

A G E N D A

Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Date: **Monday, 13th March, 2006**

Time: **10.00 a.m.**

Place: **The Council Chamber,
Brockington, 35 Hafod Road,
Hereford**

Notes: Please note the **time, date** and **venue** of
the meeting.

For any further information please contact:

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**County of Herefordshire
District Council**

AGENDA

for the Meeting of the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

To:	Councillor	B.F. Ashton (Chairman)
	Councillor	J.P. Thomas (Vice-Chairman)
	Councillors	N.J.J. Davies, G. Lucas, R.M. Manning, Mrs. J.E. Pemberton, Mrs. S.J. Robertson, D.C. Taylor, Mrs E.A. Taylor, Ms. A.M. Toon and W.J. Walling
	Church Members	J.D. Griffin (Roman Catholic Church) and Revd. I. Terry (Church of England)
	Parent Governor Members	Ms K. Fitch (Primary School Parent Governor Member) and Mrs. C. Woolley (Secondary School Parent Governors)
	Teacher Representatives	M. Carter (Special Education Sector Teachers) and C. Lewandowski (Secondary School teachers)
	Headteacher Representatives	A Marson (Secondary Headteachers) and Miss S. Peate (Primary Sector Headteachers)

	Pages
1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	
To receive apologies for absence.	
2. NAMED SUBSTITUTES	
To receive details any details of Members nominated to attend the meeting in place of a Member of the Committee.	
3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on the Agenda.	
4. MINUTES	1 - 6
To approve and sign the Minutes of the meeting held on 16th December, 2005.	
5. SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY	
To consider suggestions from members of the public on issues the Committee could scrutinise in the future.	

6. JOINT AREA REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN HEREFORDSHIRE 7 - 8

To advise Children's Services Scrutiny Committee of the recommendations for improvement, following the Joint Area Review (JAR) and to indicate progress so far.

7. HEALTH OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN HEREFORDSHIRE 9 - 12

To brief scrutiny members on the work undertaken by Children's Services and its partners to improve and maintain the health of children and young people in Herefordshire.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

The Council has established Scrutiny Committees for Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing, Children's Services, Community Services, Environment, and Health. A Strategic Monitoring Committee scrutinises corporate matters and co-ordinates the work of these Committees.

The purpose of the Committees is to ensure the accountability and transparency of the Council's decision making process.

The principal roles of Scrutiny Committees are to

- Help in developing Council policy
- Probe, investigate, test the options and ask the difficult questions before and after decisions are taken
- Look in more detail at areas of concern which may have been raised by the Cabinet itself, by other Councillors or by members of the public
- "call in" decisions - this is a statutory power which gives Scrutiny Committees the right to place a decision on hold pending further scrutiny.
- Review performance of the Council
- Conduct Best Value reviews
- Undertake external scrutiny work engaging partners and the public

Formal meetings of the Committees are held in public and information on your rights to attend meetings and access to information are set out overleaf

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Public Involvement at Scrutiny Committee Meetings

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There are also two other ways in which you can directly contribute at Herefordshire Council's Scrutiny Committee meetings.

1. Identifying Areas for Scrutiny

At the meeting the Chairman will ask the members of the public present if they have any issues which they would like the Scrutiny Committee to investigate, however, there will be no discussion of the issue at the time when the matter is raised. Councillors will research the issue and consider whether it should form part of the Committee's work programme when compared with other competing priorities.

Please note that the Committees can only scrutinise items which fall within their specific remit (see below). If a matter is raised which falls within the remit of another Scrutiny Committee then it will be noted and passed on to the relevant Chairman for their consideration.

2. Questions from Members of the Public for Consideration at Scrutiny Committee Meetings and Participation at Meetings

You can submit a question for consideration at a Scrutiny Committee meeting so long as the question you are asking is directly related to an item listed on the agenda. If you have a question you would like to ask then please submit it **no later than two working days before the meeting** to the Committee Officer. This will help to ensure that an answer can be provided at the meeting. Contact details for the Committee Officer can be found on the front page of this agenda.

