

QUARTERLY MONITORING REPORT

DIRECTORATE: Children & Young People
SERVICE: Specialist Services
PERIOD: Quarter 1 to period end 30th June 2009

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This quarterly monitoring report covers the Specialist Services Department first quarter period up to 30 June 2009. It describes key developments and progress against 'key' milestones 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 Inspection regime

From the 1st June, all Councils will be subject to an annual unannounced inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment Teams¹. Warrington, Blackpool, Redbridge, Sandwell have had their inspection and by the nature of the inspection, they have been reported as very challenging. A significant amount of preparation is underway within the Council.

In addition, the Council and all parties will be subject to a 3-year announced inspection of Safeguarding and Children in Care. We will receive 10 working days notice of this inspection.

2.2 Private Fostering

The Annual Private Fostering Report was presented to the Halton Safeguarding Children's Board (HSCB) on the 16th June 2009, which identified significant challenges due to a low level of notifications. The Action Plan was agreed by HSCB to increase notifications.

2.3 Children in Care Council

The Children in Care Council have developed a Pledge for Children in Care, which identifies the key service areas that will make a significant difference to their outcomes. The Pledge will be presented to the Executive Board in July.

2.4 Care Leavers into Education, Employment or Training

Using Working Neighbourhoods Fund an Apprenticeship Scheme for

¹ Contact, Referral and Assessment teams are the front-line teams dealing with social care services for Children and Young People.

young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) has been introduced. Ten places on the scheme have been identified for care leavers.

3.0 EMERGING ISSUES

3.1 Case Law Judgements

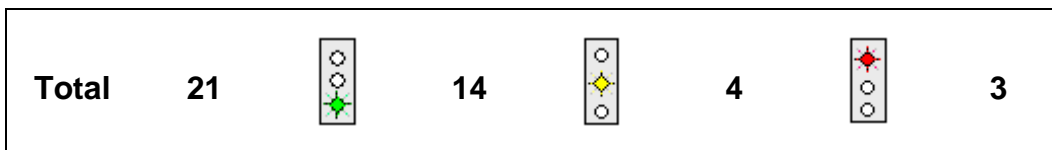
Homeless young people: A recent Case Law Judgement ‘G v’s Southwark’ has significant implications for Council’s responsibility to accommodate 16-17 year olds if they become homeless. This will have significant financial and resource implications for the Council.

Eligibility criteria for disabled children: Recent Case Law Judgements in ‘JL and LL v’s Islington’ in relation to the eligibility criteria for LA services to disabled children necessitates a review of eligibility and assessment processes.

3.2 Children in Care

During 2008/09 there was a 12% marked increase in Children in Care. Prior to 2008/09, Halton had seen a decrease in numbers of Children in Care, against the national trend of an increase. Whilst the national figures are yet to be published, it is expected to follow the trend of the local benchmarking, showing a continued growth.

4.0 PROGRESS AGAINST OBJECTIVES / MILESTONES

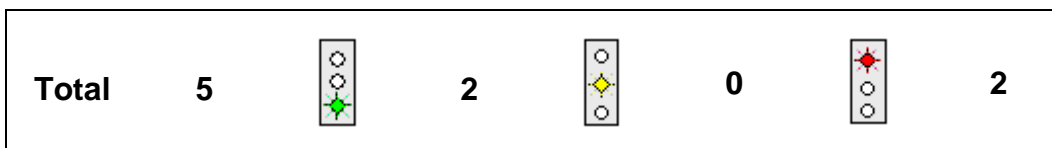


Most milestones (14) are set to be met within timescales, the remaining 7 are either unlikely to, or will not, be met. For further details please refer to Appendix 1.

5.0 SERVICE REVIEW

Nothing to report.




6.0 PROGRESS AGAINST KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS



Of the 5 “Key” performance indicators, 2 are on track to achieve annual target, of the remainder 2 are unlikely to achieve target and 1 (referrals

going to initial assessment) data is not yet available. For further details, please refer to Appendix 2.

