

QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

DIRECTORATE: Children & Young People
SERVICE: Specialist Services
PERIOD: Quarter 4 to Year-end 31st March 2010

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This quarterly monitoring report covers the Specialist Services Department fourth quarter period up to 31st March 2010. It describes key developments and progress against all objectives and performance indicators for the service.

Given that there are a considerable number of year-end transactions still to take place a Financial Statement for the period has not been included within this report in order to avoid providing information that would be subject to further change and amendment. The final 2009 / 10 financial statements for the Department will be prepared and made available via the Council's Intranet once the Council's year-end accounts have been finalised. A notice will be provided within the Members' Weekly Bulletin as soon as they are available.

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

2.0 KEY DEVELOPMENTS

2.1 Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC)

The programme has delivered short breaks for 333 disabled children and young people against a target of 250 for this year. New initiatives have included the development of a Saturday club in two children centres providing fortnightly sessions for 8 young disabled children. This is being extended to accept more children in the next few weeks.

The second Powerful Voices conference was held on 11th March with over 70 parent carers and professionals attending to hear about the AHDC developments and to share their views on the services delivered, the quality and value of the information they receive and told us what they would like to see developed in future. This information is being used to inform the communication strategy.

On 5th March Halton AHDC Programme has been assessed as meeting the Full Service Offer requirement for short breaks delivery, which needed to be achieved by all Pathfinders by end of March 2010.

2.2 Staffing

To address the current level of frontline manager vacancies, proposals to address the competitiveness of current salaries have been agreed in principle by the Council, and recently the outcome of the managers' job evaluation appeal was successful, resulting in the grade being increased. Following a national and local recruitment advert for managers and a successful open evening, this appears to have produced more applicants than previous advertising.

2.3 Working Together 2010

In response to the Baby Peter tragedy, the government has published revised guidance for agencies working together to safeguard children and young people. Halton Safeguarding Children Board is currently reviewing the document to determine what changes need to be made to local policy and procedures.

3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

3.1 Unannounced Inspection

Halton is still awaiting our Unannounced Inspection for Contact, Referral and Assessment and it will now take place in the next quarter, as the deadline for all inspections being completed is June 2010.

3.2 New Children and Families Department

The Council's new service structure came into being on 1st April, including the new children's department, which brings together services for children across the levels of need, from Universal to Specialist. A new locality service, focussing on targeted early intervention, is being created as part of the new structure, and that this ensure over time, that the needs of the most vulnerable children and families are met much earlier, thus improving outcomes and reducing the need for crisis interventions.

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

Total	21		16		0		5
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For further details, please refer to Appendix 1.

5.0 SERVICE REVIEW

There are no issues to report for the period.

6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	3		1		0		2
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For further details, please refer to Appendix 2.

6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	11		5		0		6
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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.

For further details please refer to Appendix 4.

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.







For further details please refer to Appendix 5.






