

MEETING:	CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	28 SEPTEMBER 2009
TITLE OF REPORT:	PERFORMANCE DIGEST – QUARTER 1 2009/2010
PORTFOLIO AREA:	CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND ICT, EDUCATION AND ACHIEVEMENT

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To present the Performance Digest for Children's Services for the first quarter of 2009/2010 (April – June 2009) and to highlight key performance issues.

Key Decision

This is not a key decision

Recommendation(s)

THAT Scrutiny Committee assess the levels of performance achieved for the first quarter of 2009/2010 and consider if further reports and/or action is judged to be necessary.

Key Points Summary

- There has been improved performance in relation to the percentage of initial assessments completed within 7 working days from the year end outturn.
- There has been significantly improved performance in relation to the achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage. However, unvalidated results at Key Stage 1 continue to show a downward trend over the last three years. Key Stage 2 performance is mixed with some improvements within English and Maths for girls but a further decline for boys. Science performance is good with all results above the national average. Of particular concern is the results performance in narrowing the gap for vulnerable groups. This has declined significantly on last year's performance.
- The impact of the recession and general economic downturn is continuing to affect the percentage of young people not in education, training or employment and families in bed and breakfast accommodation.
- There continues to be good performance in relation to the participation of looked after children

Further information on the subject of this report is available from
Hilary Hall, Head of Performance on (01432) 260801

and young people in their reviews, with some young people now chairing their own reviews.

Alternative Options

- 1 There are no Alternative Options.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 To ensure that progress against the indicators, for which the Children and Young People's Directorate is responsible, is understood and to ensure that the reasons for actual or potential under-performance are understood and recommendations made for remedial action.

Introduction and Background

- 3 The Performance Digest is produced quarterly and is the mechanism for monitoring key performance indicators, covering service delivery captured in the Local Area Agreement, the Children and Young People's Directorate and the Children and Young People's Plan. Committee members have been issued with copies of the Performance Digest. The Digest is available from the Council's web site or on request to the Head of Performance.

Key Considerations

- 4 Key areas in each of the Every Child Matters outcome areas, to which the Committee's attention should be drawn, are set out below:

Be Healthy

Results from the local Every Child Matters survey undertaken in secondary schools during March 2009 are now available. Compared with the previous survey undertaken in 2006, the percentage of young people smoking has reduced by 2% from 8% to 6% (HCS 22a); the percentage of young people consuming alcohol has reduced from 18% to 14% (HCS 22e). The percentage of young people eating 5 or more fruit and vegetables a day has also fallen from 24% to 22% (HCS 22c). 886 young people, aged between 15 and 24 years, were screened for Chlamydia in the first quarter of the year, down on the projected number of 1050 (NI 113b); the prevalence of Chlamydia in young people is currently 4.5% which is below the national prevalence rate of 10% (NI 113a). There was a very low response rate to the School Food Survey, which makes the results of very limited use. The survey did indicate that the take up of school lunches in primary and secondary schools (NI 52), were disappointing. There will be more joined up working between Facilities Management and Children's Services to encourage schools to take part.

Stay Safe

At the end of Quarter 1, for the rolling year, there were 263 referrals per 10,000 population aged under 18, a slight drop on the year end outturn of 276. 56.9% of initial assessments were completed in 7 working days (NI 59) which is an improvement on the year end position of 37.4%. Quarter 1 outturn has been significantly affected by performance in April 2009, offset in part by exceptional performance in May and June. Performance for the year to the end of July 2009 is now at 62.5% so it is anticipated that the target of 65% will be achieved by the end of Quarter 2. Performance in relation to the timeliness of completing core assessments (NI 60) has been affected in Quarter 1 with 56% completed in 35 working days. This is due to the discovery of a large number of uncompleted core assessments which were already out of timescale. Priority has been given to finishing off these core assessments by the end of

August 2009 as well as focusing on ensuring new core assessments are completed in timescale.