6.1 PROGRESS AGAINST OTHER PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Total	1		0		0		1
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Performance indicator NI 148 (care leavers in employment, education or training) has been reported by exception this quarter as the annual target will not be met. 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.

Measures relating to objective SS 2 have been reported by exception this quarter. For further details please refer to Appendix 3.

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.









Action relating to the participation in the programme of Equality Impact assessments on all Strategy, Policy, and Service Areas has been reported by exception this quarter. For further details please refer to Appendix 4.





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

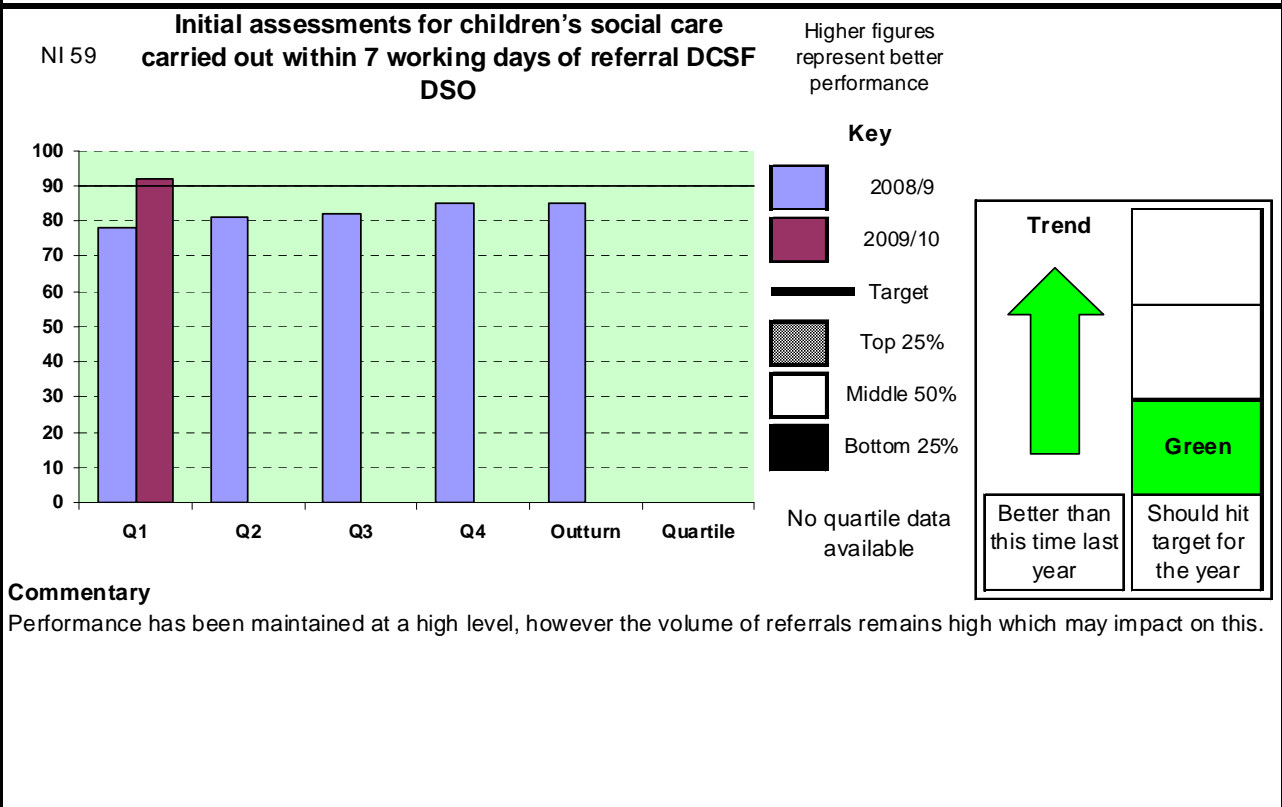
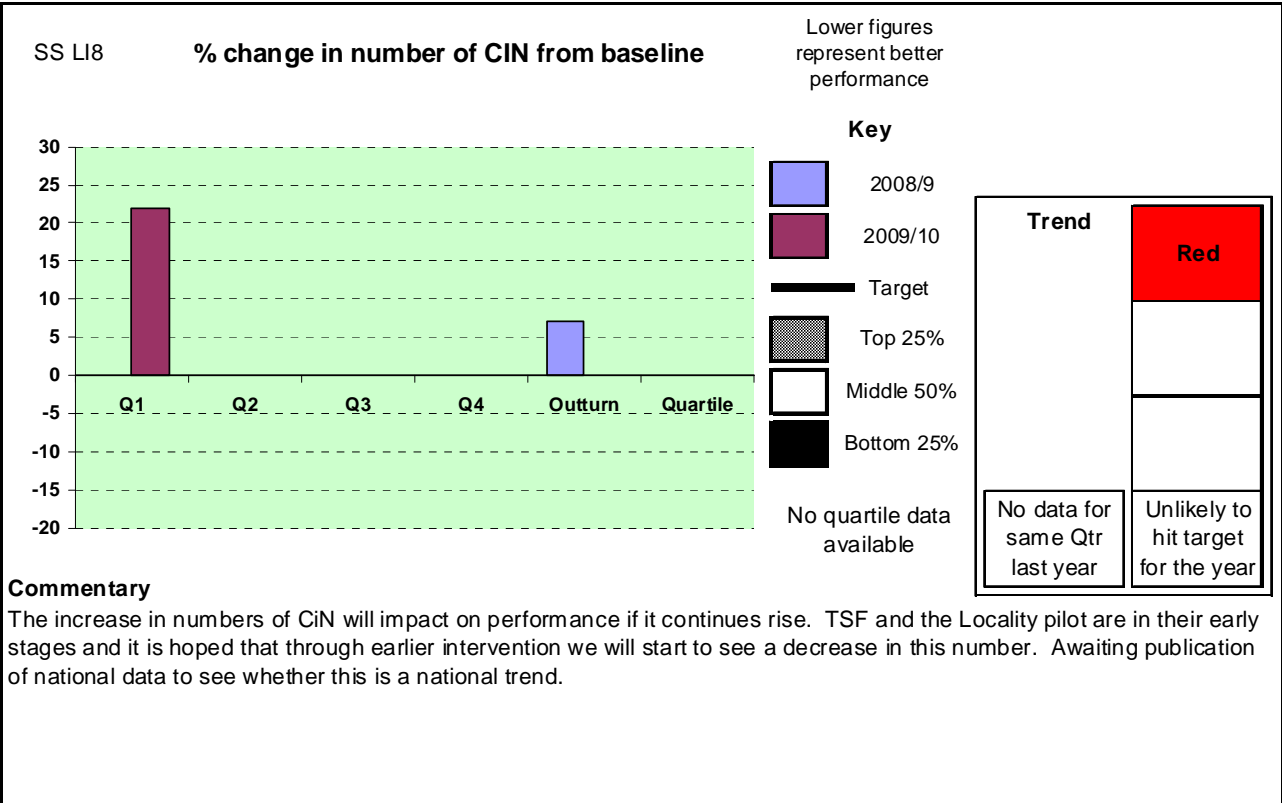
Appendix 1- Progress against Objectives/ Milestones
Appendix 2- Progress against Key Performance Indicators
Appendix 3- Progress against Other Performance Indicators
Appendix 4- Progress against Risk Treatment Measures
Appendix 5- Progress against High Priority Equality Actions
Appendix 6- Financial 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		Dedicated post to be in place by August 2009
		Implement an scheme that provides 10 apprenticeships for care leavers per year by March 2010		Scheme in place
		Fully implement the Council's employment scheme for care leavers by March 2010		Discussions underway to improve the robustness of the scheme
		Introduce a bursary for care leavers going on to higher education by September 2009		Introduced
		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		Additional posts to be recruited to in September 2009
		Increase the availability of permanent accommodation for care leavers by 4 units by March 2010		Achieved, with additional units planned for late 2009
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 2010.		In response to the review, a Placement Strategy has recently been completed but requires additional resources in the medium term to increase foster care supply.
		Implement a marketing strategy to improve recruitment of foster carers by March 2010.		Marketing strategy revised and in place.