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

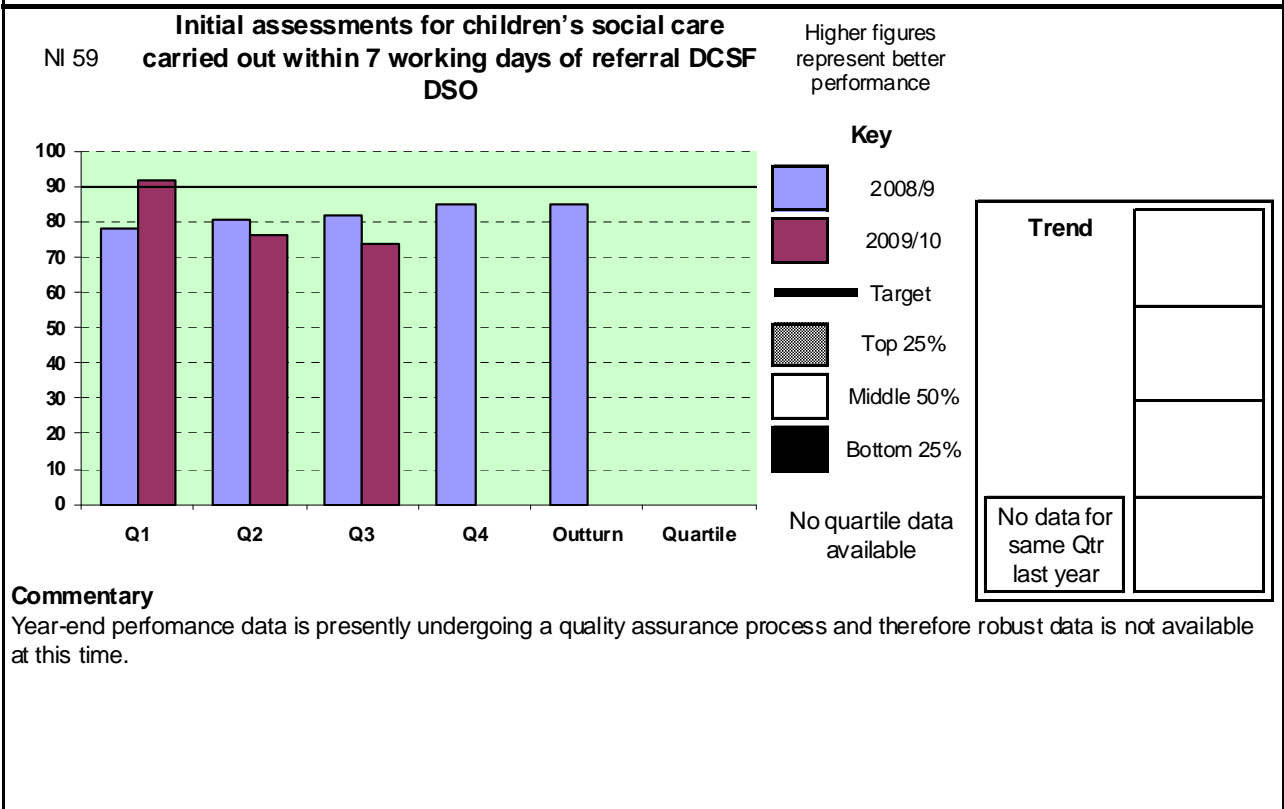
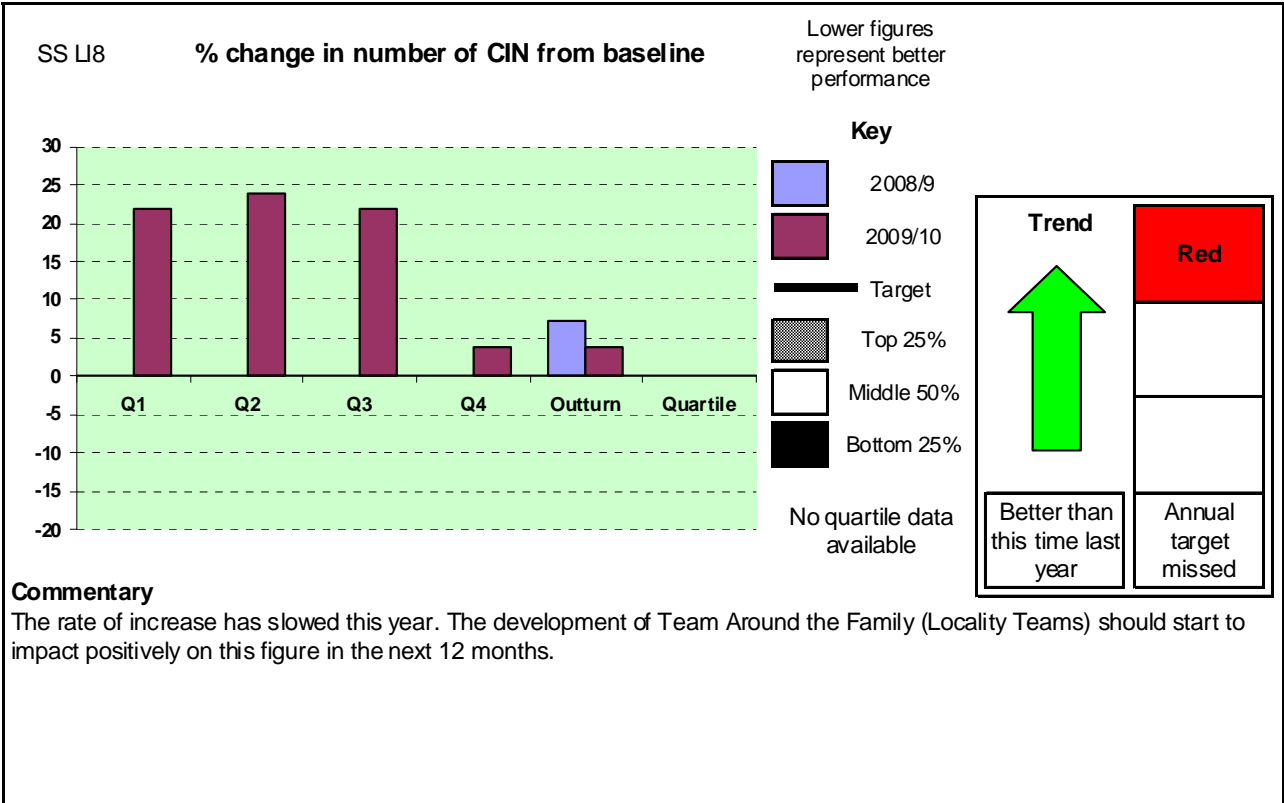
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2009/10 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
SS 1	Improve Education and Employment Opportunities for Care Leavers	Appoint a designated officer to manage care leaver employment by September 2009		Post holder in place
		Implement an scheme that provides 10 apprenticeships for care leavers per year by March 2010		10 apprenticeships now funded and Available, 5 young people are currently in apprenticeships. An additional 2 young people had started but have since ended their involvement.
		Fully implement the Council's employment scheme for care leavers by March 2010		In place and briefed to Chief Officers and Directorates. Process has been impacted by efficiency programme, awaiting confirmation from Strategic Director, HR that process can recommence.
		Introduce a bursary for care leavers going on to higher education by September 2009		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		Staffing issues have resulted in some reduced capacity but range of support in place. Requires further development to ensure Care Leavers remain EET
		Increase the availability of permanent accommodation for care leavers by 4 units by March 2010		4 units in place and 3 more supported lodging placements have been commissioned.

