

MEETING:	CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
DATE:	11 MARCH 2011
TITLE OF REPORT:	STANDARDS IN THE EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE AND STANDARDS IN THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY STAGES – FURTHER UPDATE
REPORT BY:	HEAD OF IMPROVEMENT

CLASSIFICATION: Open

Purpose

Following reports from the Head of Improvement to members of Children's Services Scrutiny Committee on 22 October 2010 and 10 December 2010 on current school and early years foundation stage performance the Committee requested an update at a mid point in the academic year.

Recommendation

THAT Children's Services Scrutiny Committee notes the content of this update to the earlier standards reports and reflects on the actions to improve educational outcomes in the respective phases of early years settings and maintained schools in Herefordshire

Key Points Summary

- The Herefordshire School Improvement Policy and Early Years Improvement Policy was agreed in the summer term 2010 and have been implemented since 1 September 2010.
- All Herefordshire schools and settings have been allocated an agreed category of performance (a four point criteria referenced scale set out in Herefordshire Council's School and Early Years Improvement Policy) and appropriate interventions and support have been determined.
- The performance of all schools in Herefordshire is formally reviewed six times a year at forum meetings attended by CYPD officers and the SIP.
- Schools in categories 1 and 2 receive regular (at least once a term) monitoring visits from their SIP. Early years settings receive an annual visit from an early years consultant and access support through termly network meetings and monthly training.
- Schools and settings in category 3 receive more frequent visits and agree a support plan with the school improvement service, the impact of which is continually monitored by the SIP/EYC and SIA.

- Schools and settings in category 4 receive frequent visits and agree a rapid recovery plan with the school improvement service. The impact of interventions and improvement activity is continually monitored by the SIP and SIA and formally reviewed at monthly progress check meetings which include the head teacher, chair of governors, SIP and SIA.
- Statutory performance targets (progress and attainment) have been agreed with all schools for 2011 and 2012.
- The Ofsted inspection profile of schools and settings in Herefordshire is improving. The number of schools in an Ofsted category of concern has fallen from six to two in this academic year. The proportion of schools judged good or outstanding is increasing. The primary details are shown in table 1. The inspection profile of High Schools remains particularly strong and is improving.
- The next key milestone for national testing will be the summer 2011 early years profile results and school test and examination results.

Alternative Options

- 1 There are no alternative options.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 The report is presented as an overview and impact of current actions and interventions to improve the educational outcomes of children and young people in Herefordshire.

Introduction and Background

Early Years Foundation Stage

- 3 The Early Years Foundation Stage is the national statutory framework for early years education for all children 0-5 years. The framework incorporates the statutory welfare requirements and guidance on learning and development across six areas:
 - Communication, language and literacy,
 - Personal, social and emotional development,
 - Problem solving, reasoning and numeracy
 - Creative Development
 - Physical Development
 - Knowledge and Understanding of the World.
- 4 The first statutory assessment of children's progress comes at the end of the Reception year at school when children are 5 years old. It is measured and reported under the Early Years Foundation Stage profile.
- 5 In 2010 the gap in attainment for the most vulnerable children under five in Herefordshire narrowed to be in line with national expectations. However, the target relating to the

percentage of children achieving a good level of development in the aspects listed above (paragraph 3) was not met and declined slightly against the previous year's performance.

- 6 As reported to Scrutiny in October 2010, an investigation was carried out to examine the disappointing early years outcomes in Herefordshire. 40% primary schools reported errors in the data submitted to the Local Authority. Further investigation highlighted that the systems for submission of the early years data were inadequate, and school staff were unclear about the interpretation and use of early years data. Actions were put in place to address gaps in systems for data collection and in improving practitioner knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile.
- 7 Following investigation by national bodies - The National Strategies and Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) it was agreed and recorded that there were "anomalies" in the data and that the 2010 data does not reflect the quality of intervention and support offered within the Local Authority. The QCDA judged the LA moderation of the Early Years Assessment process to be good.

