A	357(full year)		N/A
	<i>Supporting commentary:</i> Clare Hunt There has been a decrease 4% of missing incidents from 193 to 186, as well as an increase of 3% young people 88 to 91. It continues to be the case that the majority (45%) of CYP reported missing are residing at home, following the trend seen in the previous quarters. The significant reasons that CYP reported as their main reasons/trigger for going missing this quarter were boundary issues (Home & Care), direct family conflict, substance misuse and issues at school. Looking at the professional reasons identified within the RHI alongside this, these reasons were largely agreed with, however peer pressure was identified by the professional completing the RHI as a key trigger for CYP going MFH.					
PED02 10	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (snapshot end of quarter)	15	20	13		
	<i>Supporting commentary:</i> Linda Evans There has been targeted piece of work underway to review all high-risk cases as per procedure under the multi-agency meetings with social workers providing a detailed and current risk assessment, We have now progressed a review of all medium risk cases. All cases are heard at the monthly meeting with a targeted risk management plan for each child.					

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



Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED02a	Embed a systemic model of social work practice across the whole service, social workers, managers and senior leaders. Peter Murphy (March 2023)	
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> Peter Murphy The 'roll out' of training in support of systemic practice remains ongoing. Systemic principles are being aligned to policy and procedures, including social work practice standards and the supervision policy. Practitioners are beginning to use systemic principles in their work with children and families.</p>		
PED02b	Review and update Workforce Strategy in line with the Knowledge and Skills framework and the Professional Capabilities Framework. Developing the competencies, skills and knowledge of the workforce making them motivated, stable and ambitious will improve the outcomes for families and keep them at the heart of everything we do. Peter Murphy (March 2023)	
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> Peter Murphy Work is continuing in developing a workforce strategy. A "star chambers" approach has been adopted to align the service structures with the current staffing establishments in Early Help and Children's Social Care</p>		
PED02c	Implement redevise structure for children and need service to ensure better resilience and management accountability to provide a safe and structured environment for social workers. (Peter Murphy)	
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> Peter Murphy The Service structure supporting Children in Need is currently under review.</p>		
PED02d	Implement revised quality and assurance framework to monitor improvements in practice (Peter Murphy)	
<p><u>Supporting commentary:</u> Peter Murphy These arrangements are now in place. Quality assurance systems are in place that provides oversight as to the quality of practice across the Service, including a framework for learning.</p>		

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

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



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

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

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

All placements are tracked through the resource and placements meeting where sourcing Halton’s mainstream foster carers is a primary focus. The current level of sufficiency due to increase of looked after children is resulting in the use of Independent Fostering Agencies, and in some circumstances residential, however as foster carers approvals are also tracked there are means to place with in house carers planned. All requests for a fostering placement on Eclipse go to the internal fostering team to ensure best use of resources as well as tracking against new applicants at an early stage and only after this is a referral made to the independent sector (SM)

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

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

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

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

PED03 05	Benchmarking year – Percentage of CIC Residential and Leaving Care placements that have received a Quality Assurance Visit from the Placements Team within the previous 12 months (cumulative from April to end of quarter)	N/A	N/A	Residential 42% Leaving Care 94.7%	N/A	N/A
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Supporting Commentary: [Sam Murtagh](#)

The increase in the number of placements requests this quarter as well as previous quarter has impacted on the team’s ability to complete some planned quality monitoring visits. However, as well as the planned visit there have been a number of responsive visits that have taken place linked to quality concerns from Professionals as well as a result of OFSTED inspection outcome reports (SM)

