

QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

DIRECTORATE: Children & Young People
SERVICE: Specialist Services
PERIOD: Quarter 3 to period end 31st December 2009

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This quarterly monitoring report covers the Specialist Services Department second quarter period up to 31 December 2009. It describes key developments and progress against “key” objectives and performance indicators for the service.

The way in which traffic lights symbols have been used to reflect progress to date is explained within Appendix 7.

2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

2.1 Roll out of Carefirst 6

The first phase of the roll out of Carefirst 6 has commenced with the Intensive Support Team going live in November 2009. This upgraded system will provide more flexible inputting and storage of case planning information. Full roll out will be completed in 2010/11.

2.2 Aiming High for Disabled Children/Short Break Programme

Short Break Programme has piloted a personalised approach to the provision of short breaks for children. Early feedback from parents has been very positive. The project received national recognition on the Taking Control website for having the youngest child in the country for having individualised budget.

2.3 Placement Strategy

As part of the Children in Care Placement Strategy, the Executive Board has now agreed that payments to Foster Carers in Halton will significantly increase in September 2010. This should improve the ability to recruit and retain more carers. A revised marketing campaign is in place and will be launched in the New Year.

2.4 National Consultations

Consultation on Care Planning, Placements & Case Review Regulations – Improving standards by providing statutory guidance in relation to aspects of Children in Care.

Consultation on Revised Working Together Guidance – Following

Baby Peter, Lord Laming made numerous recommendations, which the Government accepted and these recommendations are reflected in Working Together.

National Safeguarding Indicators – Challenge continues to be identifying indicators, which evidence outcomes for children rather than measuring processes.

3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

3.1 Inspection

We are still awaiting our Unannounced Inspection for Contact, Referral and Assessment and expected to now take place in the next quarter.




3.2 Social Work Taskforce

Social Work Taskforce published its final report in November 2009 detailing 15 recommendations for transforming Children's Social Work, which will have significant implications for work force development and how we manage front line services.

3.3 Staffing

Since the last quarter the number of front line manager vacancies has increased following recent promotions to neighbouring authorities. A number of proposals will be brought forward to the Council to address the level of vacancies, and will include enhanced remuneration as part of an overall Recruitment and Retention Strategy.

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES




Total	21		16		0		5
--------------	-----------	---	-----------	---	----------	---	----------

Most milestones are on target to be achieved within set timescales. For further details, please refer to Appendix 1.

5.0 SERVICE REVIEW




Nothing to report this quarter

6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	5		2		1		2
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Progress towards “Key” performance indicators is mixed. For further details, please refer to Appendix 2.

6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	7		0		3		4
--------------	----------	---	----------	---	----------	---	----------

Seven of the thirteen “Other” performance indicators have been reported by exception this quarter. It is uncertain, at this time, if three will meet their annual target and a further four will not. For further details, please refer to Appendix 3.

7.0 RISK CONTROL MEASURES

During the production of the 2009-12 Service Plan, the service was required to undertake a risk assessment of all Key Service Objectives.

Where a Key Service Objective has been assessed and found to have associated ‘High’ risk, progress against the application of risk treatment measures is to be monitored, and reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4. However, one control measure related to objective SS2 (Increase Placement Choice and Quality of Care for Children in Care0, has been reported by exception this quarter.

8.0 PROGRESS AGAINST HIGH PRIORITY EQUALITY ACTIONS

During 2008/09 the service was required to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. Progress against actions identified through that assessment, with associated High priority are to be reported in the quarterly monitoring report in quarters 2 and 4. However, three actions have been reported by exception this quarter.






9.0 DATA QUALITY

The author provides assurance that the information contained within this report is accurate and valid and that every effort has been made to avoid the omission of data. Where data has been estimated, has been sourced directly from partner or other agencies, or where there are any concerns regarding the limitations of its use this has been clearly annotated.