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(Please note that the Scrutiny Committees are not able to discuss questions relating to personal or confidential issues.)

Remits of Herefordshire Council's Scrutiny Committees

Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing

*Statutory functions for adult social services including:
Learning Disabilities
Strategic Housing
Supporting People
Public Health*

Children's Services

Provision of services relating to the well-being of children including education, health and social care.

Community Services Scrutiny Committee

*Libraries
Cultural Services including heritage and tourism
Leisure Services
Parks and Countryside
Community Safety
Economic Development
Youth Services*

Health

*Planning, provision and operation of health services affecting the area
Health Improvement
Services provided by the NHS*

Environment

*Environmental Issues
Highways and Transportation*

Strategic Monitoring Committee

*Corporate Strategy and Finance
Resources
Corporate and Customer Services
Human Resources*

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- Inspect background papers used in the preparation of public reports for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting. (A list of the background papers to a report is given at the end of each report). A background paper is a document on which the officer has relied in writing the report and which otherwise is not available to the public.
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- Have a reasonable number of copies of agenda and reports (relating to items to be considered in public) made available to the public attending meetings of the Council, Cabinet, Committees and Sub-Committees.
- Have access to a list specifying those powers on which the Council have delegated decision making to their officers identifying the officers concerned by title.
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COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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COUNTY OF HEREFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of Children's Services Scrutiny Committee held at The Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford on Friday, 16th December, 2005 at 10.00 a.m.

Present:	Councillor	B.F. Ashton (Chairman)
	Councillor	J.P. Thomas (Vice Chairman)
	Councillors	G. Lucas, Mrs. S.J. Robertson, D.C. Taylor, Ms. A.M. Toon and W.J. Walling
	Church Members	Mr P. Eyles (Church of England) and J.D. Griffin (Roman Catholic Church)
	Teacher Representatives	C. Lewandowski (Secondary School teachers)

In attendance: Councillors T.M. James, D.W. Rule MBE (Cabinet Member Children's Services) and J. Stone

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mr M. Carter, Cllr R. M. Manning, Miss S. Peate Cllr Mrs J. E. Pemberton, Revd. I. Terry and Mrs C. Woolley.

14. NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Mr P. Eyles substituted for Revd. I. Terry.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

16. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd October, 2005 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

17. SUGGESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON ISSUES FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY

No suggestions for areas of scrutiny were received from the public.

18. CABINET MEMBER'S BRIEFING

The Committee was advised by the Cabinet Member (Children's Services), of issues within the Children's Services portfolio.

The Cabinet Member (Children's Services), elaborated upon points made in the briefing report contained in the agenda and reported that priorities for the Children and Young People's Plan in Herefordshire, indicated in his report, were currently

being shaped and would be subject to consultation before being submitted to the Children's & Young People's Partnership Board in February 2006 for confirmation. These priorities had been based on needs analysis and anticipated the outcomes from the Joint Area Review (JAR) inspection.

He highlighted that a current challenge for the Service was a potential over-commitment of £382,000 (as at September 2005), which the Service was actively working to reduce to a minimum. This was largely due to out of area placements; secure orders and payments for bed and breakfast for homeless young people leaving care. Out of area placements for specialist education resources were also high costs. There was a projected overspend of £427,000 with further placements required before the year-end. This would result in greater budget pressures for future years. The inclusion policy in the school sector was supported by a banding policy for additional needs resources in schools. This was an important policy to support but the funding was stretched. Currently the budget was predicted to overspend by £20,000 for primary schools. However, this was likely to be offset by a similar under-spend for banding by high schools.

The Cabinet Member also reported that since publication of the agenda the Joint Area Review (JAR) report for Herefordshire Children's Services Authority Area had been made publicly available. The JAR report was disappointing in that it concluded that not all those youngsters at greatest risk got consistent help and that the Council's systems needed improvement. The overall contribution of services to keeping children and young people safe was regarded as inadequate, although the inspectors found some good support to prevent family breakdown, abuse and neglect and good support for looked after children. He reported that actions were already being taken on the key outcomes and an overall action plan to address the recommendations in the report would be produced as soon as possible.

