

This Business Plan extract contains information in relation to the delivery of the Council's following strategic priority.

Children and Young People

Our overall aim is to support the development and learning of children and young people so they grow up feeling safe, secure, happy and healthy, and are ready to be Halton's present and Halton's future.

Key Developments

Improving outcomes for children and young people through effective multi agency early intervention

Children, Young People and Families Plan 2018-21

This new Halton Children and Young People and Family Plan 2018-21 marks a significant step forward in our collective ambition and efforts. We will continue to put children and young people at the heart of what we do to ensure that their needs are understood and met, and that they have clear ways to hold us to account for our decisions. Our priorities are based on clear evidence about what is needed and what works, and crucially are driven by what children and young people themselves have told us. The Halton Children, Young People and Families Plan is the main plan for all partners within Halton Children's Trust, it describes what we will do in Halton by agreeing on a set of priorities and take collective responsibility for improving the outcomes for every child and young person to ensure that regardless of their circumstances, they will have access to the best services. The priorities are:

- Early Intervention – we want families to get help when they need it.
- Achievement and Ambition - we want children and young people to do well at school so they can get the education, training or job they want.
- Healthy and safe – we want people to feel safe wherever they are and to understand how to look after their health.

The work identified in our business plan is aimed at addressing these three priorities.

Early Intervention

Investing in early intervention improves the life chances of children and young people. It also results in cost savings through a reduced need for expensive late interventions. The increasing number of children and young people requiring specialist support and intervention has resulted in increased costs and pressures on council budgets. The Council is working on reconfiguring services to identify and develop new approaches to early intervention to reduce the number of children and young people requiring specialist provision later on in their lives.

Troubled Families

The Troubled Families Programme has been extended until 2020. Halton achieved 100% payment by results for Phase One of the programme. The payment by results programme works with families to achieve positive outcomes and break the cycle of disadvantage. This programme has been very successful in helping Halton families achieve better outcomes, such as gaining employment and reducing offending. The continuation of this programme will benefit more families in the borough.

iCART

There will further development of the performance monitoring in iCART to include the outcomes of CAF to ensure CAF's are progressed by partner agencies. We will continue communication about the role and function of iCART as well as reviewing the link with Adult Services referral structures, we will also implement North West Boroughs Thrive staff front door into iCART.

Ofsted Inspections

The new framework, Inspection of Local area Children Services (ILACS) is seen by Ofsted as a step forward that will make a genuine and positive impact on children's lives. Regular contact with local authorities is at the heart of the new system meaning that Ofsted will have more frequent contact with Halton giving the opportunity to identify any issues of concern sooner enabling the Local authority to act swiftly to address them rather waiting until the next inspection to find out what/if practice has deteriorated.

Ofsted describe ILACS as a 'system' of inspection that is proportionate, flexible, and bespoke to each area Ofsted inspect. Each feature of the system informs how the rest of it works. A local authority's current Ofsted grade will determine the kind of inspection it has next time, and the contact and support it receives in-between visits. The new approach means:

- Local authorities previously judged to be good or better will get a one week short inspection every three years
- Those that required improvement to be good will get a two week standard inspection every three years; this will be the inspection that Halton receive.
- Both standard and short inspections will result in judgements on the established four point scale
- Focused visits will identify good practice or catch local authorities before they fall
- An annual conversation between Ofsted and local authorities
- An annual self-evaluation of social work practice by local authorities
- Ofsted's approach to authorities judged to be inadequate will remain the same as now – quarterly monitoring followed by an inspection under the single inspection framework (SIF)

The visits will result in a narrative outcome letter, which will be published, making clear what improvements are needed (where relevant). It is not all about identifying failings. Focused visits are an opportunity for Halton to showcase good practice, too.

Ofsted, Joint Targeted Area Inspections

In February 2016, the new Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) of services for vulnerable children and young people was launched. Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation will jointly assess how local authorities, police, health, probation and prison services are working together in an area to identify, support and protect vulnerable children and young people. Each inspection will look in detail at a specific theme and the theme changes 6 monthly.

The first inspections focused on:

- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and children missing from home, care or education.
- Children living with Domestic Abuse (DA)
- Neglect

The next round of JTAs, beginning in February 2018, will revisit two earlier themes, four will take in an updated CSE remit (now includes gangs) and two will have a DA focus. From September onwards the focus of these inspections will be on familial abuse.

Keeping Children and Young People safe by improving practice

It is recognised that our most important asset is our workforce who are given access to learning and development opportunities throughout their careers. This will help them develop skills and knowledge to improve practice in order to transform the lives of children and young people. Halton Borough Council is committed to developing the careers of Social Workers through vocational and academic routes. This provides access to training, learning opportunities and increased professional responsibility based on a thorough assessment of the social worker's competence and ability via performance review and development and the supervisory process. Well-trained and supported social workers are essential to protecting children from harm and helping families to overcome the challenges they face.

With the change of emphasis and focus the Halton Children's Trust, Integrated Workforce Strategy 2014-17 is currently under review and will be refined so that the focus is specific to the Children Social Care workforce.

The Supervision Policy Social Work Progression Policy is currently under review to ensure safe practices are maintained and training and development opportunities are identified.