10.0 APPENDICES



Appendix 1- Progress against Objectives/ Milestones
Appendix 2- Progress against Key Performance Indicators
Appendix 3 - Progress against Other Performance Indicators
Appendix 4 - Progress against Risk Control Measures
Appendix 5 - Progress against High Priority Equality Actions
Appendix 6 - Financial Statement
Appendix 7 - Explanation of traffic light symbols

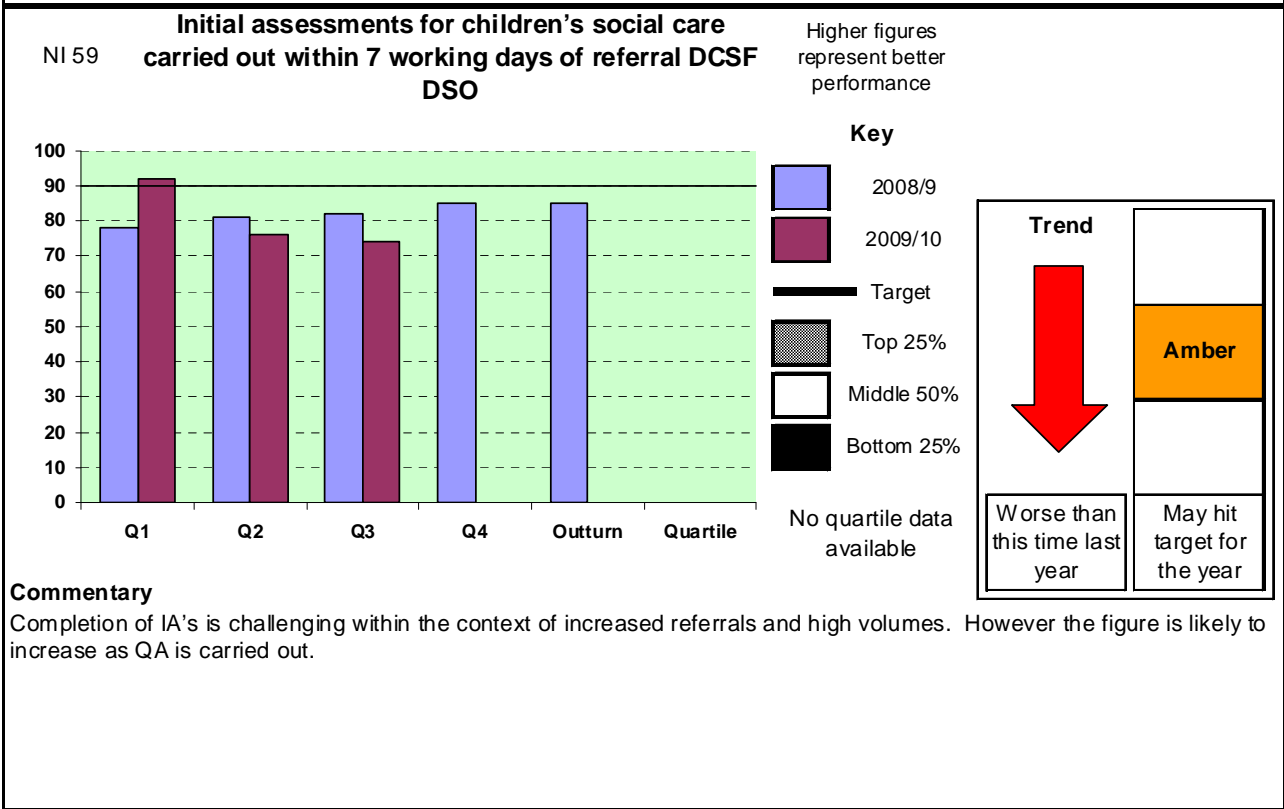
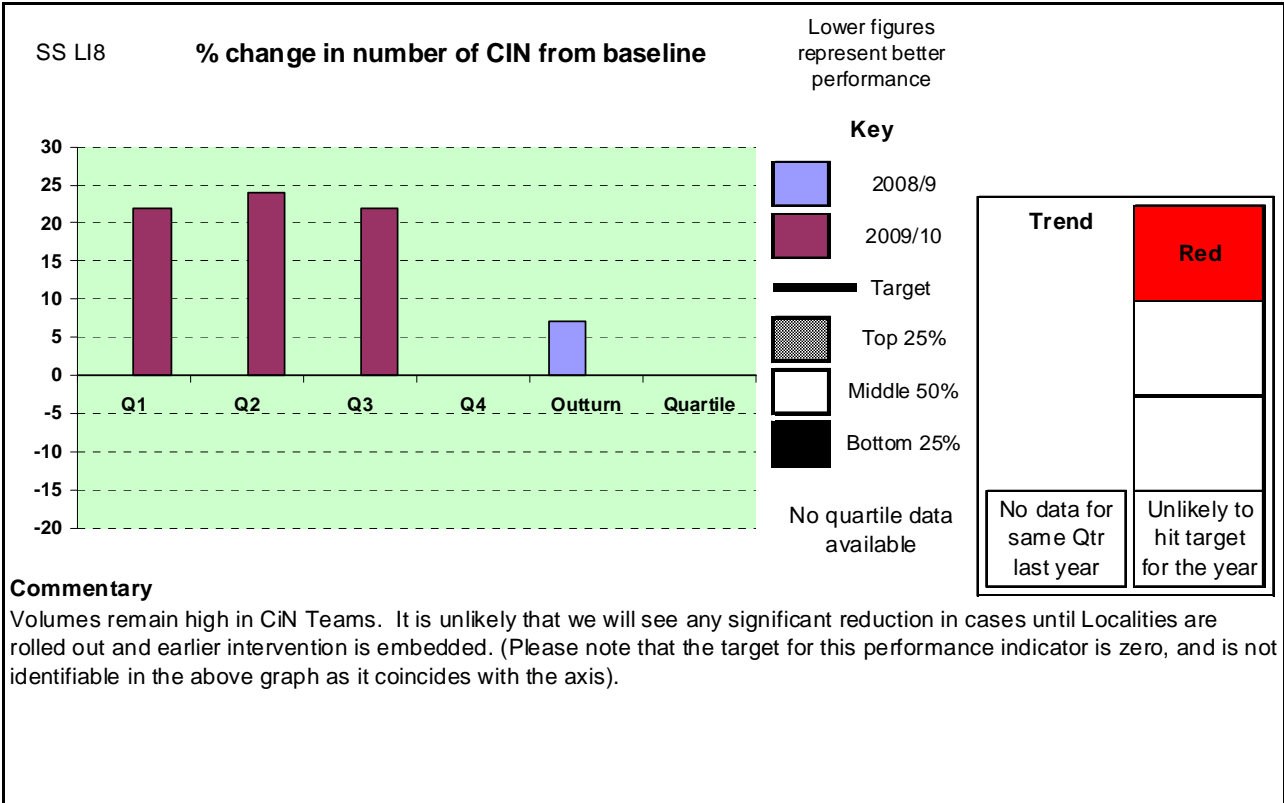
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2009/10 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
SS 1	Improve Education and Employment Opportunities for Care Leavers	Appoint a designated officer to manage care leaver employment by September 2009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Post holder in place from 1 st September 2009
		Implement an scheme that provides 10 apprenticeships for care leavers per year by March 2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Scheme implemented and 7 young people in employment
		Fully implement the Council's employment scheme for care leavers by March 2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Full report presented to COMT and work with HR and Directorates underway to fully implement the scheme by March 2010
		Introduce a bursary for care leavers going on to higher education by September 2009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Bursary scheme in place and provided to 4 young people.
		Develop the role of the Education Support Service/CSW (EET) to support the ongoing learning needs of care leavers up to the age of 21 by March 2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Comprehensive range of support in place , but requires further development to ensure Care Leavers remain EET.
		Increase the availability of permanent accommodation for care leavers by 4 units by March 2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	2 units in place with a further 4 planned to meet the target date.