The Director of Children's Services emphasised that the JAR inspection report was not all bad news and highlighted a number of areas receiving a good assessment namely: good quality early education and childcare provision; good overall support for young people in the local authority's care and good partnership working.

She commented upon the areas identified as 'of concern' in the JAR. She also highlighted an example that whilst the County had 59 children on the 'at risk' register, national statistics indicated that the County "should" have nearer 70. This had been of concern to the inspection team and was a contributory factor to the overall inspection outcome. However, the inspection team had provided no evidence of bad practice or that the Service was not identifying any children in this category. She emphasised that this, and the other concerns raised in the report were already being investigated or reviewed and that while maintaining the high quality of work being carried out, the Service would strive to improve those areas identified in the report. It was necessary to focus on the improvement needed.

During the course of debate the following principal points were noted:

- Additional resources to improve the areas identified in the JAR would need to be investigated. The Director of Children's Services reported that all partner agencies were already heavily prioritising their resources. Assuming no new investment the Children & Young People's Partnership Board would need to consider possible areas for decommissioning or reprioritisation. The Sure Start Grant would need to be used to the best effect.
- Public perception of the JAR outcomes may be confusing as a number of issues related to processes rather than the frontline service.
- In relation to staff morale the Director of Children's Services reported that she had already met with the managers, social workers and the duty team to discuss the JAR report.

- It was suggested that a seminar be arranged for Members on the organisation and management of the Family Support Services.
- Responding to an allegation that in some instances a heavy-handed approach was adopted to the investigation of cases for the Child Protection Register, the Head of Social Care (Children) commented that any issue of concern was taken into account. A balanced but robust risk assessment was needed.
- The Cabinet Member (Children's Services) commented that levels of services were good in areas covered by children's centres. However, due to the rural nature of the County and financial constraints, the most rural areas were less well provided for.
- Multi-agency meetings were already being held to look rigorously at the implementation process for the '3 levels' under the Child Concern Model. Members were issued with a copy of the Herefordshire Child Concern Model for information.
- In response to a question on the availability of baseline data to facilitate the measurement of any improvement to areas identified in the JAR report the Director of Children's Services reported that the Service already collected performance data and 'Needs Analysis' data.
- Questioned on the rigour with which contracts and fees were negotiated for 'out of area placements', the Head of Children's and Student's Services reported that providers were robustly challenged on service level and fees. However, the Service had to deal sympathetically and appropriately with the most challenging and complex young people. When appropriate the Service considered 'spend to save' measures to reduce the long-term cost of individual care, which may be between £50,000 and £400,000 per annum per placement.

It was noted that a report on the actions taken to address the shortcomings identified in the JAR inspection report would be presented to the March 2006 meeting.

**RESOLVED:
THAT**

- a) the report of the Cabinet Member- Children's Services be noted and a report on the actions to address the shortcomings identified in the JAR inspection report be presented to the March 2006 meeting; and**
- b) a seminar be arranged for Members on the organisation and management of the Family Support Service in the County.**

**19. INTEGRATING SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN
HEREFORDSHIRE**

The Committee was invited to comment on the proposed framework entitled "Integrating Services for Children and Young People in Herefordshire", outlined in the paper attached to the agenda report at appendix 1.

The Director of Children's Services reported that the consultation paper set out some of the key arguments and reasons for change and provided some ideas for how this could be achieved in Herefordshire. At the heart of the debate about integrating services to children and facilities, was the recognition that better outcomes in education attainment and health and safety, required the combined action of a number of agencies. The focus of Every Child Matters (ECM) was on vulnerable children and young people, especially those who were in danger of social exclusion. However, the Director explained that this was not simply about children with the most complex needs but about focusing on the needs of all children and recognising that outcomes were linked.