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






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






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



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




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

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


Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED04 01	Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plan assessments completed within 20 weeks (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	78.9%	75%	25.8%		
<p>Supporting Commentary: Charlotte Finch 25.8% is based upon 47 of 182 cases being completed from August to present.) This is an unacceptably low KPI. The timescales fell significantly during the Autumn and Spring term. Additional staff capacity and new management is now in place and the performance is slowly improving, by approximately 2 % per week. It is anticipated that the recovery will gain momentum from September onwards. 25.8%</p>						
PED04 02	Reduce the number of incidents of fixed term Suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	535	500	1218 Instances of SUSP's		
<p>Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton There has been a significant increase and more than doubling of suspensions of pupils from schools from 535 in 21/22 to 1218 this year. This is a particular concern as it impacts significantly on the pupils missing school due to suspension but also other pupils whose learning may be disrupted by behaviour in the classroom. The local authority have established a multi-agency group to work with schools to identify pupils at risk of exclusion with a view to advising on support and strategies to avoid permanent exclusion. The group meets every week at a different school to look at support and processes in place at each school and any pupils raised at risk of exclusion. We have seen an increase in suspensions following Covid. This includes younger primary children in Reception and Year 1 with behavioural issues possibly due to limited experience of Nursery provision due to Covid and also lack of transition support when starting in primary. We have also seen increases in behaviour concerns in early secondary years again possibly due to lack of transition support. During Covid there was also lack of face-to-face support for families and children which again may have had an impact. During Covid the gap in learning for some children has widened from their peers which has impacted on self-esteem, engagement with school and behaviour.</p>						
PED04 03	Reduce the number of children subject to fixed term suspensions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	308	350	552 Children with SUSP's		
<p>Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton With the number of suspensions is increasing across Halton we are also seeing the number of children being suspended increasing from 308 in 21/22 to 552 children to date. The target of 350 hasn't been met.</p>						
PED04 04	Reduce the number of children subject to a permanent suspension (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	15	30	39 (but 40 PERM Ex. One child excluded from 2 schools		
<p>Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton There has been a significant increase in permanent exclusions of pupils from schools particularly at KS3. The local authority established a multi-agency group is working with schools to identify pupils at risk of exclusion with a view to advising on support and strategies to avoid permanent exclusion. The rise in permanent exclusions reflects the rise in suspensions with a significant majority being for persistent disruptive behaviour. The multi-agency group is working with schools to better understand what behaviours are seen in schools and any patterns of behaviour and interventions in place looking to identify areas of good practice and share with other schools.</p>						

PED04 05	Report on the proportion of children subject to Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) placed in independent and out of borough provisions (snapshot end of quarter) – long term target is to reduce	7.4%	3.6%			
<i>Supporting Commentary:</i>						
PED04 06	Report on the budget spent on independent and out of borough (OOB) provision for SEND (Forecast end of year)	Total year spend £6,875,000	£250000 reduction			
<i>Supporting Commentary:</i> Sam Murtagh 107 pupils are placed at non-maintained and independent schools with 39 referrals received between April 2022 and March 2023. This represents a slight reduction in terms of current placements The average placement cost has risen to £56,059. Work has been completed both as an individual local authority as well as collaboratively across Liverpool City Region to mitigate against the uplift requests this year from providers with the average uplift settling around the 7% mark as opposed to the uplifts requests that ranged up to 18%. There are currently 27 open referrals for a NMISS placement: 24 of whom are male; 14 children referred have a primary need of SEMH and 2 of ADHD. 16 referrals are in KS3, with 5 in KS4, 5 in KS2 and 1 child in KS1.(SM)						
PED04 07	Increase the percentage of children subject to EHCP placed in mainstream provision (snapshot end of quarter)	44.6%	65%			
<i>Supporting Commentary:</i> Charlotte Finch 50.9% does not include mainstream colleges and nursery settings. With mainstream college's it would be 59.9% and 50.9% does not include mainstream colleges and nursery settings. With mainstream college's it would be 59.9% and including nurseries would be 66.2%, which would in effect be an improvement on the last reporting cycle.						
PED04 08	Monitor the percentage of Special Schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	xx	100%			N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary:</i> All schools good or outstanding including recently inspected special schools with strong outcomes across the board.						
PED04 09	Increase the percentage of Education Health and Care plans for Child Protection and Children in Care completed in 16 weeks (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	N/A	75%			N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary:</i> Charlotte Finch All Education and health care plans timeliness is improving.						



Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED04a	Develop and Implement the Social Emotional and Mental Health Strategy (SEMH) by March 2023. Impact to be monitored through the action plan.	
<i>Supporting Commentary:</i> Charlotte Finch Due to significant absence and vacancies within SEND, this has been delayed due to focus being placed upon increased volume of statutory assessments; recruiting staff and building service capacity and developing provision within borough aligned to the SEND sufficiency strategy. This will be developed in consultation with stakeholders across the next academic year.		
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:</i> Sam Murtagh There has been an increase in hours delivered between quarters 3 – 1204 hours compared to 1297 hours in quarter 4. Overall annual hours delivered have been maintained with 5898 hours of short breaks delivered to children in 2022/2023. On average there has been an increase in the number of children accessing provision this year with over 140 children accessing activities each quarter compared to 100 to 110 during 2021/2022. The contracts for Swimming Lessons and the Personal Assistant Support Service have been extended for 1 year from April 2023, however the contract for Motiv8 that delivered Art classes and Dance and Drama is ending due to staff changes. Vibe has introduced an additional club for a smaller group of children with more complex needs, which is running well. Quarterly and bi-annual meetings are taking place with providers to monitor provision and a provider meeting is booked in for quarter 1.		