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2009/10 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
SS 1	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.		Review completed and has identified a shortage in numbers of foster carers and some gaps in residential provision. Work is underway to address these issues
		Implement a marketing strategy to improve recruitment of foster carers by March 2009		Revised strategy in place and an increase in enquiries already evident.
		Increase the number of in house foster care placements by 8 by September 2009 (10% increase)		Increase has not been achieved. Revised marketing strategy and increased allowances are now in place to encourage improved recruitment.
		Review the role of Principal Manager Fostering to secure a permanent appointment by April 2009.		6 attempts at recruiting to the post have failed to result in a permanent appointment. Role now HBC11 after job evaluation appeal and agreement is being sought to pay recruitment and retention supplements, which will make salaries very attractive.
		Recruit to the vacant 4 social work posts in the adoption and fostering services by June 2009		Timescale for this milestone passed last year, only one part time vacancy remains and will be advertised in the next few weeks.

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 is used to inform activity and is updated regularly.
		Implement and monitor CWDC development standards for foster carers by March 2010	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Standards implemented and carers making progress towards achieving them.
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 unit is established and has developed a business plan for 2010.
		Implement a systematic approach to learning arising from Serious Case Reviews by September 2009	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Learning from serious case reviews is systematically implemented and subsequently reviewed via the auditing of practice process.
		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"/>	Briefings continue via the Local Authority designated Officer (LADO).