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2009/10 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
SS 2	Increase Placement Choice and Quality of Care for Children in Care	Complete a review of the demand for and supply of placements for children in care by March 2009.		The review has been completed and has identified a shortage in numbers of foster carers and some gaps in residential provision. Work will continue to address these issues.
		Implement a marketing strategy to improve recruitment of foster carers by March 2009		Marketing strategy revised and new range of the material to be used within the borough from January 2010.
		Increase the number of in house foster care placements by 8 by September 2009 (10% increase)		Increase has not been achieved. Report presented to Executive Board and increased allowances for carers have been agreed from September 2010.
		Review the role of Principal Manager Fostering to secure a permanent appointment by April 2009.		Previous recruitment failed to secure a permanent appointment. Further recruitment activity has resulted in 1 applicant for interview in January 2010.
		Recruit to the vacant 4 social work posts in the adoption and fostering services by June 2009		One part time vacancy to be recruited to.

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2009/10 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		Continue to engage with the Regional Commissioning programme to improve knowledge, quality and competitiveness of local, private provision by March 2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Regional information on residential and foster carer provision is provided and updated regularly and is a source of information for commissioning activity in Halton.
		Implement and monitor CWDC development standards for foster carers by March 2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Carers making progress towards achieving the standards.
SS 3	To maintain effective Safeguarding processes	Establish a Safeguarding Unit bringing expertise across the Directorate, health and the Police to improve the co-ordination of professional expertise and quality assurance processes by April 2009.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The Multi Agency Safeguarding Unit has agreed Terms of Reference, a Statement of Purpose and a Business Plan for 2009.
		Implement a systematic approach to learning arising from Serious Case Reviews by September 2009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	HSCB endorsed a proposal that each partner agency should have a systematic approach to ensure learning from Serious Case Reviews is assimilated and embedded. This has been implemented.

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2009/10 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		Ensure that all agencies understand their responsibilities with regard to the management of allegations made against adults who work with children by March 2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	The briefing to all agencies is ongoing via the Local Authority Designated Officer. (LADO)
		Audit the implementation of the neglect protocol ensuring there are interagency minimum standards by March 2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A multi agency short life task group is working on a review and update of the neglect protocol and will agree minimum standards by March 2010.
SS 4	To provide effective and efficient services to Children in Need	Pilot an integrated Targeted Support to Families (TSF) service for children in need by realigning resources in the Directorate to meet the needs of children in need by September 2009.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	TSF will continue to develop within Locality Services once these are rolled out in 2010.
		Roll out of an assessment and analysis toolkit, supported by training for frontline staff with the aim of improving the effectiveness of assessment and care planning by March 2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Framework established. Work is underway to implement toolkit. The Children's Workforce Development Officer is now in post and working alongside front line managers to take this forward.

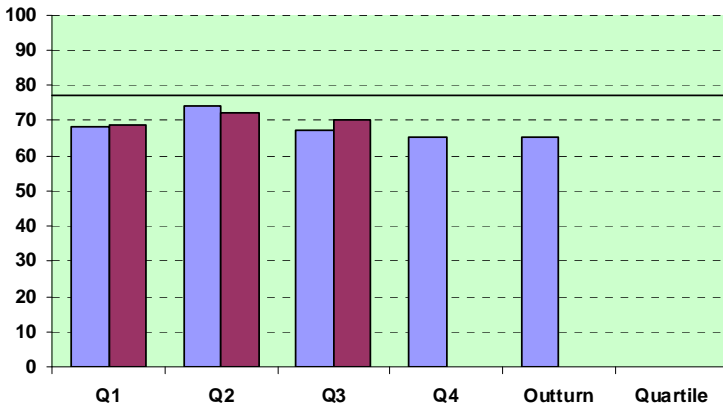
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2009/10 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		Introduce a system for independently reviewing children in need plans at levels 3b by December 2009		Successfully recruited to a post of Independent Reviewing Manager who will take the lead on implementing a system. Expected to be in post by April 2010 and system implemented by June 2010.
		Ensure that the children in need teams are sufficiently staffed to meet the current demand for children in need services by March 2009.		Although recruitment of Social Workers has remained very strong with only one vacancy, management capacity is becoming of increasing concern with 30% vacancy rate. The recruitment and retention strategy has been revised and proposals will be agreed by March 2010 to address the causes of the vacancy rate. However this will remain a challenge in the medium term