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2009/10 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		Increase the number of in house foster care placements by 8 by September 2009 (10% increase)		New carers have been recruited but due to other carers leaving the service, the overall number will not meet the 10% target
		Review the role of Principal Manager Fostering to secure a permanent appointment by April 2009.		Delayed by JE and efficiency process but due to be progressed before the end of the year
		Recruit to the vacant 4 social work posts in the adoption and fostering services by June 2009		One part time and one full time member of staff have been recruited for the adoption team and that service will now be fully staffed. Number of external advert placed for the fostering posts but the response has been poor. Currently internal process to see if existing social workers will consider transferring into the service. Further external adverts will then be undertaken if necessary. Posts are currently covered by agency staff.
		Continue to engage with the Regional Commissioning programme to improve knowledge, quality and competitiveness of local, private provision by March 2010		Good progress with increasing information on quality and cost available.

Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2009/10 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
		Implement and monitor CWDC development standards for foster carers by March 2010		Programme of implementation underway
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.		Safeguarding Unit established.
		Implement a systematic approach to learning arising from Serious Case Reviews by September 2009		A systematic approach is proposed for Specialist Services and seeking endorsement from HSCB in Sept 2009 with a recommendation all partners detail and adopt a systematic approach.
		Ensure that all agencies understand their responsibilities with regard to the management of allegations made against adults who work with children by March 2010		Appointment of Lead Conference and Reviewing Manager has been made who will assume the role of LADO and lead on the briefing for all agencies.
		Audit the implementation of the neglect protocol ensuring there are interagency minimum standards by March 2010		A multi agency short life task group is working on a review and update of the neglect protocol and will agree minimum standards.

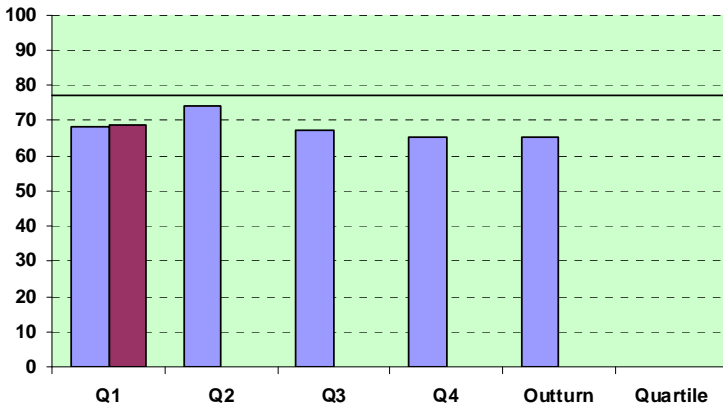
Service Plan Ref.	Objective	2009/10 Milestone	Progress to date	Commentary
SS 4	To provide effective and efficient services to Children in Need	Pilot an integrated Targeted Support to Families (TSF) service for children in need by realigning resources in the Directorate to meet the needs of children in need by September 2009.		TSF has been established and is now being embedded within Children Centre Family Support. Services have been configured to ensure that Family Support workers work across the continuum of need at level 3a and above and assistants at level 3a and below.
		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		A comprehensive plan has been put in place and agreed, that should ensure that frontline staff have the tools to undertake their work effectively. Plan now needs to be progressed through commissioning and delivering training.
		Introduce a system for independently reviewing children in need plans at levels 3b by December 2009		This will depend on the successful recruitment of an Independent Reviewing manager. Post to be advertised in September and therefore unlikely to be in post until December 2009.
		Ensure that the children in need teams are sufficiently staffed to meet the current demand for children in need services by March 2010.		SW recruitment has been good with only one vacancy across CiN at present. However, recruitment of Practice Managers has proved difficult (2 vacancies) and due to promotions, there are 2 Principal Manager posts vacant. These posts are critical to the service.