In reviewing the future development of the service, a review of the impact of the various pilots under the Innovation Programme was undertaken. It was clear that the strongest emerging evidence of impact and outcomes was in those areas which had adopted a systemic approach. Halton is now beginning to implement this as it preferred model of practice over the next 2 years.

The first cohort of frontline managers is in the middle of the “First line management development programme”, a systemic model. Immediate impact has been for managers becoming more reflective in their role, and taking this approach into the management and supervision of their staff.

Halton has also released 3 social workers (2 from CiC and 1 from CiN) to undertake training under IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) to become systemic family practitioners. This training will take 12 months and they will undertake direct family therapy work with children, young people and families open to the service but also they will receive clinical supervision and cases via North West Boroughs. The aim is that by skilling social workers to do more structured systemic family therapy work with children and families, we will be able to work more intensively with those children earlier to prevent needs escalating and entering care but also to improve placement stability by working differently with foster carers and agencies who support CiC.

In addition, in partnership with North West Boroughs and Leeds University, we will be as part of our plan be training the wider workforce including early intervention staff, community support workers, social workers and fostering supervising social workers in the principles of systemic family practice and engagement as we look to change the conversation and move towards a strengths based and systemic model which is more resilient and less risk averse than current ways of working. Clear outcomes have been set for the contract to inform its evaluation and the first cohort of 16 staff will begin to be trained from the end of March 2018.

Children in Care Strategy

This multi-agency strategy continues the work of the previous one and recognises that every Corporate Parent has a part to play in improving outcomes. It establishes shared priorities and the actions to be taken over the next 3 years to make a positive difference to lives and outcomes. The Strategy is the framework by which agencies and services in Halton will ensure that children in care and care leavers have the same opportunities as their peers and are able to reach their full potential. We will relaunch the Children in Care Partnership Board, establishing a sub group approach linked to key areas of our Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy 2017 – 2020, forging stronger links and accountability to our Children in Care Council and partnership ownership of our Pledge commitments.

Residential Provision

Commissioning of a provider to develop a specialist residential provision within an existing, currently unregistered, children’s home resource to support a group of complex children to step down from residential provision to foster care. This will support a reduction in the number of children in residential care, particularly younger children.

Sufficiency Strategy

In line with our refreshed sufficiency strategy we will review how placements are commissioned, in house and external.

Foster Care Service

Halton will work with neighbouring Local Authorities to develop a Market and Recruitment collaboration to increase the number of Foster Care households, meaning we can place more children in our own provision, keeping children more local to family, services and resources. Halton want to enhance our Foster Carers offer by developing an Intensive Placement Support Service, to better train and support our foster carers to enable them to manage more complex children – we are looking at the Secure Base Model which complements our Systemic Family Practice Model we have begun to roll out across the partnership. We will also review and embed a Stay Put policy so care leavers are able to stay with foster carers beyond 18 when they want to – this is normal now for children during the transition to adulthood and must be something Halton strives to achieve for our Children in Care.

Together for Adoption

Together for Adoption is based in Warrington and was officially launched on Friday 1 September 2017, it brings together the adoption services of five local authorities – Cheshire West and Chester, Halton, St Helens, Warrington and Wigan. Together for Adoption brings together outstanding expertise from across the region under one roof and by bringing the teams together it is hoped the process of adoption will be easier, increasing the number of children adopted and improving the experience of adopting. The Governance and performance monitoring processes are under constant review to ensure we capture this and other relevant data.

Domestic Abuse

Halton will be reviewing the commission for domestic abuse for both children and adults to ensure this is an integrated approach and includes a service for perpetrators.

Client recording System

IT and equipment support is of a sufficient quality for staff to work flexibly outside of the office as needed. We are in the process of re-commissioning our client recording system to support a more integrated multi-agency way of working across the full continuum of need, easier recording and reporting and better record the voice of children and families.

Improve progress and attainment across all key stages and diminish the difference between vulnerable groups and their peers.

Under the more challenging curriculum and assessment system, Halton have compared less favourably to the national average than under the previous system. This has resulted in a significant gap at Early Years and Key Stage one in comparison to national; Halton performing below national at Key Stage Two and whilst at Key Stage 4 performance in EBacc measures are strong, attainment in English and Maths GCSE and progress is an area that needs to be improved further. The current, statutory assessment system and Ofsted frameworks have a much greater emphasis on progress and quality of a schools performance against pupils' outcomes.

Disadvantaged pupils are also a key area of focus, with investment through two year old funding to nursery education; the 30 hour working parent offer; Early Years Pupil Premium and Pupil Premium funding being allocated to specifically target improving life chances and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.

The role of the Local authority in School Improvement has shifted to being champions of high quality education and challenging schools and education providers. The support role is increasingly shifting to being commissioned/facilitated through Teaching Schools and Multi Academy Trusts. Local Authorities also have a key role in identifying “Schools Causing Concern”, holding maintained schools to account and working with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) to hold Academies and Free Schools to account.

Regional priorities are identified through a Schools Regional Improvement Board (SRIB), whereby strategic leaders across a RSC region (which is Lancashire and West Yorkshire for Halton) work together on collective and borough wide priorities. Part of this work is submitting bids to the Strategic School Improvement Fund (SSIF) to access funding to resource school improvement work and additional capacity for targeted schools on specific themes. Halton have currently been successful in SSIF bids for Key Stage 4 maths and Early Years Language and Communication and are continuing to bid for key areas of priority.