The Director of Children's Services highlighted that the provisional conclusions indicated in the consultation paper were that the concept of developing "service hubs" – the reconfiguration of services around the child and family in one place, for example, children's centre, extended schools and the bringing together of professionals in multi-disciplinary teams – and their location in areas of relative deprivation was already developed and comparatively straightforward in Herefordshire. She reported that while a clear view of the long-term destination was apparent, and indicated in the consultation paper, what was not so clear was the route to this destination, however, the report set out a number of pointers and signposts for the journey.

In the course of debate the following principal points were noted:

- Further information on the concept of Extended Schools was requested.
- Acknowledging that the development of Children's Centres was at an early stage in the County and that the area of the City south of the River Wye was identified as an area of deprivation, a view was expressed that areas of the City to the north of the river were also in need of these facilities. The Committee were informed that this was already the subject of a feasibility study.
- Accepting that the provision of after school transport would be extremely expensive, the Committee reminded the Cabinet Member (Children's Services), that while the City and Market Towns lacked adequate off-peak public transport provision, many rural areas had no transport infrastructure that would permit children to participate in after school activities, thereby adding to their sense of rural isolation.
- The Committee noted that a pilot project was being worked on with Sure Start (and the DfES), which would provide valuable information concerning provision and cost that would inform the rest of the integration programme.
- While schools already work together in the pyramid system further collaboration may be possible through School Trusts.
- The Committee questioned why a child who attended one school, but lived near another school, could not make use of that other school's after school facilities.
- The Cabinet Member – Children's Services emphasised that the development of children's Centres and Extended Schools was necessary and possible.

RESOLVED: that, subject to the points noted above, the framework for integrating services for Children & Young People in Herefordshire, as outlined in Appendix 1 to the report, be noted.

20. REVIEW OF STATUTORY AND CO-OPTED MEMBERS ON CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - UPDATE

The Committee considered the principles under which a Foster Care representative and a Children's Social Care Social Worker representative were to serve on the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee and other arrangements.

In accordance with the resolution passed at the Committee's meeting held on 3rd October, 2005, the Director of Children's Services, following consultation with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman, put forward in a report an appointment mechanism and terms for a Foster Care non-voting co-opted representative and a Children's Social Care Social worker advisor to the Committee. The report also proposed that the term for non-voting co-opted teacher representatives expire at May 2007 and thereafter run concurrently with Council elections and that prior to Council elections

Headteacher Associations reconfirm or re-nominate their representative.

The Committee noted that, depending on the subject to be debated, suitable officer advice would be secured or an external representative e.g. in relation to Youth Services or the Child Protection Agency, would be invited to attend the meeting.

**RESOLVED:
THAT**

- a) **the Herefordshire Foster Care Forum be invited to nominate one representative to serve on the Committee under the terms proposed in the report;**
- b) **one Children's Social Care Social worker be nominated by the Director of Children's Services to act as advisor to the Committee;**
- c) **the term of office for the non-voting co-opted teacher representatives be set to expire at the May 2007 Council elections and thereafter the term for non-voting co-opted representatives run concurrently with the Council's Electoral cycle; and**
- d) **subject to the Associations confirming their nominations prior to Council elections the term of office for the Headteacher representatives be at the discretion of the appropriate Headteacher Association.**

21. CHILDREN'S SERVICES SRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2006/7

The Committee considered a new work programme for 2006/07.

Following consultation with the Vice-Chairman and the Director of Children's Services the Chairman proposed the Committee work programme, as set out at appendix 1 to the report, for the period May 2006 to March 2007.

The Chairman confirmed the current intention that the March 2006 meeting would debate issues concerning:

- the Every Child Matters agenda and the Change for Children Programme. The Committee would particularly focus on the outcome of the Joint Area Review (JAR) and the Cabinet Member's action plan to tackle the areas of concern identified from the review; and
- Young People's Health issues.