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

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

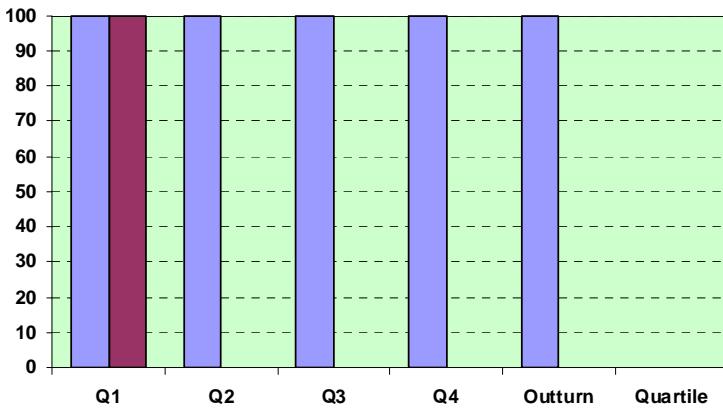
Commentary

This indicator has seen an improvement at the start of 09/10. It is anticipated that in 09/10 could potentially see an improvement in Placement Stability as the Cohort changes and reflects the long-term improvement in placement stability amongst Halton's Children in Care.

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

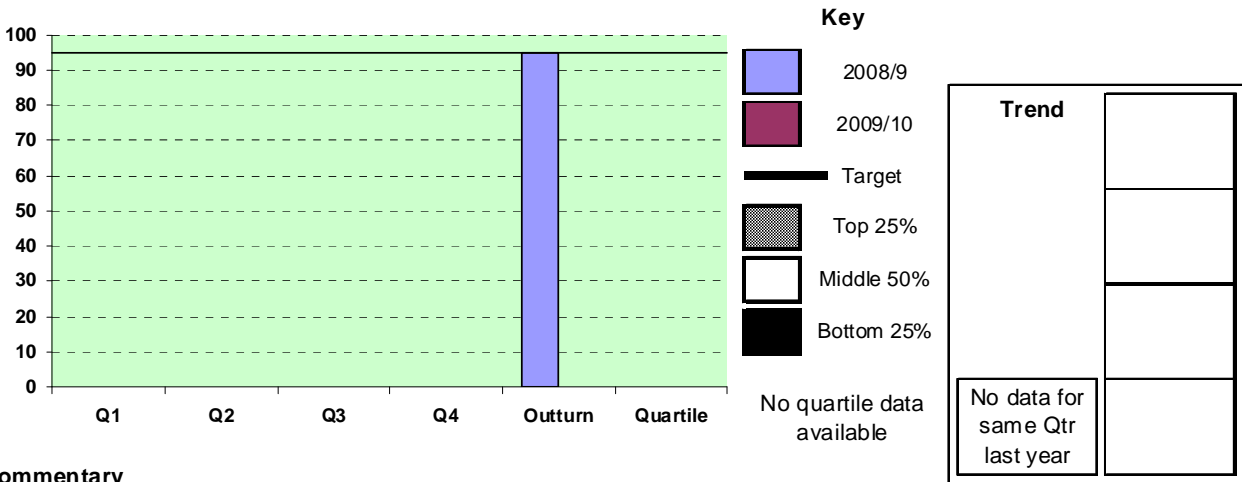
Same as this time last year	Green
	Should hit target for the year

Commentary

All Children in Care Cases were reviewed in timescale, maintaining the figures from 08/09.


NI 68




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




Commentary

Data not available this quarter.

Ref	Description	Actual 2008/9	Target 09/10	Quarter 1	Progress	Commentary
Fair Access						
NI148	Care leavers in employment, education or training (%)	46%	71%	56%		The development of dedicated apprenticeship opportunities and support for care leavers, continued work with Connexions and work on the Council's Care Leaver Employment Policy should improve performance by 2010.