Primary

- 8 The first statutory assessment of children's progress comes at the end of the Reception year at school when children are 5 years old. It is measured and reported under the Early Years Foundation Stage profile. This is followed at age 7 by statutory Key Stage 1 assessment, measured through moderated teacher assessment and informed by the results of national tests.
- 9 Achievement data was summarised in the autumn term scrutiny paper. The Local Authority does not collect mid year information on attainment and progress and this report cannot therefore comment on whether achievement is improving or deteriorating across the county. Individual discussions with schools will happen through summer term SIP meetings and this information taken alongside the key stage 1 and 2 end of year data will be used to make a comment on achievement at that time.
- 10 National tests are undertaken at the end of key stage 2 in the summer term. Results are collected and made available for schools and local authorities.
- 11 The Local Authority uses the information from both national tests/examinations and Ofsted inspections of schools to inform planning and to measure effectiveness. A key role is to pinpoint where additional support is needed, and to identify the good practice to be shared.

Secondary

- 12 The next key milestone for national testing will be the summer 2011 examinations for schools at KS4 and KS5.
- 13 Some schools operate an early entry policy or undertake modular examinations in some subjects and these will count towards the final outcomes for that cohort of students. Feedback from these early entry and modular tests has been very encouraging.

Key Considerations

Early Years Foundation Stage

Table 1 Summary and Interim Evaluation of Actions Taken:

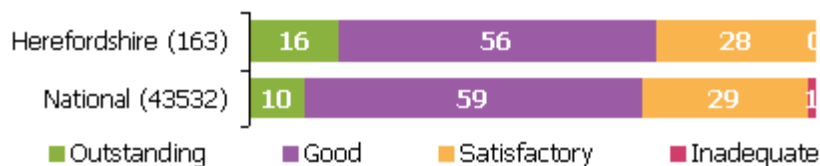
Proposed Actions (Scrutiny Report Oct. 2010)	Interim Evaluation Report (February 2011)
<p>Introduction of new systems for the collection, analysis and submission of the early years foundation stage profile data in 2010. The new system is known as E-Profile and is used by most other Local Authorities.</p>	<p>All Herefordshire Primary Schools have been advised to use 'eProfile' to collect and analyse early years profile data. Training has been provided by the Early Years Improvement Advisor and Early Years Profile Moderation Manager at six workshops (October – December 2011) or during school visits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> EYFS Teachers (55) <input type="checkbox"/> Headteachers (3) + New Heads (7) <input type="checkbox"/> School Improvement Partners (10) <p>Impact: All schools that participated in training are now using EProfile and have given positive feedback. Training in the use of Early Years Profile Data will be included in Head Induction Training, Governor Training and for staff new to the Early Years Foundation Stage. An audit of Primary Schools (February 2011) is being carried out to assess use of EProfile.</p>
<p>Introduction of a training programme for Head Teachers, School Improvement Partners, Local Authority Advisors and Consultants to ensure consistent advice is given, and the profile data is used effectively to analyse and present standards in early years.</p>	<p>All Primary Schools provided with the Herefordshire Early Years Profile Data Pack which can be used to support analysis of provision and practice in Reception Classes.</p> <p>Every Primary School was offered support from an Early years Consultant to analyse the 2010 data at child level.</p> <p>12 Schools accepted the offer of a 1:1 discussion. Two Heads requested telephone conversations.</p> <p>70 delegates attended an 'EYFS/KS1 Transitions' conference. Speakers from QCDA and The National Strategies (21/01/11)</p>
<p>Ongoing support and challenge to ensure EYFS/Year 1 teachers are making accurate judgements, collecting information, using and applying the data to inform their provision and</p>	<p>100% Reception Teachers to attend cluster moderation meetings in Spring Term. Trained moderator to attend each cluster meeting and to</p>