The Committee considered the programme and suggested the following issues for consideration:

- i) Pupil transition arrangements between primary and secondary school and between secondary school and sixth form or college. It was suggested that parental concerns about their child e.g. in relation to pupil dyslexia problems, were not being adequately communicated at the time of transition. The Director of Children's Services reported that the Joint Area Review (JAR) had identified that "planning overall for young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) was a weakness" and this wider aspect may be an area to which scrutiny might give consideration.
- ii) Disruptive Behaviour in Schools – the Committee requested a workshop on this subject so that they could appraise of the level of disruption and the

methods of monitoring employed and be informed of what measures the Executive and schools were taking to control it.

- iii) Any potential implications arising from the feasibility of the Steiner School at Much Dewchurch becoming an Academy.
- iv) School Improvement Service (SIS) - formerly IASPS – Following clarification on what aspect of the services was to be the subject of a scrutiny report, the Committee requested comparative details on school performance, particularly in relation to the 2005 exam results, including vocational training.
- v) A report was requested concerning Weobley High School's achievement of coming out of 'special measures' within a year of being placed in that category by OfSTED. Following clarification of the matter to be scrutinised the Cabinet Member (Children's Services) responded that he was pleased to report that the school had come out of 'special measures' and that any good practice learned would be disseminated to other schools.

RESOLVED:

THAT

- a) **that the work programme as set out at appendix 1 to the report be approved and recommended to the Strategic Monitoring Committee;**
- b) **the suggested issues i, ii, iii and iv above be noted and taken into consideration as the work programme evolved during the year; and**
- c) **the response by the Cabinet Member (Children's Services) in relation to Weobley High School be noted.**

The meeting ended at 11.47 a.m.

CHAIRMAN

JOINT AREA REVIEW OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES IN HEREFORDSHIRE

**Report By: SUE FIENNES, DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S
SERVICES**

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To advise Children's Services Scrutiny Committee of the recommendations for improvement, following the Joint Area Review (JAR) and to indicate progress so far.

Financial Implications

2. The budget planning for 2006-07 does contain an allocation to support the Improvement Plan.

Considerations

3. The JAR Improvement Plan has been sent to the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) to the Chief Inspector alongside the Department for Education and Skills (DfES). This was undertaken on the 9th February. We are still awaiting the outcome of their assessment of our capacity to improve given this plan.
4. If the response is available at the time of Children's Services Scrutiny Committee it will be tabled to indicate the next steps for Herefordshire. At this stage it is not possible to attach the Plan as it has not been approved as indicated above.
5. The Staying Safe judgement of inadequate is a serious concern to the Council and Partners. The improvement must deliver confidence in the area that children are properly referred and assessed against revised criteria.
6. The Strategic Monitoring Committee has indicated that they are keen to be engaged in the future monitoring of the Improvement Plan and it will be important for both Chairs of Committee to be properly briefed about the Plan as soon as the endorsement is forthcoming. The first four recommendations in the JAR report are the most critical for improving on Staying Safe.
7. The recommendations are:-
 - Recommendation 1 - ensure that appropriate criteria are set for the involvement of the LA's professionally qualified Social Care staff In child protection cases
 - Recommendation 2 - ensure that these criteria are clearly understood by all concerned and consistently applied in practice.

- Recommendation 3 - ensure that there is an effective workforce strategy to address the recruitment and retention problems within the local authority's Social Care Service.
 - Recommendation 4 - ensure that a written record is made of all contacts with the Social Care Duty Team.
8. Recommendations 1 and 2 are now developed for implementation in March. Recommendation 3 is progressing to the agreed timetable. Recommendation 4 has already been acted on.
9. There is an Annual Performance Assessment (APA) for Children's Services in Herefordshire. This is a routine assessment which happens for Herefordshire to follow on from the JAR Inspection last year. There is an opportunity for us to demonstrate and evidence the improvement for this assessment. The week of assessment for Herefordshire will be week commencing 12th June. This will be conducted by Brian Cartwright, Her Majesty's Inspectorate (Ofsted) and Lynette Ranson, CSCI.
10. Key questions for the Committee in examining the JAR report are:-
- How does the child protection system work?
 - What is the overall performance on "Staying Safe" in Herefordshire?
 - What are the revised criteria and how will they improve access into the child protection system?
 - What are the workforce implications?
11. Copies of the full JAR inspection report have been issued to Committee Members as a separate document. Copies can be made available to the public on request.
12. Further updates will be given at the time of the Committee on the 13th March.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Committee note the JAR report and the progress so far and indicate their intention to undertake ongoing monitoring of progress.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- JAR Report (December 2005)

**HEALTH OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN
HEREFORDSHIRE****Report By: DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES****Wards Affected**

Countrywide.