Objective Reference	Risk Control Measures	Progress	Commentary
SS 2	Targeted recruitment strategy to increase numbers of local foster carers		In place but no impact to date, without new payment structures to attract more carers
	Review payments structure and rates for carers		Completed and new rates and structures identified but has significant resources implications in the medium term
	Evaluate impact of Recruitment and Retention Strategy		Significant progress in front line CiN services but vacancies in fostering and adoption remain a challenge

HIGH Priority Actions	Target (Resp. Officer)	Progress (Traffic lights)*	Commentary
Participate in programme of Equality Impact assessments on all Strategy, Policy, and Service Areas	Mar 10 OD Specialist Services and all DM's		Now built into policy development and review, but requires more work to imbed process

SPECIALIST SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 30th June 2009

	Annual Revised Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Expenditure to Date £'000	Variance to Date (Overspend) £'000	Actual Including Commitments £'000
<u>Expenditure</u>					
Employees	6,193	1,538	1,369	169	1,598
Premises	454	25	25	0	35
Supplies & Services	579	143	146	(3)	176
Transport	167	28	26	2	36
Agency Related Expenditure	309	27	21	6	21
Residential Placements	1,986	417	417	0	417
Out of Borough Adoption	80	1	1	0	1
Out of Borough Fostering	365	102	102	0	102
In House Foster Care Placements	1,670	298	298	0	300
Care Leavers	307	77	45	32	58
Central Support Service Recharges	762	141	141	0	141
Commissioned Services	2,020	266	266	0	266
Other Expenditure	190	55	51	4	51
Contribution to CwD Pooled Budget	1,426	344	338	6	387
Total Expenditure	16,508	3,462	3,246	216	3,589
<u>Income</u>					
Aiming Higher for Disabled Children	-552	0	0	0	0
Carers Grant	-129	-32	-32	0	-32
Care Matters Grant	-141	-65	-65	0	-65
Child & Adolescent Mental Health Serv.	-402	-176	-176	0	-176
Child Death Review Processes Grant	-23	-6	-6	0	-6
Children's Fund Grant	-484	-122	-122	0	-122
Children's Trust Fund Grant	-3	-1	-1	0	-1
Cohesion Grant	-49	-12	-12	0	-12
HSCB	-210	-200	-200	0	-200
Inter Authority Income	0	0	-56	56	-56
Other Income	0	0	5	(5)	0
Positive Activities for Young People	-196	-49	-49	0	-49
Teenage Pregnancy Grant	-106	-28	-28	0	-28
Youth Opportunity & Youth Capital	-273	-68	-68	0	-68
Young Persons Substance Misuse	-63	-16	-16	0	-16
Total Income	-2,630	-774	-826	51	-831
Net Expenditure	13,878	2,688	2,420	268	2,758

Comments on the above figures

In overall terms, revenue spending at the end of Quarter 1 is below budget profile.

The Employee budget is below budget profile. This is due to a number of posts which still remain vacant, although partly offset by the use of external agency staff. It is anticipated that these vacant posts will be filled during the year with an offsetting reduction in the use of agency staff. Expenditure is planned to remain within budget by year-end.

The Residential Placements and Out of Borough budgets are currently in line with the budget profile. However, these budgets are extremely volatile and the Department is monitoring activity closely.

The In House Foster Care Placements budget is also currently in line with the budget profile. The Department is currently reviewing its placement policy which may result in increased costs within this budget.

The Care Leavers budget is currently below budget profile, however, it is anticipated that spend will be in line with the budget profile towards the end of the financial year.

The Income Budgets are currently above budget profile due to the receipt of inter authority income which was unforeseen at the start of the financial year.

SPECIALIST SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Children with Disabilities Pooled Budget as at 30th June 2009

(The following provides a summary of the council's contribution to the CwD Pooled Budget)

	Annual Revised Budget £'000	Budget to Date £'000	Expenditure to Date £'000	Variance to Date (Overspend) £'000	Actual Including Commitments £'000
<u>Expenditure</u>					
Employees	932	233	224	9	258
Premises	161	30	30	0	42
Supplies & Services	58	14	10	4	14
Transport	26	6	3	3	3
Agency Related Expenditure	965	158	158	0	158
Central Support Service Recharges	192	34	34	0	34
Commissioned Services	52	13	23	(10)	23
Other Expenditure	10	3	3	0	3
Total Expenditure	2,396	491	485	6	534
<u>Income</u>					
PCT Income	-970	-147	-147	0	-147
Total Income	-970	-147	-147	0	-147
Net Expenditure	1,426	344	338	6	387

Comments on the above figures

In overall terms, revenue spending at the end of Quarter 1 is below budget profile.