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


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

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED05 01	Ensure all eligible children for the vulnerable 2-year-old funding access quality EY provision (internally collected termly information – may not match to published data from Jan census)	91	100% of eligible	98%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell / Belinda Yen</i> The DfE provided a target of 477 children to be placed. Halton have placed 466 (not including 17 Out of Borough (OOB) settings) which equates to 98%. 95% of day care and pre -school settings are good or outstanding; funded two-year-olds are only placed in good/outstanding Childminders provision 44						
PED05 02	Increase the take up of Early Years Entitlement for 3- to 4-year-olds.	89%	96%	93.9%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell / Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson</i> The current 93.9% figure is based on national data produced from the January 2023 annual census.						
PED05 03	Monitor the percentage of Early Years settings (pre-schools, day care, out of school clubs, childminders) with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding (snapshot end of quarter)	94%	N/A	91% (as of 31st March 2023)	N/A	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell / Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson</i>						









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





ED05 04	Monitor the percentage of Primary schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	81.6% (As of 30th April 2022)	N/A		N/A	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell April 2023, 37/49 primary schools Good or outstanding (76%). 8 schools remain requires improvement and 4 inadequate. There have not been any category changes published during Q4, and we continue to work closely with school leaders</i>						
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		N/A	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell April 2023 4/8 Secondary schools Good or Outstanding (50%)</i>						

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)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> <i>ASIA Link Officers to maintain and faith schools, as part of their termly visits, hold leaders to account for educational outcomes and progress of all pupils, especially disadvantaged and SEND. Disadvantaged working groups are led by the local authority, but work alongside education leads, SENDCOs and DSLs to ensure there is an effective pupil premium strategy within each school and that funding is being used to best effect to secure improved outcomes and life chances for children and young people. Guidance is provided to school governors through the directors briefing and through governor briefings to enable them to fulfil their duties.</i>		
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)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> <i>The continued impact of Covid on pupils, especially the most vulnerable, is monitored as part of termly ASIA Link officer work in schools, including the use of National Tutoring Programme funding and the impact on pupil premium pupils.</i>		
PED05c	Review the process of risk assessment for schools and settings to target support and drive improvement (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> <i>The School Improvement Team risk assess schools termly and adjust targeted support to meet needs of schools. In Q4 1 secondary school and 3 primary schools were re-categorised with 3 improving and 1 identified as needed additional support. Outcomes published in summer 2022 based on statutory assessments and exams showed that bespoke working to meet individual need supported by National Tutoring Programme enabled young people to receive individual tuition that made a positive difference to outcomes.</i>		
PED05d	Build engagement, capacity and governors understanding of the strategic roles and responsibilities (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> <i>Governor training and briefings were well attended and promoted governor roles and responsibilities in relation to use of performance data and being confident about their roles within a school inspection and understanding of the school inspection handbook. Peer reviews are being carried out in partnership with school leadership teams and SEND governors</i>		
PED05e	In partnership with schools, review and design an effective educational vision for the region that meets pupils needs whilst raising ambitions (March 2023 Jill Farrell)	

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
<p><u>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</u> Halton Learning Alliance have agreed the educational vision for the region in line with the Priority Educational Investment Area plans. Key priorities include Early Years development; improving outcomes in reading and maths through all key phases and improving attendance A focus of inclusion runs throughout all key priority themes. Plans and Organisation leads for each strand are being identified.</p>		
PED05f	Launch Halton Learning Alliance Strategic Partnership to develop an inclusive, ambitious approach developing contributing, successful citizens locally, nationally and globally. All educational stakeholders and community members acting with morale purpose for Halton children, young people and community members (March 2023, Jill Farrell)	
<p><u>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</u> Halton Learning Alliance have agreed the educational vision for the region in line with the Priority Educational Investment Area plans. Key priorities include Early Years development; improving outcomes in reading and maths through all key phases and improving attendance A focus of inclusion runs throughout all key priority themes. Plans and Organisation leads for each strand are being identified, including MATs, a maths hub and currently talks are in progress with regard to the lead for KS2 and KS4 reading outcomes.</p>		