Key priorities for Early Years and the School Improvement Team are to improve pupil outcomes and diminish the difference to national and between disadvantaged groups and their peers. Work is also targeted at holding schools to account where the quality of provision, pupil performance or strategic leadership are causing concern. The ambition is to raise aspiration, achievement and quality of provision, with all educational provisions to be graded at least good by Ofsted so that our children and young people have the best start in life.

Raise Achievement in Early Years.

In recent years, the Early Years Statutory assessment reports on children achieving a “Good Level of Development”(GLD). This is based upon children achieving at least the expected standard in Communication and Language; Physical Development; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Literacy and Maths. Unfortunately this has proved challenging in Halton, with Halton LA 2017 data, being ranked as the lowest LA performance nationally for this GLD indicator. The One Halton Strategic group, have a detailed action plan and many measures have been taken and are in place to address improving the outcomes for EY children in Halton. This is a key priority and involves raising aspiration and ambition working with families, the community as well as settings, schools, child minders and multi- agency colleagues, including health.

A successful SRIB bid, transition working groups; refocus of EY and school improvement priorities and working arrangements are all part of the improvement plan. Increased understanding of child development, observation and assessments

being used to target specific next steps and detailed tracking are key to this improvement plan.

Improve attainment in Key Stage 1

During recent years, low performance in GLD has meant that children have been delayed starting the Key Stage One curriculum as they need to continue with EYFS curriculum until they are in a position to achieve GLD before they are able to access the Key Stage One curriculum. Given the increasing challenge of Key Stage One this has also impacted upon Key stage One performance and outcomes. In 2017, Halton's Key Stage One performance in Reading, Writing and Maths was 10% below the national average. Targeted work is planned to challenge any underperforming schools; to share good/outstanding practice both within Halton but also from wider regions and to launch a borough wide reading strategy to improve engagement, interest and achievement in reading.

Improve Achievement in Key Stage Two

Attainment and progress is improving on last year's performance within reading and writing, but Halton still experienced a 5% gap to national with maths attainment performance. Maths performance is being targeted through a maths SSIF bid and potentially a transition SSIF bid. The school improvement team are focusing capacity upon targeted schools to improve quality of teaching, learning and assessment in order to improve pupils Key Stage Two progress and outcomes.

Improve Achievement in Key Stage Four

There have been recent changes to the Key Stage Four curriculum with a higher level of challenge in the reviewed curriculum and the introductions of a progress 8 measure. The progress 8 is a combined measure of progress across a range of subjects that include Maths, English, Science and Humanity subjects and are measured against a pupils progress from their Key Stage 2 score in comparison to all pupils nationally who had achieved that same score at Key Stage Two.

In 2017 exams, GCSE exam performance for maths and English were measure on a new grading system of 9-1, with 9 being a higher level than the previous A* grading. A grade 5 and above are considered a good pass and a grade 4 is considered a standard pass. In 2018, most other curriculum subjects will also be assessed against this 9-1 new grading system. This has provided challenges nationally, with more clarity and information require around grade boundaries. Secondary schools nationally have been faced with challenges target setting and identifying the level of performance required to achieve specific grades. In 2017, Halton's 9-4 performance in English and Maths was 4% below national, with 9-5 performance being 9% below national. The percentage of pupils achieving an English GCSE pass was higher than the maths performance. Maths is a subject area that nationally is proving hard to recruit colleagues into teaching. Halton are working with strategic partners to improve the quality of maths teaching, learning and assessment through a successful Key Stage 4 maths bid. This includes capacity using Specialist Leaders in Education (SLE's) to work with regional maths hub sharing best practice, implementing new methods where appropriate and monitoring the impact of interventions.

Improving the offer for children and young people with SEND

The SEND Reform resulted in a major transformation in the way services for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities are delivered with Schools in the local area using the graduated approach to tailor interventions to meet the needs of children and young people and focusing on an early intervention.

In March 2017 The Halton Local Area was inspected by OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission and they identified some key areas of strength. Our SEND Assessment Team were on track to complete all conversions from Statements of Educational Need into Education and Health Care Plans by March 2018. Our Children and Young people received effective support resulting in their needs being well met as a result of early identification and appropriate and timely assessment.

The achievement of children and young people showed signs of improvement across all key stages with the work of Visual Impairment services, Audiology, Teachers of the Deaf and School Nurses also being recognised.

Crucially the children and young people spoken to said they were happy and feel safe in their school or college and the inspection identified that Young People in Halton are well prepared for adulthood.

It was also identified that Leaders had an accurate understanding of what was working well and what needed to improve and as a result of the Inspection, an Action Plan had been produced to focus on key areas of development. Whilst not possible to identify them all in this document some key areas identified are:

- Leaders do not have a thorough understanding of the range of parental views.

In response to this an independent review of engagement with families and parents/carers is being commissioned to identify improvements in the arrangements.

- There is a sharp rise in the proportion of children and young people with social, emotional and mental health issues (SEMH). This has increased the number of children and young people who are consistently absent /and or being excluded from school.