The Employee budget is below budget profile. This is due to a number of posts which still remain vacant, located within the Children's Disability Team and Inglefield. These vacancies are currently offset by the use of external agency staff. It is anticipated that these vacant posts will be filled during the year with an offsetting reduction in the use of agency staff. Expenditure is planned to remain within budget by year-end.

The Commissioned Services budget is above budget profile. This is due to unplanned expenditure which can be subsumed within the pool budget.

STANDARDS FUND & AREA BASED GRANT SCHEMES

As at 30th June 2009

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)	Actual Including Committed Items
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Primary Targeted Support	556	98	93	5	94
Key Stage 3 Targeted Support	314	55	91	(36)	93
Extending Early Yrs Making Good	180	32	0	32	0
Progress	313	55	0	55	0
School Lunch	199	35	0	35	0
Ethnic Minority Achievement	38	7	0	7	0
Music Services	184	32	18	14	18
Extended Schools	351	62	0	62	0
Extended Schools Sustainability	93	30	1	29	2
KS4 Engagement	80	14	0	14	0
Total Standards Fund	2,308	420	203	217	207
14-19 Flexible Funding	37	9	0	9	0
Choice Advisors	26	6	6	0	6
Education Health Partnership	60	15	6	9	6
Extended Rights for Free Travel	47	12	0	12	0
Extended Schools – Start Up	567	142	47	95	47
Secondary Behaviour & Attendance	68	17	17	0	17
Secondary National Strategy	132	33	33	0	33
Primary National Strategy	94	24	24	0	24
School Development	1,132	283	57	226	57
School Improvement Partners	71	18	0	18	0
School Intervention	44	11	2	9	2
School Travel Advisors	17	4	0	4	0
Sustainable Travel to Schools	10	3	0	3	0
Connexions	1,682	420	420	0	420
Total Area Based Grant	3,987	997	612	385	612

GENERAL SURE START & CHILDRENS CENTRE GRANT SCHEMES

As at 30th June 2009

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)	Actual Including Committed Items
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
General Sure Start Main	2,229	557	386	171	481
Ditton CC	512	128	103	25	106
Brookvale CC	521	130	158	(28)	181
Halton Lodge CC	447	112	114	(2)	120
Halton Brook CC	588	147	118	29	155
Kingsway CC	618	155	98	57	106
Warrington Road CC	81	20	22	(2)	23
Our Lady of Perpetual Succour CC	15	4	3	1	3
Runcorn All Saints CC	0	0	2	(2)	2
Castlefields CC	0	0	(6)	6	(6)
Palacefields CC	75	19	9	10	9
Windmill Hill CC	75	19	34	(15)	34
Children's Centre General	1,081	270	(19)	289	(15)
Total General Sure Start & Children's Centres	6,242	1,561	1,022	539	1,199

OTHER EXTERNAL GRANT SCHEMES

As at 30th June 2009

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)	Actual Including Committed Items
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
LSC Post 16 Transport	31	8	9	(1)	9
Children's Workforce Development	81	20	1	19	1
Walking to School Initiative	4	1	0	1	0
IS Contact Point	267	67	33	34	33
Info Systems for Parents & Providers	4	1	3	(2)	3
Children's Workforce Higher Level	86	22	25	(3)	35
Teaching Assistants	56	14	0	14	0
Arts Education Development	67	17	23	(6)	23
National Remodelling School Workforce	149	37	17	20	17
Basic Skills Quality Mark – Primary	4	1	1	0	1
Schools Music Service	17	4	2	2	4
Build Capacity for Leadership Succession	53	13	0	13	0
PE & Sports	580	145	107	38	108
Aim Higher	336	84	56	28	68
14-19 Advisory	491	123	93	30	98
Education Business Link	284	71	54	17	58
Neighbourhood Managers Project	44	11	15	(4)	16
Enterprise Game	128	32	27	5	32
14-19 Diploma	247	62	39	23	40
Parenting Strategy	40	10	0	10	0
St Chads – Lottery	8	2	4	(2)	4
Gateway Plus	115	29	18	11	18
Mental Health in Schools	220	55	1	54	1
Total Other External Funding	3,312	829	528	301	569

LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP SCHEMES

As at 30th June 2009

	Annual Budget	Budget To Date	Actual To Date	Variance To Date (overspend)	Actual Including Committed Items
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Neglect – PACT	125	31	0	31	0
Barnardos Missing from Home	70	18	18	0	18
Teenage Pregnancy (Health)	45	11	0	11	0
Portage	16	12	8	4	9
Attendance	22	17	25	(8)	25
HITS	50	12	0	12	0
Vikings in the Community	17	13	0	13	0
Connexions – NEET	46	35	0	35	0
Canal Boat Adventure	17	12	0	12	0
Improved Education for Vulnerable Youngsters	13	10	1	9	5
Kingsway Literacy Development	355	89	26	63	26
Youth Activity	27	21	10	11	10
H9P PEP Dowries	3	3	3	0	9
Unallocated Funds	162	41	0	41	0
Total LSP	968	325	91	234	102

Comments on the above figures:

Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) funding spending to the end of quarter 1 is below budget profile.

Regular monitoring reports are sent to the LSP in respect of all LSP projects and any areas of concern are dealt with throughout the year by the CYP commissioning / finance team. Further support is provided by the LSP team in the Policy & Performance Division as well as individual project managers.

There are some projects which have been allocated working neighbourhood funds for the first four months of the year so the budgets have been profiled to reflect this.

CHILDREN'S & YOUNG PEOPLES DIRECTORATE

Capital Projects as at 30th June 2009

	2009/10 Capital Allocation	Allocation To Date	Actual Spend To Date	Total Allocation Remaining
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Asset Management Data	5	0	0	5
Fire Compartmentation	15	0	0	15
Capital Repairs	1,152	380	378	774
Contingency	191	24	24	167
Fairfield School Asbestos Management	306	60	39	267
Cavendish School Changing Rooms	43	42	42	1
All Saints Upton School PCP	713	48	48	665
Our Lady Mother of Saviour School	100	0	0	100
Kingsway Centre Children's Centre General	1,625	90	90	1,535
Astmoor CC	56	0	4	52
Runcorn All Saints CC	26	19	16	10
St Augustine's CC	8	0	0	8
The Park CC	4	0	0	4
Windmill Hill CC	20	9	8	12
Children's Centre Maintenance	17	0	0	17
Brookfields School	41	0	0	41
Cavendish School Early Years	217	59	59	158
Childcare School Access Initiative	98	0	0	98
Play-builder Capital	388	5	5	383
Moore Primary	273	9	9	264
Lunts Heath	63	0	0	63
Westbank School	87	0	0	87
Hillview School	92	0	0	92
Cavendish School Furniture & Equipment	35	0	0	35
Aim Higher for Disabled Children	285	0	0	285
Harnessing Technology	631	11	67	564
Total Capital	6,605	756	789	5,816




Comments on the above figures:

There are still some schemes with no actual expenditure up to the end of Quarter 1.

It is important that these projects get underway as soon as possible and are closely monitored during the year, in order to ensure that the relevant capital allocations are fully utilized by the financial year end.

There are a number of schemes where the works will take place in the 2010-11 financial year as the funding is permitted to be carried forward into 2010-11.

The traffic light symbols are used in the following manner:

	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Performance Indicator</u>
<u>Green</u>	 <p>Indicates that the <u>milestone/objective is on course to be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the <u>target is on course to be achieved</u>.</p>
<u>Amber</u>	 <p>Indicates that it is <u>unclear</u> at this stage, <u>whether the milestone/objective will be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that it is either <u>unclear</u> at this stage or too early to state whether the target is on course to be achieved.</p>
<u>Red</u>	 <p>Indicates that it is <u>highly likely or certain that the milestone/objective will not be achieved</u> within the appropriate timeframe.</p>	<p>Indicates that the <u>target will not be achieved</u> unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.</p>