NI 63

**Stability of placements of looked after children:
length of placement**

Higher figures represent better performance



Key

- 2008/9
- 2009/10
- Target
- Top 25%
- Middle 50%
- Bottom 25%

No quartile data available

Trend

↑

	Red
Better than this time last year	Unlikely to hit target for the year

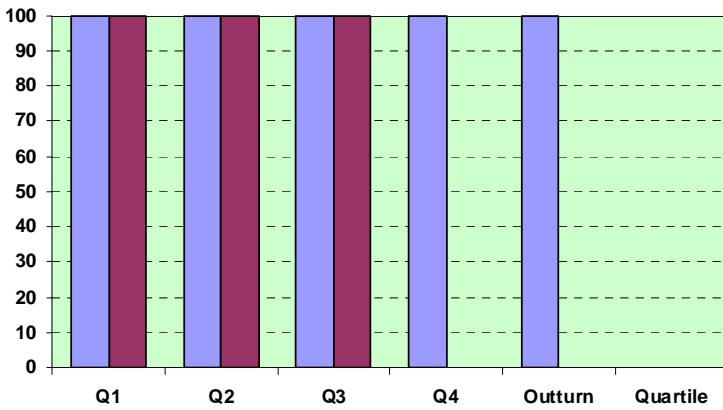
Commentary

The stability of placements for CiC is expected to improve as the placement strategy is implemented. Planned moves however will continue to impact on this performance measure.

NI 66

Looked after children cases which were reviewed within required timescales DCSF DSO

Higher figures represent better performance



Key

- 2008/9
- 2009/10
- Target
- Top 25%
- Middle 50%
- Bottom 25%

No quartile data available

Trend

↔

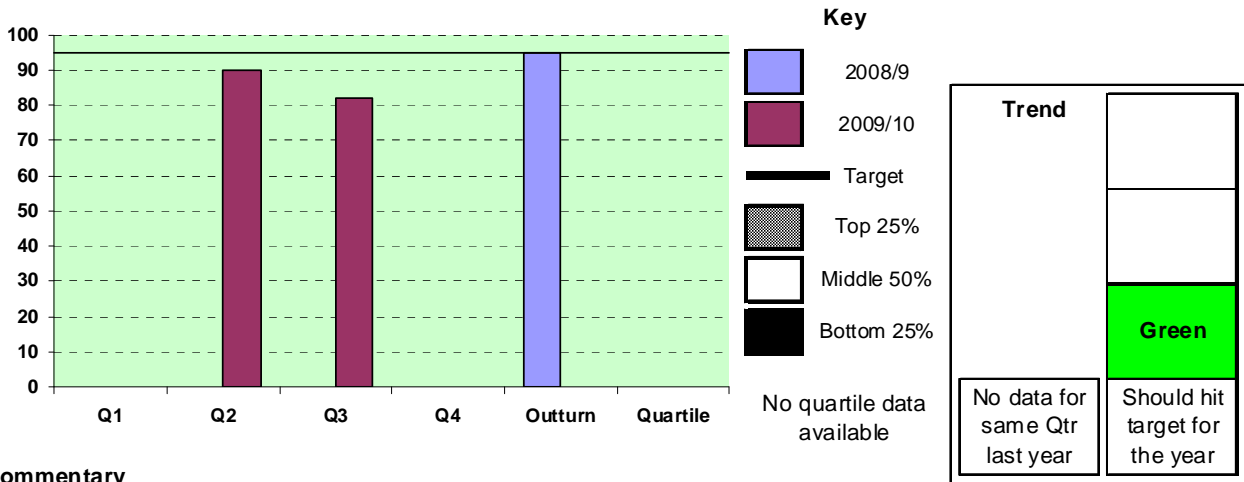
	Green
Same as this time last year	Should hit target for the year

Commentary

All Children in care cases are consistently independently reviewed within timescales






NI 68



Referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment DCSF DSO






Commentary

This indicator will need a quality assurance process and the actual number is likely to be nearer to the target.