Purpose

To brief scrutiny members on the work undertaken by Children's Services and its partners to improve and maintain the health of children and young people in Herefordshire.

Financial implications

The ongoing work will be met through the existing budget arrangements

Report

1. National Healthy School Status (NHSS) is a new approach to the holistic education of children and young people not only in school, but also as part of the wider community.
2. It follows what was a less rigorous process that became subsumed by the new status in September 2005.
3. The new status consists of four themes to which the local Herefordshire Healthy Schools Partnership (HHSP) has added a fifth. The themes are Healthy Eating, Physical Activity, Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) that includes Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) and Drugs Education, and Emotional Health and Well-Being (EHWB). The additional local theme is that of Difference and Diversity.
4. This more holistic approach is fully in keeping with the five outcomes of Every Child Matters.
5. Healthy Schools is a partnership between Health and Children's Services, and the local team is based at the Education and Conference Centre in Blackfriars Street. The team consists of a PSHE and Healthy Schools Coordinator, a health promotion specialist out posted from the Primary Care Trust, Project Worker, School and Community Gardener, Drugs Education Officer and Race Equality Officer.
6. Far from being a delivery mechanism for the various criteria specified within the NHSS documentation, the HHSP works with schools to ensure quality input from a variety of community partners. With a more unified approach

recently to the provision for children, the HHSP has started to work very effectively at both a strategic and operational level.

7. A strategic steering group has met for the first time this academic year, to set terms of reference and to bring the partners up to speed with recent changes. Representatives from strategic roles within the Police, Fire and Rescue Service, Health, Children's Services as well as many community partner groups were represented. At an operational level there have always been, and continue to be, good, effective and efficient working relationships.
8. Nationally there is an expectation that 50% of all schools will have the new status by the end of 2006, and that all schools will have it by the end of 2009. Locally the team has a target of 50% by the end of the academic year 2005 - 2006. Currently 54 schools are already engaged in the process and we are confident we should see success. There is to be an award ceremony on 27th June at the Bishops Palace, where the Bishop will give the awards.
9. NHSS aims to encourage a holistic approach to learning, giving children and young people the skills to make wise decisions about issues that will affect their lives and health. This is done through securing good quality teaching and learning in a physical, social and emotional environment, which is safe, secure and appropriate. The learning and environment is for children and young people, and also for staff, parents and the wider community. Many schools have already embarked on the process of becoming an Extended School, and there is a clear need for partnership working with the Extended Schools agenda, which we are developing. NHSS remains a 'quality assurance' mechanism for Extended Schools provision.
10. The Healthy Schools team has also been working to ensure that all partners working with schools do so within a clear structure of good lesson planning and resource preparation, delivery and feedback. All work is being encouraged within the guidance provided by QCA.
11. As far as possible the HHSP encourages student voice and the effective setting up and use of school councils. We provide training on this for any school needing it. It is essential that children and young people are heard, and that their views are valued. To this end we have worked to promote the Herefordshire Youth Council. We also await the launch of our website which will enable children and young people to continue using their voice, and to celebrate good practice in schools and link with partner agencies.
12. **Drugs Education**
A report was submitted to Scrutiny in March 2005 and there is nothing further to add at this point.
13. **Sex and Relationship Education**
A health promotion specialist from the PCT is part of the HHSP with a specific remit for this area. Schools and the team plan their work based on local data. The school nursing service has been working together with the HHSP in developing good quality SRE education appropriate for age and stage based on this data. Parents have also been encouraged to take part in this

collaborative working. School nurses alongside teachers have been taking a part in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in PSHE. We have the fourth cohort starting in April on a programme funded through the Teenage Pregnancy Unit (TPU). There has also been a lot of work done this year on raising self-esteem, particularly aimed at reducing teenage pregnancies.