The High Needs budget is under great pressure. Across all sectors demand has continued to rise and outstrip the resources available. In line with the national picture, there have been increases in requests for specialist provision and an increasing number of pupils and students are now placed in independent provision. Many of these pupils have Social Emotional and Mental Health Issues. As a result this has been recognised as the key priority for the Education Strategic Partnership Board. A review of behaviour has been undertaken, a Strategic Lead identified and a SEMH Action Plan developed. A programme of training to improve school capacity will be delivered by specialist settings and a new Behaviour Support Team established.

Under the Special Purposes Grant Halton Borough Council are to receive half a million pounds in instalments from the Department for Education over the next three years to increase placements for children with education and health care plans. The proposal is to increase the provision in Key Stage one, three and four for children with SEMH.

There has been a marked increase in the number of schools excluding pupils, both on a fixed term and permanent basis, over the last two years at both primary and secondary level with verbal abuse and persistent behaviour being the predominant reason. Proportionally these figures are higher than many other boroughs. The majority of these children and young people have SEMH difficulties as defined by the SEND Code of Practice (Paras 6.32). A Protocol for supporting schools with challenging behaviour has been developed and launched. Its aims to allow schools to reflect on the support they have provided to date prompt them to fully utilise their resources and seek advice where appropriate.

Nurture provision

'Nurture for Learning' is our Strategy for schools to reflect the six principals of nurture and will be launched in 2018, behind this will be a detailed action plan to address the priorities to ensure that by 2020:

- Fewer children and young people with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs will be educated in out of Borough provision;
- Every school/setting will have nurture embedded at the heart of their curriculum and fully reflected in their policies and culture;
- The Halton Nurture Group Network continues to drive forward this Strategy and provide high quality Continued Professional Development opportunities;
- The parent of every child in a nurturing school or setting will be able to access a nurture based parenting programme;
- Every child/young person in care will have a Boxall Profile with an individual plan.

There are currently 20 settings that now have nurture champions; this was over double last year's target of 8. By 2020 we want all settings to have Nurture champions actively engaging with nurture principals.

Improving participation and skills for young people to drive Halton's future

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION SKILLS STRATEGY: New Strategy for Changed Times

Liverpool City Region are in the process of finalising a Skills Strategy for the region, the ambition and vision for the strategy states that the region has seen significant capital investment in infrastructure and buildings over the last decade. This creates a major platform to support and promote key industries that are major employers, such as tourism, health and retail. It is also providing a magnet around which to coalesce major groupings of businesses in the growth sectors of tomorrow, such as low carbon and advanced manufacturing. To ensure and enhance the competitiveness of these and other sectors, it is essential to secure a significantly increased level, and an appropriate mix, of education and skills to build and maintain a highly productive workforce.

The Skills Strategy goes on to state that the City Region still has too many people who find themselves economically inactive, or unemployed where they are seeking work. The percentage of young people in the NEET group remains unacceptably high, as does economic inactivity in the younger age groups. Much of this is influenced by the volume and quality of jobs on offer, but this interacts with low aspirations and educational attainment levels – particularly in key areas such as English, maths and digital skills - which remain lower than in the country as a whole. Geographical concentrations of economic inactivity and other indicators of deprivation remain entrenched.

The Skills Strategy identifies five outcomes, one of which is:

- A higher percentage of our young people have good attainment levels in English, Maths and digital skills, and higher levels of work readiness

The two key actions identified to meet this outcome are:

- More multi-agency support for young learners to help raise attainment levels and increase work readiness,
- Improve aspirations through promotion of clear progression pathways through education and learning, leading to sustainable and good quality employment nurturing ambition and building resilience.

Careers Strategy for England

In December 2017 the Government published the Careers Strategy: making the most of everyone's skills and talents.

These are some of the key elements from the strategy:

- The teacher responsible for careers will now be known as the 'Careers Leader'. From September 2018, every school will be expected to publish the name and contact details of their Careers Leader on their website. Government will provide £4 million to fund the development of new training programmes and support at least 500 schools and colleges in areas of the country needing most support to train their own Careers Leaders and build momentum behind this enhanced role.
- By 2020 secondary schools should offer every young person at least seven encounters with employers during their education, with at least one encounter taking place each year from years 7-13.
- From January 2018, Government will require schools to give providers of technical education, including apprenticeships, the opportunity to talk to pupils about the courses and jobs they offer, and publish how they will do this on their website.
- The Gatsby Benchmarks have set world-class standards, and now we want every school and college to use them to develop and improve their careers provision. Government will ask schools and colleges to meet standards.

- Government strongly recommend that all schools and colleges work towards the updated Quality in Careers Standard
- From September 2018, Government will expect schools and colleges to publish details of their careers programme [online].
- Starting in 2018, Government will test what careers activities are appropriate and work well in primary schools.
- To improve careers advice for people with special educational needs and disabilities, Government is funding the Education and Training Foundation to provide professional development for careers professionals working with these young people.

Young people who are not in education employment or training or whose activity is not known to the local authority

Halton Borough Council continued to reduce the percentage of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) or whose activity is not known to the local authority (Not Known) with a further 0.3% reduction in 2016/17 bringing the overall percentage for 16 and 17 year olds down to 5.2% compared to 6% nationally. Only three statistical neighbours perform better than Halton, those being Darlington, South Tyneside and Hartlepool.