<p>practice.</p>	<p>collect Spring Term data and record outcomes.</p> <p>30% schools to receive Moderation Visits in Summer Term. 70% schools to attend group Moderation Meeting in Summer term.</p>
<p>Extension of the pilot programme to track progress of children attending pre-school settings so that accurate information on children's learning and development is provided on entry into school.</p>	<p>Pilot Programme 'Progress Matters' extended across all group settings. Format to be included in 2011 county-wide Transition Document.</p> <p>Early Years Entry Profile piloted in reception classes. Positive feedback from reception teachers, Heads and Ofsted Inspectors. Entry profile format now provided to all Herefordshire Primary Schools.</p>
<p>Support for strengthened quality improvement arrangements in children's centres ensuring early identification and intervention for vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>Children's Centre Reviews completed in two centres. Highlighted gaps in systems for data collection, consistency and cohesion across the county. Since September 2011 a Children's Centre Steering Group has been established. Data for Children's Centres is now collated centrally and presented as a Data Profile updated on a quarterly basis. An annual cycle of Quality Improvement has been introduced which will support self evaluation processes, target setting and focused improvement.</p>
<p>Strengthening engagement of parents in children's early learning and development. A particular focus on the development of children's speech and language through the 'Every Child a Talker' DFE funded project in preschools and the Communication, language and literacy DFE funded programme in schools.</p>	<p>'Lets Talk' training for parents and EY Practitioners (26 parents/11 Practitioners)</p> <p>Speech and Language Support for Under Fives 2x 10 week course (66) 2 day overview for Leaders and Managers (48)</p> <p>'Getting Started' training for parents in Children's Centres (36 Parents)</p> <p>25/26 Early Language Lead Practitioners will complete training in March 2011 and will support delivery of the county wide programme of early language support for Under Fives.</p> <p>Partnership Project with Bookstart to promote Under Fives and Family membership of Libraries. Reported in Herefordshire Matters.</p> <p>'Letters and Sounds' Parent Workshops in 8 Primary Schools involved in CLLD Intervention</p>

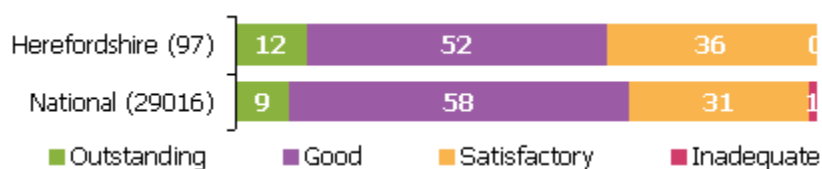
	Project.
Improving the accuracy of observations and assessments in early years. Introduction of E-Profile, a new EYFS data collection and analysis tool, with associated training for Heads, Teachers and LA Advisory Teams.	<p>Observation and assessment workshops delivered at monthly training for Early Years Teachers/Practitioners. 100 delegates attended and took away resources (Early Years Entry Profile Pack, Progress Matters Record Sheets and Vulnerability Matrix) Heads, Teachers, Practitioners reported piloting assessment tools, gave positive feedback and have requested 'Progress Matters' is now used county-wide as a 'Transition Document'.</p> <p>Moderation Team trained by QCDA to support accurate observation and assessment using eProfile (February 2011)</p>
Reorganisation of the Early Years team to raise standards and ensure early identification of vulnerable groups. The team will need to be flexible in order to meet changing needs in line with new guidance and funding arrangements from the DFE.	<p>Improved links between Early Years Settings and Schools with Children's Centres.</p> <p>Multi-Agency Group meetings to support CAF and early support for vulnerable groups.</p> <p>All settings/schools have access to a named Early Years Consultant who is qualified and experienced in Safeguarding, Special Education and Early Intervention.</p>

The Current situation in Herefordshire

- 14 Ofsted report (December 2010) that the quality (overall effectiveness) of Herefordshire early years PVI provision exceeds national statistics with 72% good/outstanding compared to 69% nationally:



- 15 There has been an increase in the numbers of good/outstanding PVI settings from 59.6% in August 2008 to 72% in December 2010. Every PVI setting in Herefordshire is now subject to a graduated programme of support and challenge so this upward trend should continue.
- 16 Interim Profile data (Teacher Assessments) will be collected in the Spring Term.
- 17 Anecdotal reports suggest that Herefordshire Primary Schools expect to see a strong improvement in the numbers of five year olds attaining a 'good level of development' in July 2011, in line with the target set.
- 18 All Primary Schools/settings have identified those children at risk of delay and are delivering early intervention programmes and focused improvement plans to address gaps in provision and practice. Progress is monitored using 'Development Matters' and collected at school/setting level.
- 19 Interim data for the 'Every Child a Talker' intervention programme in early years indicates that the % of children at risk of speech and language delay decreased from 19.5% to 12.75% following early language intervention from a trained Early Years Practitioner. The % of children identified as being 'ahead' with speech and language increased from 13.75% to 22.25% following intervention.
- 20 100% Home-based Childcare (Childminders) judged by Ofsted who are in receipt of Nursery Education Funding are part of the Local Authority Network and are all judged good/outstanding.
- 21 Inspection outcomes for all Childminders inspected between 1st September 2008 and 31st December 2010:



- 22 A new 'Pathway to Quality' has been introduced for all new childminders to ensure that they all enrol in the LA network and work towards the Quality Mark accreditation. The Early Years Quality Improvement Programme of support and challenge now applies to all existing childminders and has been targeted at those with a satisfactory outcome.
- 23 A focus on Early Years Education is necessary to improve standards and close the gap for children in Herefordshire. The Profile data indicates that 56% of children in Herefordshire are starting school without a 'good level of development' and 59% boys start school with a risk of speech and language delay which will impact on their learning in primary and secondary schools. Early speech and language intervention programmes are having an impact but this needs to be reflected in the profile/KS1 data.
- 24 A coordinated approach to early years provision and practice is needed. All those working with children under five across children's services must be clear about the vulnerabilities that affect children's learning and development, and work together to ensure that those children can be identified (effective and accurate data collection) can be supported (Universal and targeted delivery of research based early intervention programmes) and tracked to show the impact and outcomes of the interventions.

Primary

Table 2 Summary and Interim Evaluation of Actions Taken

Proposed Actions (Scrutiny Report Oct. 2010)	Interim Evaluation Report (February 2011)
<p>Improving all subjects at key stage 1 with a particular emphasis on improving the performance of boys especially in reading and writing. Intervention programmes such as ECAW, ECAR, ECC and Numicon will help in addressing this. As will the early years CLLD phonics focus.</p>	<p>No mid year data is collected from schools but meetings with SIPs and SIAs focus on discussions on pupil progress.</p> <p>The SIP visit for the spring term will specifically focus on provision and will look at the effectiveness of intervention programmes.</p> <p>Schools have now started the specific intervention programmes (ECAW, ECAR, ECC and Numicon) and are reporting significant improvement in pupil progress.</p>
<p>Improving the quality of leadership in schools to ensure that all pupils make the required progress and achieve well. Tightening up of SIP visits at school will ensure that leadership receives the rigour of effective challenge and support.</p>	<p>At the Primary Forum meeting with SIPs in January it was decided to alter the categorisation of some of the schools. There are now 55 schools in category 1 and 2 support, compared with 52 previously and 26 in category 3 and 4 compared with 29.</p> <p>All SIP reports have been completed for the Autumn term 2010.</p> <p>Early headship provision meetings have taken place and are part of a package for Headteachers to develop leadership skills. Feedback from these sessions has been very positive.</p>
<p>Improving the quality of governance to ensure that the leaders in schools are challenged and supported to drive improvements in standards. The setting up of a larger governor service will ensure that the delivery of key training will develop governor skills to focus on school improvement issues.</p>	<p>The newly extended and appointed Governors Service Team has been shadowing school improvement advisors in delivery specific support to schools. A package of support including a new website to support governor development and a revised training programme are nearing completion.</p>
<p>Improving the transition between EYFS and NC SIA and Sips will work closely with schools to ensure that Headteachers ensure an effective transition between early years and the first year of the National Curriculum.</p>	<p>The training provided for SIPs in January included a focus on EYFS and the link into the National Curriculum. Three Early Years/ Key stage 1 consultants have been appointed as part of the restructuring of the CYPD.</p>

