

## Children and Young People Directorate

### Quarter 3 2008-09 Overview Report

#### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress within the directorate for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2008.

#### **2.0 Key Developments**

- 2.1 The following key developments have impacted on the work of the Directorate during the quarter;

- The development of the National Challenge programme to ensure that by 2011 every school in England has at least 30% of students achieving 5+ A\*-C including English and Maths. LA in partnership with the schools has developed a plan to be submitted to DCSF to release the funds to support the programme. (*Universal and Learning Services Plan*)
- National Strategy Team visited Halton in December to review and agree actions need to implement the recommendations from the review of Teenage Pregnancy services. A number of actions have been identified across the key strands of Strategy, Data, Communication, and Implementation. (*Preventative Services Plan*)
- Children and Young People Act received royal assent in November and introduces new requirements in respect of Children in Care. These include an increased responsibility to place children within their home area, increased choice of accommodation, extension of the role of Independent Visitor to all children in care, establishment of the statutory role of Designated Teacher in each school, bursaries for young people in higher education and not disrupting children's school placements at key stages. Work has commenced on introducing these requirements. (*Specialist Services Plan*)
- In November the authority had prepared and submitted its Strategy for Change Part 2 (SfC2). This document describes how the authority, along with its key stakeholders intend to achieve its vision. It was developed by working in partnership with headteachers of secondary and special schools, external consultants and other key stakeholders and through the BSF Workstreams such as ICT and Technical. In addition, the Strategy for Change for each secondary and secondary special school was included in its appendices. (*Business Support and Commissioning Plan*)

#### **3.0 Emerging Issues**

- 3.1 The following emerging issues have been identified and will have an impact on the work of the Directorate;

- There is some concern that the Level 1 diploma is not meeting learner perceptions with too much emphasis on theoretical aspect of the

Construction and Built Environment, this is emerging as a national issue. (*Universal and Learning Services Plan*).

- The Education and Skills Act 2008 changes the definition of an independent school. This may have implications for many alternative provision providers and reduce the flexibility available in placing young people. We are in consultation with the DCSF about this but potentially it could result in a KS4 PRU whose provision is subject to multiple OfSTED inspections. It also has the potential to reduce the number of providers available in the pre-16 sector. (*Preventative Services Plan*)
- The publication of the Serious Case Review and the revised Ofsted inspection of Haringey have created an increased level of anxiety across agencies in child protection work. There is potential for this anxiety to impact upon child protection plans and the wider management of risk to children. However multi-agency dialogue and working remains strong, and the Safeguarding Children Board has put a strategy in place to address the increased level of anxiety, particularly evident amongst frontline staff, which Baby P has provoked. A reported outlining the implications for Halton and actions required will be submitted to all relevant Boards during the next quarter. (*Specialist Services Plan*)
- There is a requirement for all Children's Trusts to undertake an assessment of progress towards an integrated workforce using the 'One Children's Workforce' tool. This will be a major project requiring input from all agencies and will run in parallel with a review of the Integrated Workforce Strategy for Children's Services. A project group has been established to lead this work and an initial report from the tool will be submitted to the Children's Workforce Development Council in June 2009. An action plan will be developed and implemented based on the findings of the assessment process. (*Business Support and Commissioning Plan*)

#### **4.0 Service Objectives / Milestones**

4.1 The majority of service objectives within the directorate are being delivered as planned and most notably positive progress has been made in regards to:-

- Numbers of SEN children accessing targeted support in mainstream settings has increased due to the reinvestment in capacity building with the mainstream sector. A number of initiatives have been funded and are outlined within the ULS plan. (*Service Objective ULS1*)
- Following a successful pilot the joint project with the health sector to reduce non-attendance at schools due to chronic health issues has now been rolled out to a number of primary schools with a focus on those schools with high persistent absence rates. In addition all pupils in the persistent absence cohort now have a multi-agency intervention plan. (*Service Objective PS5*)
- Revised accommodation strategy for care leavers has been implemented with a number of specific actions implemented. 2 starter flats have been secured from Halton Housing Trust and 2 further flats will be made available year on year from 2009. This has helped lead to a 6% reduction in the number of care leavers in temporary accommodation during the quarter (SSLI2). (*Service Objective SS6*)

- CYP database has been developed to further support analysis relating to narrowing the gap and vulnerable groups, which will inform the targeting of resources. There are currently over 30 ICT projects within the Directorate that all running to their agreed timetables. (*Service Objective BSC5*)

Of those objectives that have not progressed as planned those of most concern at this stage are;

- Young Peoples sexual health services identified as a priority for additional funding provided for contraceptive services. Review currently being undertaken this will link to Teen Drop In's and extended services in schools although timescales have slipped slightly. (*Service Objective PS8*)
- There have been some difficulties in implementing a departmental medium term financial plan and the timescale has slipped from September 2008 to March 2009. (*Service Objective BSC2*)
- Review of administrative support in Specialist Services has been put on hold pending the efficiency review and will therefore not be implemented by March 2009. The initial report proposing a support structure was agreed and this will be put forward to the efficiency review. (*Service Objective BSC5*)
- The impact of Job Evaluation on recruitment and retention in some areas has been significant. A number of these issues cannot be resolved while the appeals process is ongoing and we will continue to work with Corporate HR and the unions to progress. (*Service Objective BSC5*)

## **5.0 Performance Indicators / Targets**

5.1 The majority of performance indicators within the directorate are on target and most notably positive progress has been made in regards to:-

- NI92 Achievement gap at Early Years Foundation Stage has reduced from 33.8% to 30.4% well ahead of the target for the year of 31.7%. This is a critical indicator in narrowing the gap for vulnerable children. (*ULS plan*)
- NI86 Secondary Schools judged as having good or outstanding standards of behaviour. Performance has hit the target of 87.5%, of the 8 mainstream secondary schools 2 have been judged as outstanding, 5 good and 1 as satisfactory in their most recent inspections. (*PS Plan*)
- SSLI2 % of Care Leavers living in temporary accommodation has reduced from 35% to 29% during the quarter. (*SS Plan*)
- BSC LI6 % of training evaluation forms rating the course good or better has been maintained at 100% for all course delivered or commissioned through the Directorate. (*BSC Plan*)

Of those performance indicators within the directorate that are not on target those of most concern at this stage are;

- NI89 Schools in Special Measures has increased to 2 against a target of none following an inspection on Weston Primary in October. We are working closely with the school to support them in making progress as quickly as possible. Recent monitoring reports indicate that good progress is being made at Simm's Cross Primary and we are hoping that the school will come out of special measures as a result of the next inspection visit. (*ULS plan*)
- NI117 NEET continues to be an issue with a further increase during the quarter. A number of factors are impacting on this indicator including the economic downturn, method of calculation using destination rather than residency, and the quality of Post-16 provision available in Halton. (*PS Plan*)
- NI148 Care leavers in EET is an ongoing issue with only 21% of the cohort being in EET at their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. The numbers involved are small and can be impacted on by a number of factors including disability, pregnancy and mental health issues. Apprenticeship schemes are being developed through WNF and a target of 30 apprenticeships for care leavers over the next 3 years has been agreed by the LSP. (*SS Plan*)