Emerging Issues

The Children and Social Work Act 2017

Halton Safeguarding Children Board was set up by the local authority and has had a strategic role in protecting children in our area by coordinating what is done by everyone on the Board to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the area and make sure that each organisation acts effectively when they are doing this. The Government commissioned a fundamental review of LSCBs, which was undertaken by Alan Wood and reported in March 2016. A general response to the Review from the Government was published in May 2016, and a number of the recommendations from the Review have been incorporated into the Children and Social Work Bill which is a series of reforms to social work in England which have now become law, The Children and Social Work Act 2017.

The Act abolishes Local Safeguarding Children Boards, and replaces them with 'local arrangements'. These arrangements will involve the safeguarding partners for a local authority area, namely the local authority, the local clinical commissioning group, and the chief officer of police for the area and any other relevant agencies considered appropriate. Together, we must continue to work together in exercising our functions for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in our area. Work will be undertaken with our safeguarding partners and other relevant agencies to implement a revised safeguarding framework for 2019.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 also seeks to provide clarification of local authorities' corporate parenting obligations and provides an important list of 'corporate parenting principles' which local authorities in England must have regard to when carrying out their functions. The Act specifically requires:

- Local authorities to publish information about services which they offer for care leavers under the Children Act 1989, and any other services offered that may assist care leavers in preparing for adult and independent living.
- Local authorities to provide support to any care leaver (up until the age of 25) who requests it, including the provision of a personal adviser, assessment of needs, preparation of a pathway plan, and the provision of any support identified in that plan to be appropriate. Local authorities are under an obligation to inform care leavers of this opportunity for advice and support.
- Local authorities to make advice and information available to previously looked after children to promote their educational achievement. Local authorities must appoint at least one person to discharge this duty.
- Provide extra support in schools for children in care. Local authorities must make advice and information available for the purpose of promoting the educational achievement of previously looked after children educated in their area, and must appoint at least one person for the purpose of discharging that duty; schools must designate a member of the staff as having responsibility for promoting the educational achievement of previously looked after children
- The legislation extends the current considerations of the court when making decisions about the long-term placement of children to include an assessment of current and future needs and of any relationship with the prospective adopter.

There are, therefore, significant new obligations placed on Local Authorities under the Children and Social Work Act 2017 which must be complied with placing additional stress on resources.

Another element of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 is establishing a new regulator for social workers in England, this was named in the Act as 'Social Work England' and will set standards for social workers and ensure public protection. It will be accountable to both the Department for Education and the Department of Health and be overseen by the Professional Standards Authority. Whilst a detailed timetable for the transfer of regulatory functions from the Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC) to Social Work England is not known, the recruitment process for the CEO and Chair of the new body has begun. The supporting recruitment information says 'we do not expect Social Work England to begin regulating the profession before Spring 2019'.

General Data Protection Act

The GDPR comes into effect on the 25th May with greater scope and tougher punishments for those who fail to comply with new rules around the storage and

handling of personal data. It contains explicit provisions that require us to maintain internal records of our processing activities. Among other things, records must be kept on processing purposes, data sharing, and retention. An information audit has been undertaken by Information Governance and plans to implement this are on schedule however the impact on day to day service provision and the practicalities of operating under the new act are still under consideration and there is still work to be done to ensure individual services are compliant.

Demand for Services

The full Universal Credit service was implemented in Halton in 2016. This, along with the other changes such as bedroom tax, Sanctions and disability benefit changes, have and will continue to have a significant impact on Halton families. This could impact on families through increased stress resulting in debt problems, increased likelihood of domestic violence etc., which will impact on children and young people and the services that support them and their families.

Monitoring of referrals to Children’s Social Care to enable future service planning will continue. Increasing numbers of referrals will have an impact on capacity of social care staff. Increasing numbers of children and young people taken into care will have an impact on the budgets for the Council.

To meet the rising demand for support for children and young people with SEND, an inclusion Kite Mark is being developed. Work will be done to build schools capacity and resilience and reviews will be undertaken of the systems and processes for identifying and supporting children and young people. To ensure we have the most appropriate and effective specialist provision a detailed review has been commissioned.

The Changing Role Of Local Authorities in School Improvement and the Middle Tier

Over recent years there have been a plethora of changes in the educational landscape. As a local authority, we all want the best for our children and young people in terms of outcomes and preparation for adulthood. However as a Local Authority we are held to account for schools performance, pupil outcomes and overall effectiveness and quality by our regulatory inspector, Ofsted. In the last few years, the Local Authority role in School Improvement has had to change due to a range of statutory requirements which have most recently been outlined in the “Schools Causing Concern” document February 2018.

In the past, the local authority had the capacity, statutory roles and measures to work with all schools in both a supportive and a challenge capacity, our role is now to “act as champions of high standards of education” across our schools and includes:

- Understanding the performance of maintained schools, using data to identify underperformance and support progress
- Work with the RSC to ensure schools receive the support required
- Identify underperformance and use powers of intervention such as warning notice to improve leadership and standards

- Encourage good and outstanding schools to be responsible for their own improvement and to support other schools to make improvements needed RSC's will provide the same level of rigour to academies and free schools.