<p>Improving all subjects at key stage 2 with a particular emphasis on improving the progress of all pupils in maths and the performance of the more able in the subject. Key interventions such as the national 1:1 intervention will ensure that targeted support will be effective in accelerating progress and improving standards, The MAST training for teachers will improve teacher subject knowledge and will build up a team of teachers to support other schools in developing teacher subject knowledge in maths,</p>	<p>No mid year data is collected from schools but meetings with SIPs and SIAs focus on discussions on pupil progress.</p> <p>The SIP visit for the spring term will specifically focus on provision and at the effectiveness of intervention programmes.</p> <p>1029 pupils in Herefordshire at Key stage 2 are being supported through the 1 to 1 intervention programme. This includes children with EAL and LAC.</p>
<p>LA consultants will deliver focussed bespoke training and support for schools in targeting appropriate intervention to help move all pupils who achieve 2C at key stage 1 to level 4 at key stage 4, along with moving all pupils who achieve level 3 to a level 5</p>	<p>All schools being supported by LA consultants have agreed School Support Plans or Rapid Recovery Plans. Targeted consultancy is defined in these plans. These are being monitored regularly to ensure impact of actions.</p>

Ofsted updates

- 25 Since September 2010 the following Primary Schools have been inspected.
- 26 The table above shows that the nearly all schools inspected since September have improved their judgement grades, with one school moving two judgement grades.

Table 3

School	Previous Ofsted Overall Effectiveness Judgement	New Ofsted Overall Effectiveness Judgement
Pencombe	2 – Good	1- Outstanding
Brockhampton	3 - Satisfactory	2 – Good
Weobley	3 - Satisfactory	2 – Good
Ledbury	3 - Satisfactory	2 – Good
Kingstone and Thruxton	Notice to Improve	3 - Satisfactory
Little Dewchurch	Special measures	2 – Good
Wellington	3 - Satisfactory	3 - Satisfactory

Update on attendance

- 27 Over the last two years absence levels rose slightly in the primary phase and went above national and regional averages for the first time. Persistent absence rose slightly (by 0.3 % points) but remains below national and regional averages.
- 28 The LA has recently purchased Attendance Analysis software which will facilitate remote analysis of current attendance in Herefordshire primary schools. This will, capacity notwithstanding, enable the Education Welfare Service to respond more proactively to changes in attendance patterns where they give cause for concern.
- 29 New guidance and advice to schools has been issued relating to holiday absence in term time. Most schools discourage parents wherever possible from removing their children from school during term time for family holidays.
- 30 The other action we are about to embark upon is a greater focus on transition and attendance; again a cluster approach seems sensible.

Secondary

Table 4 Progress with the priorities for the secondary team identified in the previous scrutiny report:

Proposed Actions (Scrutiny Report December 2010)	Interim Evaluation Report (February 2011)
<p>Implement the new and revised school improvement policy and ensure that appropriate support is allocated for schools to ensure that they continue to improve.</p> <p>Ensure that any decline in school performance is addressed early so that all Herefordshire high schools remain in a positive Ofsted category.</p> <p>Work in partnership with schools to consolidate the advances made in improving the performance of disadvantaged groups of students.</p> <p>Focus challenge and support on key areas such as continuing improvement in Mathematics and English. In particular share effective practice and strategies to improve the outcomes of boys and narrow the performance gaps between boys and girls.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The secondary desk top review took place in December 2010. This included the Pupil Referral Units and the Special schools with secondary provision and excluded the Herefordshire Academy and the Steiner Academy as they are monitored through the DFE. Using the new School Improvement Policy Categorisation (not a direct parallel with Ofsted Judgements) a discussion and agreement in relation to school categorisation took place. ▪ Category 3 and 4 schools are being closely monitored and supported by SIS. ▪ Feedback from School Improvement Partners and head teachers was overwhelmingly positive about this process. ▪ A further forum meeting has taken place with category 3 and 4 schools to ensure that there are secure plans in place to improve identified aspects of performance. ▪ The School Improvement Service is deploying staff and financial resources to support schools in meeting the targets for improvement agreed. ▪ The programme to develop and support school based intervention centres continues successfully.
<p>Continue to work with the Herefordshire LA data team to further develop the systems for benchmarking school performance at key stages four and five.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This is underway. The school data profiles have been updated in November following the publication of the validated data sets.
<p>Work closely with the 11-19 Integrated Service to develop the recently established school sixth form heads' network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The heads of sixth forms are keen to develop this network and a further meeting has been planned. The network will become self sustaining and the LA will act in an advisory role as commissioned.
<p>Continue to work with school sixth forms to support their further improvement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The School Improvement Service is working closely with two sixth forms and deploying resources (financial and personnel) to support their identified areas for improvement.