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2009/10 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		Audit the implementation of the neglect protocol ensuring there are interagency minimum standards by March 2010		The neglect protocol was reviewed and the revised neglect protocol is expected to be endorsed by HSCB in June 2010 followed by a roll out to all staff and will be in-corporated in future safeguarding training.
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.		TSF and the Locality Pilot have had a significant impact on the design of the new department with Team Around the Family, (Locality Teams) built into the structure to support the realignment of services.
		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		The toolkit has been developed and will be available on the intranet. Assessment and analysis workshops have been delivered and appropriate training commissioned.
		Introduce a system for independently reviewing children in need plans at levels 3b by December 2009		The individual appointed withdrew. A further recruitment process is underway. As a result of the new Care planning Regulations the Job descriptions and person specifications for Independent reviewing officers will require some change.

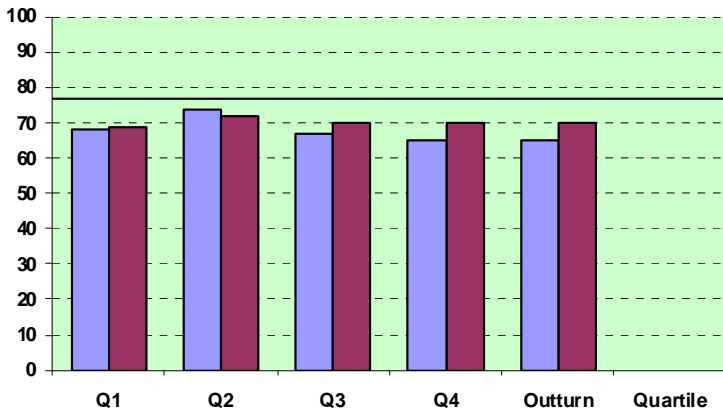
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2009/10 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		Ensure that the children in need teams are sufficiently staffed to meet the current demand for children in need services by March 2009.		Whilst Social work recruitment and retention remains positive, Management vacancies remain a challenge. Interviews to take place 27 th and 28 th April following national adverts with competitive salaries that reflect the outcome of the JE appeal.



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	Annual target missed
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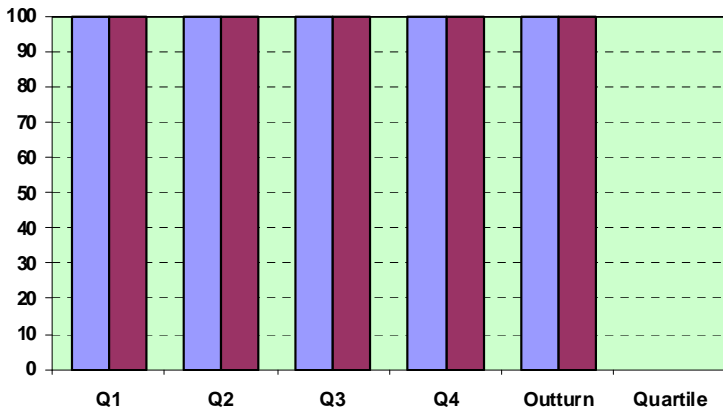
Commentary

This year end performance is a significant improvement on last years out turn. Performance will continue to improve as the placement strategy increases the range of placements.

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

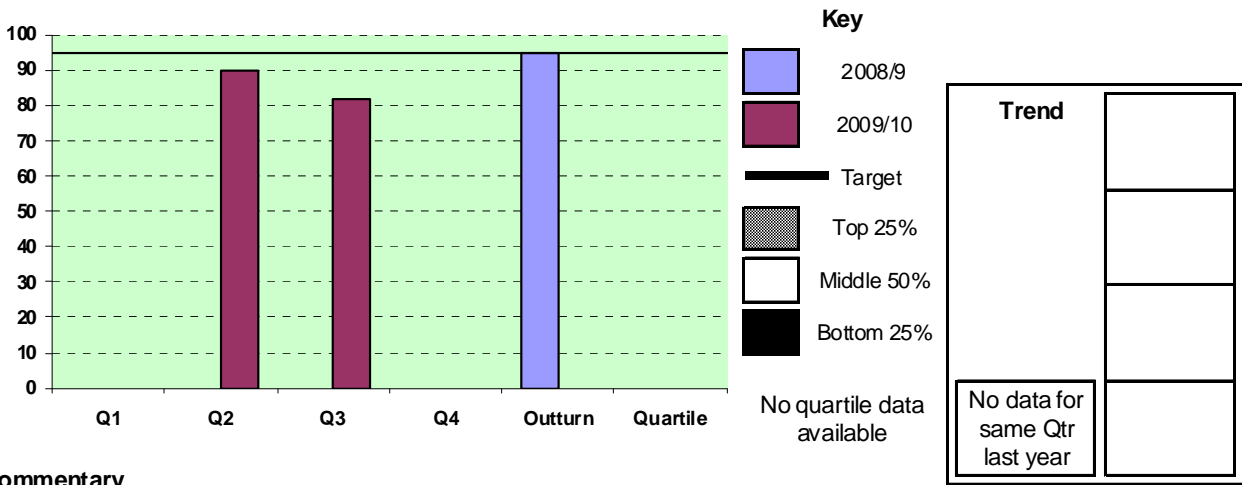
Same as this time last year	Annual target hit or exceeded
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Commentary