This shift in duty means that within the middle tier, stakeholders holding schools to account involves the Local Authority and the Regional School Commissioner, with LA's holding maintained schools to account and the RSC holding Academies and Free Schools to account. Local and regional priorities are identified and shared through the SRIB, who then commissions/broker support capacity from within the school led system and are able to resource such work by bidding for funding. The support is then derived from leaders within the system such as Teaching Schools, Multi Academy Trusts and system leaders such as National, Local and Specialist Leaders in Education and Governance (NLE's, LLE's, SLE's, NLG's). The Teaching School Council hold the Teaching Schools to account against their key performance indicators of providing training and bespoke support within the school led system; whilst the impact of funding bids are reported to the Department of Education. The Local authority is also responsible for statutory duties relating to statutory assessment and moderation activity; acting as the appropriate body for Newly Qualified Teachers (NQT's) and for SACRE duties. (Standing Advisory Council for Religious Education).

This shift in role does mean that the school improvement team are and will be working in a different way to previously. School Improvement capacity will focus on improving outcomes for all, but capacity will be targeted to working with those maintained schools that are at risk of causing concern either from standards or leadership concerns. Where performance does meet the "Schools Causing Concern" guidance, powers of intervention must and will be used to drive improvements. Any concerns regarding Academies and Free Schools will be shared with the RSC and held to account through increasing communication with RSC colleagues. Schools performing well will be encouraged to facilitate support for other schools and building system leadership capacity, such as a Halton Primary Teaching School offer. Rigorous and comprehensive data analysis will identify key priorities to share with the SRIB and identify themes for SSIF bids.

The National Funding Formula for Schools and High Needs

Following a two part consultation the new national funding formula for schools, high needs and the central services block, the government announced that the new funding arrangements would commence in April 2018. Through the national funding formula the government aim to ensure that schools with similar pupils and needs receive the same funding. The funding changes maximise pupil-led funding and protect funding for disadvantaged pupils and those with additional needs. There will be a two year transitional period with increased funding across the two years before the full implementation of the national funding formula in 2020/2021.

From April 2018 Halton schools will be funded on the national funding formula with transitional protection. Despite an increase in the total funding allocated through Dedicated Schools Grant, the implementation of the national funding formula with transitional relief has meant some schools have gained much more funding than

others. Key changes for the schools include the changes to the allocation of deprivation and in particular the value of funding allocated to low prior attainment, changes to the funding for the secondary pupil teacher ratio and changes to the level of lump sum for each school.

A new basis for funding High Needs provision commences April 2018. Local Authorities will now be funded on a range of factors including a basic entitlement, historic spend, a number of proxy indicators such as disability living allowance, children's health and low attainment as well as hospital education. Funding levels will be adjusted to take into consideration the number of children and young people from other authorities in Halton provision and the number of children and young people from Halton accessing other Local Authority provision. The total funding allocated remains insufficient to meet the rising demand within the borough.

Post-16 offer of learning

The September Guarantee helps Local Authorities to fulfil their duty to provide education and training to young people by ensuring they have a suitable offer of post-16 learning by the time they leave secondary school. The offer should be appropriate to the young person's needs and can include full time education in school sixth form or colleges, an apprenticeship or traineeship, or employment combined with part-time education or training.

Halton Borough Council 14-19 team work collaboratively with schools to secure offers for young people and in 2016 were successful in securing firm offers of learning for 97.6% of 16 and 17 year olds, an increase of 4.2% on 2015 and well above the National figure of 94.5%.

Whilst performance has increased year on year the expected reported figure for 2017 will be 97%, a 0.6% drop in performance.

Participation of 16 and 17 year olds in Education and Training

The Local Authority supports the participation of 16 and 17 year olds in education and training through the Raising the Participation Age strategy, delivered by the 14-19 Programme Team. The 2017 figures published by the Department of Education demonstrate Halton is below Regional and National figures in this area. Further scrutiny of the data shows that Halton has had an increase in the proportion of young people entering employment without training with twenty two more young people going into jobs without training in 2017 that in 2016, making a total of fifty two 16 and 17 year olds in employment without training in March 2017.

End of European Social Fund monies

2016 saw a number of new projects being commissioned through the use of European Social Fund (ESF) money to target young people who are at risk of or are already not in education, employment and training. Halton Borough Council itself has used ESF money to commission a Coaching and Mentoring programme for our hardest to reach young people. There are case studies about the significant impact this work has had on the lives of young people involved in the project. In total there

are five different ESF funded projects supporting young people in Halton, all due to finish between July and December 2018 with uncertainty about whether there will be any future funding to commission projects beyond 2018.

Together for Adoption

The Governance and performance monitoring processes are under constant review to ensure we capture this and other relevant data.

Foster Care Service

In partnership with the three Cheshire Local Authorities a collaborated approach to advertising and recruitment of foster carers is being developed.