There has been a rise in the number of children subject to a child protection plan in quarter 1 from 104 as at 31 March 2009 to 120 as at 30 June 2009. 100% of children subject to a child protection plan were allocated to a named social worker (DIS 1219). The percentage of children subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time has fallen to 12.6% from the year end position of 15% (NI 65). All reviews of child protection cases have taken place during Quarter 1; however, as the figure is reported on a rolling year basis, five cases in the final quarter of 2008/2009 missing the statutory timescales has affected the Quarter 1 outturn (NI 67). The number of looked after children has fallen from 162 as at 31 March 2009 to 152 as at 30 June 2009. 100% of looked after children were allocated to a named social worker (DIS 1114). The percentage of looked after children in residential accommodation (KIGS CH44) has fallen slightly from a year end outturn of 11% to 10.5% reflecting the monthly review of placements taking place through the Children's Resource Panel.

Enjoy and Achieve

Although not achieving the target for achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (NI 72), the outturn of 45.8% represents a significant improvement on the 2008 outturn which was 42%. The predominance of summer born boys in the EYFS continues to impact on results with 37% of boys achieving the improvement target compared with 54.9% of girls. The percentage of boys in the total cohort is not significantly more than girls but there are a higher proportion of summer born boys, making up 18% of the cohort. It is recognised, nationally and locally, that boys do less well than girls, and summer born children do less well at the Foundation Stage. Unvalidated data for Key Stage 2 shows that 70.8% of children achieved Level 4 in English and Maths (NI 73) which is 2% below the 2008 outturn. Results in Key Stage 2 have shown a continuing downward trend over the last three years and work is currently underway to explore the reasons behind the trend and to develop a robust improvement plan.

75 looked after children out of a cohort of 87 (86.2%) have an up to date personal education plan (CYPEA-6). The majority of the remaining 12 are booked to have their plans updated in the autumn term. Currently, 8 children and young people have hit, or are likely to hit, the 25 day absence target (HCS 35a). Final data will be available in October 2009.

Make a Positive Contribution

All reviews of looked after children cases have taken place during Quarter 1 (NI 66). However, as the figure is reported on a rolling year basis, five cases in the final quarter of 2008/2009 missing the statutory timescales has affected the Quarter 1 outturn. 94.4% of looked after children participated in their reviews, an improvement on the year end position of 93.4% (PAF CF/63). During Quarter 1, there were 41 first time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 to 17 years (NI 111). In relation to re-offending, 52 young people from the cohort of 123 re-offended in the period with 143 offences between them (NI 19). Three young people, out of a cohort of 96, were sentenced to custody having received a conviction in court (NI 43).

Achieve Economic Wellbeing

The impact of the recession and general downturn in the economy continues to impact on this outcome area. The percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NI 117) continues to rise. The post 16 NEET programme has just started up again which will help. However, the biggest group in the overall NEET group is 18 year olds who have already been through the post-16 provision. Connexions is liaising with Jobcentre Plus

about fast tracking these young people to New Deal provision. At 30 June 2009, 7 families were occupying bed and breakfast accommodation (CYP-AEW1). The increase in the number of families presenting as homeless has meant that the homeless team has resorted to bed and breakfast accommodation when other temporary accommodation is not available.

Service Management

50% of social workers have achieved the PQ1 award (DIS 3124). New recruits who do not currently hold the award have impacted on the overall percentage and the target for the year has been revised to 55%. 6.7 working days were lost to sickness absence per FTE within Safeguarding and Vulnerable Children Service (HR02). There has also been a reduction in the number of long term absence cases. The social worker establishment, as at 30 June 2009, stood at 49.5 FTE against a target of 57 FTE (HR03).

Community Impact

5 None.

Financial Implications

6 Remedial action in respect of the directorate's performance may require reallocation of resources within existing budgets. This is being addressed by the Directorate Leadership Team.

Legal Implications

7 None.

Risk Management

8 The risks to achievement of the indicators, for which the directorate is responsible, are identified by officers as part of the service planning process. Any significant risks are escalated to the directorate risk register, and corporate risk register, as appropriate. Day to day management of risk is undertaken by responsible officers, in conjunction with their Assistant Directors.

Consultees

9 None.

Appendices

10 Performance Digest circulated with the agenda as a separate document.

Background Papers

- None identified.