Ref	Description	Actual 2008/9	Target 09/10	Quarter 3	Progress	Commentary
Fair Access						
SS LI3	Number of jobs created for care leavers by HBC	2	5	1		A temporary post has been created for 1 Young person within the CYP Directorate and a further 4 have apprenticeships within the Council.
NI148	Care leavers in employment, education or training (%)	46%	71%	44.4%		This a reduction in performance from the last quarter. The cohort is nine young people, one young person has just had a baby, and two were temporarily NEET at the end of December when this target is measured. Considered resources have been deployed to support this Care Leaver cohort who are aged 19 and left care after their 16th birthday. Performance is expected to improve in quarter 4.
SS LI4	% change in the number of foster carers from baseline	-10%	5%	-13%		Revised strategy in place for 2010 to address the decline.
Service Delivery						
SS LI7	% of CIN 6+ months independently reviewed with agreed timescales	N/A	50%	0%		An additional Independent Reviewing Manager has now been appointed with an expected start date in April 2010. This officer will lead on the independent review of a % of CiN.
NI60	Core Assessments completed	91.2%	92%	77%		The number of completed assessments is




Ref	Description	Actual 2008/9	Target 09/10	Quarter 3	Progress	Commentary
	within 35 working days					likely to increase as QA is carried out.
NI62	Stability of placements of CiC: number of moves	8.5%	8.3%	12%		Although there is a lack of placement availability and choice, the recently agreed Placement Strategy will, if successful, increase placement availability. This will positively contribute to placement stability to ensure that the most appropriate placements are made through greater availability of placements.
NI101	Children in Care achieving at least 5 A*-C GCSE	8.5%	17%	7.7%		This level of performance reflects the Year 11 cohort. However, all young people achieved their predictions.

Objective Reference	Risk Control Measures	Progress	Commentary
SS 2	Targeted recruitment strategy to increase numbers of local foster carers	?	Marketing campaign started in Jan 2010, targeting potential local carers, enhanced recruitment and retention package now in place. As it takes 6-9 months to recruit carers the impact will not be realised until at least September 2010.

HIGH Priority Actions	Target (Resp. Officer)	Progress (Traffic lights)*	Commentary
Ensure staff participate in a programme of Equality and Diversity training	Mar 10 OD Specialist Services and all DM's		Baseline now established. So far 31.4% of staff have undertaken E&D training. This will increase in Q4 but may not reach 100% March 2010.
Participate in programme of Equality Impact assessments on all Strategy, Policy, and Service Areas	Mar 10 OD Specialist Services and all DM's		No progress made as not currently an established programme in the directorate.
Embed a system of stakeholder engagement, participation and consultation in all aspects of Service Delivery	Mar 10 OD Specialist Services and all DM's		Scoping work undertaken resulting in pilot to start in March 2010 for qualitative consultation exercise, however it is already a statutory requirement for CiC, CiN, and Complex Needs.

Financial statement to be inserted.

Application of RAG symbols:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<u>Green</u>	 Indicates that the milestone/objective <u>will</u> be achieved within the identified timeframe.	Indicates that the annual target <u>will</u> , or has, been achieved or exceeded.
<u>Amber</u>	 Indicates that at this stage it is <u>uncertain</u> as to whether the milestone/objective will be achieved within the identified timeframe.	Indicates that at this stage it is either <u>uncertain</u> as to whether the annual target will be achieved.
<u>Red</u>	 Indicates that the milestone/objective <u>will not</u> , or has not, been achieved within the identified timeframe.	Indicates that the annual target <u>will not</u> , or has not, been achieved.