Objectives, Milestones and Measures

Service Objective: PED01	Improve outcomes for children and young people through effective multi-agency early intervention		
Key Milestone(s) (17 / 18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Further develop the performance monitoring in iCART to include the outcomes of CAF's (March 2019). ▪ Implement North West Boroughs Thrive staff front door into iCART (March 2019). ▪ Review the link with Adult Services referral structures (Sept 2018). ▪ Revise joint protocol of Working between Children's and Adult Services to be relaunched in February 2018 (June 2018). ▪ Preparation for Ofsted inspections (March 2019). ▪ Implement the Exclusions Protocol to reduce the number of exclusions (September 2018). 		
Responsible Officer:	Operational Director, Children & Families Service	Linked Indicators:	PED01 01-08

Service Objective: PED02	Keeping Children and Young People safe by improving practice		
Key Milestone(s) (17 / 18)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Move to a model of systemic practice across the service (March 2019). ▪ Revise LSCB arrangement for April 2019 (March 2019). ▪ Review the commission for domestic abuse support services (March 2019). ▪ Implement the revised Children in Care Partnership Board (July 2018). ▪ Commission and implement a new client recording system (March 2019). ▪ Commission a provider to develop a specialist residential provision supporting a group of complex children to step down from residential provision to foster care (March 2019). ▪ Develop a Market and Recruitment collaboration to increase the number of Foster Care homes (March 2019). ▪ Develop and publish a Local Offer for Care Leavers (July 2018). 		
Responsible Officer:	Operational Director, Children & Families Service	Linked Indicators:	PED02 01-05

Service Objective: PED03	Improve the offer for children and young people with SEND		
Key Milestone(s) (18/19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop and implement a Social Emotional and Mental Health Strategy and outcome focused Action Plan (March 2019). ▪ Establish a Behaviour Support Team (March 2019). ▪ Review specialist SEND provision for children and young people in Halton (March 2019). ▪ Review the Education, Health and Care Plan process (March 2019). 		
Responsible Officer:	Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision	Linked Indicators:	PED03 01-05
Service Objective: PED04	Improve progress and attainment across all key stages and diminish the difference between vulnerable groups and their peers		
Key Milestone(s) (18/19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Using rigorous data analysis, feedback from the Cross Service Monitoring Group and School Improvement officer knowledge, schools will be categorised to identify levels of support and challenge. ▪ School categorisation review will be carried out in September 2018 using provisional data but the new and full categorisation will take place in spring term 2019 following the publication of validated school performance data. ▪ Analyse, evaluate and report end of EYFS, Key Stage 1, Key Stage 2, Key Stage 4, Key Stage 5 achievement outcomes ▪ Identify areas of need and support for Children in Care and Free School Meals pupils (December 2018). ▪ Monitor the impact of Pupil Premium and Early Years Pupil Premium in closing the gap between Disadvantaged pupils and their peers (March 2019). ▪ Ensure appropriate deployment of school improvement challenge and support for identified schools and settings, including school to school support as appropriate (March 2019). 		
Responsible Officer:	Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision	Linked Indicators:	PED04 01-02
Service Objective: PED05	Raise achievement in early years		
Key Milestone(s) (18 / 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analyse GLD performance for all pupils and groups ▪ Use data analysis to inform and share priorities with One Halton strategic group, the Educational Strategic Partnership 		

	<p>Board and the SRIB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Agree local and regional priorities and bid for funding where appropriate through SSIF and other funding streams (September 2018). ▪ Complete RAG categorisation process for all EYFS settings (by September 2018) and identify actions, including levels of challenge, support and intervention required to improve pupil and inspection outcomes. ▪ Using “Schools Causing Concern” guidance and “Strategy for Support and Intervention” identify and challenge schools and settings underperforming, using powers of intervention and locally agreed strategies required to improve standards and leadership (March 2019). 		
<p>Responsible Officer:</p>	<p>Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision</p>	<p>Linked Indicators:</p>	<p>PED05 01-05</p>

Service Objective: PED06	Raise Attainment across all Key Stages: Key Stage One, Key Stage Two, and Key Stage Four		
Key Milestone(s) (18 / 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Analyse and report on the performance of pupil, school and LA attainment outcomes against national data for reading, writing and maths KS1; RWM KS2; percentage of pupils achieving 9-4 and 9-5 in English and Maths(September 2018-provisional data; March 2019 validated data). ▪ Analyse and report on attainment 8 and progress 8 scores(September 2018-provisional data; March 2019 Validated data) ▪ Identify and share good practice locally, regionally and nationally (termly). ▪ Identify schools requiring further challenge and support due to outcomes and quality of teaching, learning and assessment and or middle/senior leadership. Broker support where necessary and use powers of intervention where necessary (ongoing). ▪ Increase the skills, knowledge and experience of middle leadership through training and facilitating coaching and introducing peer reviews (December 2018). ▪ Provide updates and training to strategic leaders including governors, outlining their role in holding schools to account and providing challenge to improve standards (December 2018). ▪ Using “Schools Causing Concern” guidance, identify and challenge schools underperforming, using powers of intervention and locally agreed strategies required, improve standards and leadership. Inform the RSC and hold the RSC to account where necessary regarding underperformance in Academies and Free Schools (March 2019). 		
Responsible Officer:	Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision	Linked Indicators:	PED06 01-11