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

Ref:	Measure	21/22 Actual	22/23 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED06 01	Maintain the percentage of 16–17-year-olds not in education, employment or training (snapshot end of quarter, end of year information February)	3.7%	4.0%	4.9%		
<p><u>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</u> A continuation of the issues seen in previous quarters: a significant greater number of young people are not available to the labour market due to illness, including mental health issues, in 2022/23 compared to the previous year. In addition, there are a greater number of young people who are not in education, employment or training this year. All are allocated to a worker to support them, although not all do want support from the team.</p>						
PED06 02	Maintain the percentage of 16–17-year-olds whose activity is not known (snapshot end of quarter, end of year information February)	0.3%	0.3%	0.5%		
<p><u>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</u> A continuation of the issues seen in previous quarters: there are more young people (and/or their families) who have refused to disclose the young person's activity or where they are currently living in 2022/23 than in previous years, meaning more young people are recorded as cannot be contacted or refused to disclose. This means their current situation is not known and we have no other means of gaining the information.</p>						
PED06 03	Increase the percentage of 16–17-year-olds with an offer of learning (September guarantee)	96.6%	98%	96.02%		
<p><u>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</u> This is the September 2022 reported figure as figures leading up to September 2023 are not currently available. The outcome is a result of the increased number of young people who are not available to the labour market due to illness and who have not sought options for learning due to their illness.</p>						
PED06 04	Increase the percentage of 16–17-year-olds participating in education or training that meets the Government definition of full participation (known as Raising the Participation Age)	90.9%	92%	86.6%		
<p><u>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</u> The increase in the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training impacts this figure. The significant reduction in those participating has been in the 16-year-old cohort. The figures are 3.1% lower for 16-year-olds compared to last year, for 17 year olds the figure is 1.5% lower. This matches the experience with those who left Year 11 in July 2022 and haven't progressed to post 16 educations.</p>						

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED06a	Closely monitor the cohort of young people not in education, employment or training and identify common patterns/issues to inform actions, guide the effective use of resources and to identify any future commissioning needs (Háf Bell) (March 2023)	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> Ongoing analysis takes place to respond to need and ensure the resources that are available to the team are being used appropriately. This has been developed through the year to meet the increasing demand of young people who are not in education, employment or training. Whilst the resources available are being used effectively, there are not enough resources to give the same level of service to young people as in previous years due to volume of need.</p>		
PED06c	Work with schools, the College and training providers to review the post 16 offers of learning made to young people and increase the amount of offers made before the end of an academic year. (July 2023) (Háf Bell)	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> Work is currently taking place to analyse the returned information from the school sector and identify any gaps in information.</p>		
PED06d	Work with schools, the College and training providers to report where young people progress to Post 16 as quickly as possible so those who haven't progressed can be identified and contacted to offer support (Háf Bell)	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> Good flow of information from institutions, including being able to access information from out of borough institutions quicker this year than previous years, helping us identify young people who need support sooner.</p>		
PED06d	Work with Post 16 education and training providers in the borough to support the development of provision that does have clear progression opportunities (March 2023) (Háf Bell)	
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> Post 16 provision in the borough is limited in terms of range of provision. There is a large range of options at an Outstanding college, although this is oversubscribed, and places fill quickly. There is also school 6th form provision and provision in small work-based learning providers. Two work-based learning providers rely on sub contracted arrangements, limiting control they have over the number of young people they can take. The college and school 6th form work on academic year courses, limiting in year progression.</p>		

5.0 Financial Summary




Q4 2022.23 Children
& Families Final.docx





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Education, Inclusion a

6.0 Appendix I




6.1 Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress	Milestone	Measure
Green		Indicates that the milestone is on course to be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.
		Indicates that the annual target is on course to be achieved.

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

6.2 Direction of Travel indicator

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

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

6.3 Key for responsible officers:

JF Jill Farrell, Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision Service
PM Peter Murphy, Operational Director, Children and Families Service