

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>11 DECEMBER 2009</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>PERFORMANCE DIGEST – QUARTER 2 2009/2010</b>
<b>PORTFOLIO AREA:</b>	<b>CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND ICT, EDUCATION AND ACHIEVEMENT</b>

**CLASSIFICATION:** Open

### **Wards Affected**

County-wide

### **Purpose**

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

### **Key Decision**

This is not a key decision

### **Recommendation(s)**

**THAT Scrutiny Committee assesses and considers the levels of performance achieved for the second quarter of 2009/2010 and considers if further reports and/or action are judged to be necessary.**

### **Key Points Summary**

- The percentage of initial assessments completed within 7 working days has significantly improved and is now ahead of the target for the year.
- Unvalidated results show that the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A\*-C GCSEs including English and Maths in the 2009 exams was the same as in 2008 at 52% which is ahead of the national average of 50% but still below the target. 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. Of particular concern is the results performance in narrowing the gap for vulnerable groups which has declined significantly on last year's performance.
- Educational attainment of looked after children, particularly at GCSE, shows good performance again this year, ahead of national and statistical neighbour averages.

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

- Persistent Absence in High Schools fell for the second successive year to 5.3% which met the target for 2009-10 and was 1.2% below this year's target. The national average of persistent absence is 5.58%. Overall absence in High Schools has fallen for the third successive year. In terms of exclusions, the trend overall is down with 18 permanent exclusions in 2008-2009. Clearly improving performance in these two areas ensures that children and young people are attending schools which, in turn, will positively impact on their achievement and attainment.

## 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. The Digest has been issued to Committee members as a separate document. Copies are available to the public on request.

## 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***

797 young people, aged between 15 and 24 years, were screened for Chlamydia in the second quarter of the year, which is less than the projected number of 1050 (NI 113b); the prevalence of Chlamydia in young people is currently 4% which is below the national prevalence rate of 12% (NI 113a). Results from the local *Every Child Matters* survey undertaken in secondary schools in March 2009 show a reduction in the percentage of young people smoking and consuming alcohol. The percentage of young people consuming 5 or more fruit and vegetables a day has also fallen. The majority of indicators in this outcome area is subject to annual reporting in March 2010.

### ***Stay Safe***

At the end of Quarter 1, for the rolling year, there were 262 referrals per 10,000 population aged under 18, a slight drop on the year end outturn of 276. 67.9% of initial assessments were completed in 7 working days (NI 59) which is a significant improvement on the year end position of 37.4% and ahead of the target for the year. It reflects the targeted improvement work undertaken by managers in the service, supported by the performance team, focusing on quality and timeliness. Figures to the end of October 2009 show a continuing upward trend at 70.2%. As previously reported in quarter 1, a large number of uncompleted core assessment which were already out of date had been identified. These have now been completed and performance in relation to the timeliness of completing core assessments (NI 60) has remained at 57%. The risk of the potentially negative impact of a large number of out of date core assessments has been mitigated by a focus on completing new core

assessments in timescale. Completion of 'new' core assessments is in line with the target set for the year of 75%.

There has been a slight rise in the number of children subject to a child protection plan in quarter 1 from 120 as at 30 June 2009 to 128 as at 30 September 2009. The percentage of children subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time continues to maintain good performance at 12.7% (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 152 as at 30 June 2009 to 144 as at 30 September 2009. Performance in relation to the stability of placements for looked after children (NI 62 and 63) in terms of the number of moves and length of placement, continues to be very strong, ahead of national and statistical neighbour averages.

### ***Enjoy and Achieve***

Unvalidated results show that the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A\*-C GCSEs including English and Maths in the 2009 exams was the same as in 2008 at 52% which is ahead of the national average of 50% but still below the target of 60%.

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%. 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 improvement work in the current academic year will focus on embedding specific strategies around reading and writing, focusing on tracking pupil progress and continuing universal support and training for school, together with targeted work with key schools.

As at the end of Quarter 2, 9 personal education plans for looked after children (CYPEA-6) were outstanding; these were all completed in October. 100% of looked after children sat at least one GCSE examination (DIS 1406). 3 looked after children out of a cohort of 14 achieved 5 or more A\*-C GCSE including English and Maths; a further 3 achieved 5 or more A\*-C GCSEs not including English and Maths.

### ***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. 96.6% of looked after children participated in their reviews, an improvement on the previous quarter's outturn of 94.4% (PAF CF/63). During Quarter 1, there were 33 first time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10 to 17 years (NI 111), a decrease on the previous quarter's outturn of 41. In relation to re-offending (NI 19), 52 young people from the cohort of 123 have re-offended in the previous 12 calendar months with 143 offences between them. 5.2% of young people 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 continues to liaise with Jobcentre Plus to fast track these young people to New Deal provision. The Children's Trust

is using Area Based Grant awarded by the Herefordshire Partnership to increase the number of places on a variety of programmes to reduce the number of young people not in education, training or employment. At 30 September 2009, 2 families were occupying bed and breakfast accommodation (CYP-AEW1), a decrease on the previous quarter's outturn of 7.

### ***Service Management***

60% of social workers have achieved the PQ1 award (DIS 3124). 8.8 working days were lost to sickness absence per FTE within Safeguarding and Vulnerable Children Service (HR02), slightly behind the target for the year of 8 working days but considerably better than the year end outturn of 11.27 days. Managers, supported by HR, have been proactively managing short term absence cases through the corporate policy and procedure and there has also been a corresponding reduction in the number of long term absence cases. The social worker establishment, as at 30 September 2009, stood at 44.6 FTE against a target of 57 FTE (HR03). Appointments have been made to the vacant posts with CRB clearance awaited.

## **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.