Service Objective: PED07	Improve participation and skills for young people to drive Halton’s future		
Key Milestone(s) (18 / 19)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Closely monitor the cohort of young people not in education, employment or training and identify any common patterns/issues to inform actions or future commissioning needs. (March 2019) ▪ Work with schools to review the post 16 offers of learning made to young people in order to review why the percentage dropped in 2017 and to avoid any further decreases. (June 2018) ▪ Work with Liverpool City Region colleagues to influence the development of the Careers Hub and how this works alongside the careers information, advice and guidance support given to institutions in Halton. (March 2019) 		

Responsible Officer:	Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision	Linked Indicators:	PED07 01-05
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Ref	Description	16/17 Actual	17/18 Target	17/18 Actual	18/19 Target
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PED01 01	Monitor the average length of time between a child returning home and their return interview those missing from care/home (Commissioned services information)	72 hours	72 hours		
PED01 02	Reduce the number of young people who repeatedly run away in Halton	156	115		
PED01 03	Monitor the number of young people going missing in the year	395	N/A		N/A
PED01 04	Monitor the number of young people flagged as at risk of child sexual exploitation (snapshot at end of the quarter)	24	N/A		N/A
PED01 05	Reduce the number of incidents of fixed term exclusion	244			220
PED01 06	Reduce the number of children subject to fixed term exclusions	172			160
PED01 06	Reduce the number of children subject to permanent exclusion	52			40
PED01 08	Increase the number of children involved in early intervention (e.g. CAF) (All those who have had a CAF at any point in the year)	560	650		

PED02 01	Monitor the rate of referrals to Children's Social Care per 10,000 0-18 year olds	368	N/A		N/A
PED02 02	Reduce the number of children and young people who enter the care system	97	70		70
PED02 03	Reduce the number of children who are placed at home with parents on a Care Order	34	N/A		29
PED02 04	Reduce the number of children who are placed in residential care	40	N/A		34
PED02 05	Reduce the number of children who are placed in independent fostering agency placements	43	N/A		35

Ref	Description	16/17 Actual	17/18 Target	17/18 Actual	18/19 Target
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PED03 01	Increase participation in the POET Survey (parent/guardians)	N/A	N/A	33	35
PED03 02	Increase the percentage of Education Health and Care plans completed within 20 weeks	N/A	N/A	26.8%	50%
PED03 03	Increase the number of schools identified as Nurture Champions	N/A	N/A	0	8
PED03 04	Increase the percentage of Statements converted to Education Health Care Plans to meet published timescales	N/A	N/A	22.9%	80%
PED03 05	Increase the number of people accessing the Local Offer (proxy measure of number of sessions measured annually in October)	N/A	N/A	3868	3950

PED04 01	Diminish the difference between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in achieving the expected standard at Key Stage 2 in Reading, writing and Maths	24%	N/A	24%	
PED04 02	Increase the percentage of Children in Care achieving expected outcomes at KS2	Due to small cohorts and statistical variation, targets are not provided. Analysis of the small cohort conducted on an individual basis for these children to underpin resulting performance.			

PED05 01	Increase the percentage of children achieving a good level of development in Early Years Foundation Stage (SCS CYP)	62%	62%	61%	67%
PED05 02	Reduce the good level of development attainment gap for disadvantaged children and their peers at EYFS	24%	19%	23%	19%
PED05 03	Increase the take up of Early Years Entitlement for vulnerable 2 year olds	74%		95%	97%
PED05 04	Increase the take up of Early Years Entitlement for 3 to 4 year olds	93%	92%	92%	95%

Ref	Description	16/17 Actual	17/18 Target	17/18 Actual	18/19 Target
PED05 05	Monitor the percentage of Early Years settings (pre-schools, day care, out of school clubs, childminders) with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	97%	90%		
PED06 01	Increase the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard at Key Stage 1 Reading	67%		66%	
PED06 02	Increase the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard at Key Stage 1 Writing	54%		58%	
PED06 03	Increase the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard at Key Stage 1 Maths	64%		65%	
PED06 04	Increase the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard at Key Stage 2 in Reading, Writing and Maths	46.8%	N/A	56%	59%
PED06 05	Increase the percentage making sufficient progress in Reading KS1 to KS2	-0.32	N/A	-0.05	0
PED06 06	Increase the percentage making sufficient progress in Writing KS1 to KS2	-1.47	N/A	-0.48	0
PED06 07	Increase the percentage making sufficient progress in Maths KS1 to KS2	-0.51	N/A	-0.41	0
PED06 08	Increase the percentage of young people achieving 9-5 in GCSE English and Maths			30.5%	
PED06 09	Increase the percentage of young people achieving 9-4 in GCSE English and Maths			55.0%	
PED06 10	Increase the average Attainment 8 score per young person			44.9	
PED06 11	Increase the Progress 8 score			-0.22	
PED07 01	Reduce the percentage of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training	4.4%	4.4%		4.4%
PED07 02	Reduce the percentage of 16-17 year olds whose activity is not known	0.8%	0.8%		0.8%

Ref	Description	16/17 Actual	17/18 Target	17/18 Actual	18/19 Target
PED07 03	Increase the percentage of 19 year olds achieving a Level 2 qualification	84.3% (15/16)	84.3%		
PED07 04	Increase the percentage of 19 year olds achieving a Level 3 qualification	54.4% (15/16)	54.4%		
PED07 05	Monitor the percentage of young people progressing to Higher Education	28% (15/16)	25%		25%