Performance on this measure is a reflection of the robust systems that are in place to ensure the timely review of children in care cases.





NI 68






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





Commentary

Year-end performance data for this measure is presently unavailable as a result of the annual quality assurance process





Ref	Description	Actual 2008/9	Target 09/10	Quarter 4 year-end	Progress	Commentary
Corporate Health						
SS LI2	% of managers trained in safe recruitment practice	TBA	TBA	35%	Refer Comment	As at 31 st March, 7 of the managers within the Specialist Services Department had been trained in Safer Recruitment. All managers are scheduled to attend training on the forthcoming sessions.
Fair Access						
SS LI3	Number of jobs created for care leavers by HBC	2	5	1		The Efficiency programme has presented an additional challenge in 09/10 in achieving this target. 1 young person has a permanent job within the Council and 4 have apprenticeship placements.
NI148	Care leavers in employment, education or training (%)	46%	71%	55.6%		Whilst the target has not been met for this indicator, progress has been made upon last year. The 4 young people who were not in education, employment or training were NEET for significant reasons (caring responsibilities, pregnancy or unable to work due to disability).
SS LI4	% change in the number of foster carers from baseline	-10%	5%	-16%		The shortage of foster carers has been a known issue for some time and a revised marketing strategy and improved payments are now being established to address the issues.
Quality						
NI147	Care leavers in suitable accommodation (%)	78.6%	82.5%	88.9%		The range of accommodation choice has improved and work continues to improve it further through the provision of supported lodgings.




Ref	Description	Actual 2008/9	Target 09/10	Quarter 4 year-end	Progress	Commentary
Service Delivery						
SS LI7	% of CIN 6+ months independently reviewed with agreed timescales	N/A	50%	0%		Recruitment to the post that will undertake this activity has been unsuccessful, plan is to redesign existing resources to commence review activity in 10/11
NI59	Initial Assessments completed within 7 working days	88.3%	90%		-	Year end performance is current undergoing a quality assurance process, and therefore robust performance data is not currently available.
NI60	Core Assessments completed within 35 working days	91.2%	92%		-	Year end performance is current undergoing a quality assurance process, and therefore robust performance data is not currently available
NI62	Stability of placements of CiC: number of moves	8.5%	8.3%	13.6%		The strategy to improve permanence planning for children has resulted in a decrease in performance as children placed out of the borough in independent foster placements are moved to in house provision, the reduction in performance from last year is actually 9 children
NI64	Child Protection plans lasting 2 or more years	0%	0%	3%		Whilst 0% performance is outstanding performance and therefore the target is aspirational, this is actually only one family.
NI65	Children subject to a CP Plan for a second or subsequent time	1.9%	10%	10%		Target was met and is recognised as good performance.
NI67	Child Protection cases reviewed within timescales	100%	100%	100%		This reflects robust systems in place







Ref	Description	Actual 2008/9	Target 09/10	Quarter 4 year-end	Progress	Commentary
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.
NI111	First time entrants to the Youth Justice System	249	239	149		This is reported by Cheshire Constabulary and validated by PNC data which is available in November. Last years figures (2008-09) were notably different in that the Police reported an additional 70 young people in the Northern Division than they reported monthly. The YOT can supply details of all the young people we report on the Police are unable to do this. Therefore this data should be treated as provisional data and with some caution.