14. The overall sexual health of teenagers in Herefordshire is improving, but the conception rate has gone up. With a teenage pregnancy (TP) rate of 37.8 (per 1000 females ages 15-17) for 2004, Herefordshire has gone up by 1.4% since the 1988 baseline rate. This was predicted by the TP Coordinator, due to small numbers of conceptions in Herefordshire. Comparing this to the regional picture, West Midlands has a rate of 45, and we are significantly lower than that. Having only 126 conceptions in 2004 but 96 in 2003 – it is difficult to maintain a downward trend.
15. However, despite this rate of change, the work towards targeting teenage pregnancies continues in schools. In particular a resource at KS3 that targets alcohol and behaviour associated with alcohol use is going into all schools. This resource deals with sexual behaviour and activity under the influence of alcohol, through a drama/role play approach. This is in line with current evidence as to what is effective in the delivery of harder to teach subjects. With this resource and Healthy Schools working with schools to ensure SRE policies are robust, the work to reduce TP rates is more exciting than ever. In the coming year, Healthy Schools and the TP Coordinator will be working on 'kite marking' high school SRE lessons.
16. **Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE)**
A new PSHE Coordinator has been in post since September, and is working with the team to ensure quality provision of PSHE. This is being done through work directly in schools, but also with training of new teachers as part of work done with Marches Consortium. Within schools the work is being monitored for quality whether it is discretely timetabled or mapped across the curriculum. The extent to which it meets the criteria of the NHSS shows areas for development. Together with school nurses, teachers are following year long CPD in PSHE. The fourth cohort is starting in April. This will ensure good quality provision in schools.
17. **Healthy Eating**
This aspect of school life has been given a very high profile recently and the HHSP has worked hard to ensure sustainability of any changes being made. The HHSP is working with the PCT (as part of the multi-agency Obesity Strategy), the council (school meals provision) and various community groups, to ensure that the need for good food in schools is understood by all stakeholders. The 'Food in Schools Toolkit' has been used as the basis for progressing schools towards this important goal. Schools are only too aware of the link between food, water and effective learning, but need support to ensure it becomes embedded in the culture of the school. The PCT health promotion specialist has produced guidance for the council on school food provision.

18. Physical Activity

The move away from PE and team games to a broader provision of Physical Activity is not only part of the NHSS framework but also links with the Obesity Strategy. NHSS aims to encourage the removal of barriers to participation by promoting/providing a wide range of activities that suit all children and young people. This has been facilitated recently through the Sports College partnerships and the teams of Partnership Development Managers (PDMs) and School Sports Coordinators (SSCos). They work within guidelines from Youth Sport Trust in supporting physical activity in schools.

19. Emotional Health and Well-being

There have been guidance and schemes of work issued recently by the DfES, which develop skills of emotional health and well-being. HHSP has been involved in training teachers in the delivery of these, and also in placing this good practice within the NHSS criteria. EHWP encourages the achieving of potential by all students and the development of skills for later life. This area is fundamental in the holistic education of children and young people.

20. Difference and Diversity

As we have a Race Equality office in the HHSP, we added this dimension to the NHSS documentation. It formalises good practice that should exist in all schools. Resources and training have been provided to facilitate this theme. Documentation has been drawn up, cross-referencing NHSS with the five outcomes of ECM and the criteria schools have to address for the Ofsted SEF (Self Evaluation Form). This also spells out the value of being a 'Healthy School'.

21. In conclusion it has become increasingly clear that NHSS is an important school improvement tool, provides an excellent focus for improving the health of children and young people, and is also a good audit mechanism to identify areas for development. The service is being sought by partner agencies including Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, and the Police, to engage in collaborative provision for schools. The future is indeed exciting.

Recommendation

Scrutiny Members are invited to note the report and comment on it as appropriate.