<p>Work in partnership with schools, supporting head teachers and governing bodies in responding to national initiatives such as the academies programme and local imperatives such as the increasing development of alternative school models.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Both Wigmore schools (Primary and High) and John Kyrle High School became Academies on the 1st January 2011. ▪ Both schools have expressed a desire to continue to work closely with the LA. ▪ John Kyrle High School Head teacher continues to be a School Improvement Partner for another High School in the LA and is engaging their current LA School Improvement Partner for the rest of this academic year.
<p>Commission external expertise to advise SACRE on the statutory revision of the Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. Support its implementation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This revised syllabus is near completion and will be launched in the summer term for schools to implement in September 2011.

Ofsted updates

31 Since December 2010 full section five Ofsted inspections have taken place in John Masefield High School, Lady Hawkins High School and Weobley High School. Subject inspections in English and Geography have taken place in Kingstone High School and Queen Elizabeth High School. Because the inspections are recent and the inspection judgements have not been quality assured and signed off by Ofsted they remain confidential and cannot be reported. However the outcomes are positive and Herefordshire continues to have no high schools in a negative Ofsted Category.

Update on Attendance.

32 Validated data for the autumn term 2010 from the DfE expected in March.

33 Validated data for 2009-10 indicates the following:

High School Overall Absence 2009-10.

- Herefordshire's overall absence continues to fall year on year in line with national and statistical neighbour trends
- Overall absence in Herefordshire high schools was at its lowest since 1999-2000

High School Persistent Absence 2009-10.

- This also continues to fall year on year in line with national and statistical neighbour trends
- Overall Persistent Absence in high schools was at its lowest since 2005-6, the year the measure was introduced

Community Impact

34 Effective early intervention can prevent speech and language difficulties, disaffection, mental health issues, obesity, challenging behaviours and low standards in later years. Accurate information and intervention in the early years will provide long term benefits to the child, the family and community.

- 35 Improving primary pupils' achievement in the basic skills of English and maths will improve their life chances and consequently their contributions to the wider community.
- 36 Declining pupil numbers and the financial limitations of the 2011/12 budget settlement for schools mean that some schools have to reduce their staffing and that there is often increasing competition between schools to attract admissions.

Financial Implications

- 37 The recent cuts in funding and removal by Central Government of grants which have previously support school improvement activity, mean that the Improvement Service and the support provided to improve performance will, from April 2011 have to be increasingly purchased by schools and settings through a Service Level Agreement (SLA).
- 38 Statutory provision will continue to be provided at no cost.
- 39 If the purchase of the services does not cover the costs then it is likely that parts of the service will cease.

Legal Implications

- 40 No legal implications have been identified.

Risk Management

- 41 The recently announced Government funding cuts, changes in statutory services and movement into traded services will affect the future of the Improvement Service and the form of support which it has historically provided to EYFS, Primary and Secondary settings.
- 42 The ability to maintain a high quality service ensuring no Herefordshire school/setting is underperforming or in a negative Ofsted Category.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Glossary

Background Papers

None.

Appendix 1

Glossary

CLLD	Communication, language and literacy development
CYPD	Children and Young People's Directorate
EAL	English as an additional language
ECAR	Every Child a Reader
ECAW	Every Child a Writer
ECC	Every Child Counts
EYC	Early Years Consultant
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage
LAC	Looked after children
MAST	Mathematics Specialist Teachers
NC	National Curriculum
SIA	School Improvement Advisor
SIP	School Improvement Partner
SIS	School Improvement Service