Additional National Indicators:

The indicators below form part of the new National Indicator Set introduced on 1st April 2008. These indicators are subsidiary indicators to the main indicators monitored through the service plan. Where appropriate information will be provided as exception reports within the quarterly monitoring reports.

NI	Description	2008-09 Actual	2009-10 Target	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
43	Young people within the Youth Justice System receiving a conviction in court who are sentenced to custody	9.2	5	9.5		The overall numbers of young people receiving custodial sentences is stable but the reduction of cases appearing before the Courts has increased the percentage for this indicator.
44	Ethnic composition of offenders on Youth Justice System disposals	1.10	0	N/A	-	This figure is compiled by the YJB and is not available yet. Unfortunately the YJB do not 'split' the figure for Halton and Warrington but give a YOT based outturn
45	Young offenders' engagement in suitable education, training and employment	76.70	90	79.9%		This is an outstandingly good figure- the target is a challenging one and to achieve 79.9% is extremely creditable. The issue is the 16-18 age range where the take up of provision is more limited this is similar to other agencies working with this target
50	Emotional health of children (TellUs)	70.0	72	60.9%		This indicator has declined nationally and for Halton. Halton however is still reporting the 5 th highest percentage in the North West and significantly higher than the National Average.
51	Effectiveness of child and adolescent mental health (CAMHS) services	12	13	12		Whilst this rating has not improved from last year as serviced consolidate, however the rating will improve as a number of service improvements have been implemented on 1.4.2010 after the assessment rating was agreed.




NI	Description	2008-09 Actual	2009-10 Target	Quarter 4 Year-end	Progress	Commentary
54	Services for disabled children	New Indicator 2009/10	N/A	62		Alison Upham
58	Emotional and behavioural health of looked after children	16.0	16			Awaiting data – expected end of May 2010.
61	Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption	44.4	Not relevant	69.2%	-	9 out of 13 children were placed within their adoptive family within 12 months of the decision they should be placed for adoption. As data underpinning this indicator relates to small numbers, targets are not appropriate.
70	Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people	161.2	155.3	-	-	Awaiting data from PCT. Expected end of April 2010.
71	Children who have run away from home/care overnight	13.0	14	14		Progress remained stable during 2009-10.
99	Looked after children reaching level 4 in English at Key Stage 2	50.0	33	50%		Small numbers (6 children in the cohort) affect these indicators however targets were met for this indicator this year.
100	Looked after children reaching level 4 in mathematics at Key Stage 2	25.0	33	67%		Small numbers (6 children in the cohort) affect these indicators however targets were met for this indicator this year.

Objective Reference	Risk Control Measures	Progress	Commentary
SS 2	Targeted recruitment strategy to increase numbers of local foster carers		Strategy now in place and activity underway to increase recruitment . Impact unlikely to be realised until September 2010 due to the length assessment period
	Implement CWDC standards for carers		Implemented and carers working towards the standards
	Review payments structure and rates for carers		Reviewed and improved allowances in place from September 2010
	Implement actions from Staff Survey		Implemented
	Evaluate impact of Recruitment and Retention Strategy		Evaluation complete and new strategy with action plan in place from 31.3.10
SS 3	Development of multi-agency Safeguarding Unit to improve integrated working		In place and had Business Plan for 2010
	Sustained high performance in ensuring all safeguarding processes are quality assured and timely		Performance across a range of indicators remains strong and processes remain robust. Regular audit of practice monitors the performance

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		Equality and Diversity training is a requirement of all EDRs.
Participate in programme of Equality Impact assessments on all Strategy, Policy, and Service Areas	Mar 10 OD Specialist Services and all DM's		Process not in place and impacted by efficiency programme.
Embed a system of stakeholder engagement, participation and consultation in all aspects of Service Delivery	Mar 10 OD Specialist Services and all DM's		A Pilot to obtain qualitative information from stakeholders is underway and will have been completed by July 2010. The outcome will inform future exercises. Quartley Compliments and Complaints Report identifies how stakeholder feedback has informed service design.

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.