



**Children Young People and Families
Policy and Performance Board**

**Monday, 23 November 2020 at 6.30 p.m.
To be held remotely, contact below for
access**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'David W R'.

Chief Executive

BOARD MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Mark Dennett (Chair)	Labour
Councillor Geoffrey Logan (Vice-Chair)	Labour
Councillor Marjorie Bradshaw	Conservative
Councillor Chris Carlin	Labour
Councillor Lauren Cassidy	Labour
Councillor Pauline Hignett	Labour
Councillor Rosie Leck	Labour
Councillor Peter Lloyd Jones	Labour
Councillor John Stockton	Labour
Councillor Angela Teeling	Labour
Councillor Louise Whitley	Labour

***Please contact Ann Jones on 0151 511 8276 or e-mail
ann.jones@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Board is on Monday, 25 January 2021***

**ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

Part I

Item No.	Page No.
1. MINUTES	1 - 4
2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST (INCLUDING PARTY WHIP DECLARATIONS)	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest or Other Disclosable Interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda, no later than when that item is reached or as soon as the interest becomes apparent and, with Disclosable Pecuniary interests, to leave the meeting during any discussion or voting on the item.	
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In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

CHILDREN YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES POLICY AND PERFORMANCE BOARD

At a meeting of the Children Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board on Monday, 14 September 2020 via remote access

Present: Councillors Dennett (Chair), Logan (Vice-Chair), M. Bradshaw, Carlin, P. Hignett, Leck, P. Lloyd Jones, J. Stockton, Teeling and Whitley

Apologies for Absence: None

Absence declared on Council business: None

Officers present: M. Vasic, A. McIntyre, A. Jones, L. Davenport, T. Coffey and J. Farrell

Also in attendance: One member of the press

**ITEMS DEALT WITH
UNDER DUTIES
EXERCISABLE BY THE BOARD**

		<i>Action</i>
CYP7	MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the meeting held on 20 July 2020 were taken as read and signed as a correct record.	
CYP8	PUBLIC QUESTION TIME	
	It was confirmed that no public questions had been received.	
CYP9	EXECUTIVE BOARD MINUTES	
	The minutes relating to the Children, Education and Social Care Portfolio, that had been considered by the Executive Board since the last meeting of this Board, were attached at Appendix 1 for information.	
	RESOLVED: That the minutes be noted.	
CYP10	EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE, ATTAINMENT SUMMARY 2020	
	The Board received a report from the Strategic Director – People, which provided the annual update of the educational challenge, position and outcomes for Halton children for 2019-20.	

As a note of caution, Members were advised that this year had been an unusual and challenging one due to the impact of Covid-19. Data was not available this year as many statutory assessments were cancelled nationally and any individual school level data would not be comparable to previous years' data. Further, it was commented that due to the outbreak of Covid-19 and the subsequent response, there had been many changes to educational provision, assessment and examinations during 2020 and the validated national results would not be published this year.

The report provided Members with detailed information in the following areas:

- Statutory Assessment and Exam Result Key Issues;
- Educational Challenges for September 2020 onwards;
- Changes to 2020-2021;
- The National Tutoring Programme (NTP); and
- The Catch Up Premium.

Following the presentation Members queried:

How would the National Tutoring Programme work – this was a Government funded sector led initiative to support schools to address the impact of Covid-19 on pupils learning. An amount of £350m was allocated nationally towards the Programme which would make high quality tuition available to schools and support pupils who had missed out the most as a result of school closures. The Programme would be led by a collaboration of five charities; schools would select which programmes they accessed, with many schools across Halton using evidence based programmes from the Education Endowment Foundation.

How would the Catch Up Premium work – this was a further £650m to ensure that schools had the support they needed to help all pupils make up for lost teaching time and was designed to mitigate the effects of the disruption caused by the Pandemic. It was only available for the 2020-21 academic year but would not be added to schools baselines in calculating future years' budgets.

Were there any pupils in Halton that were home tutored and did not get any results – there were no instances of this reported in Halton but this would be confirmed. It was understood that the onus was on the parent to follow

through with exams and register at exam centres.

The late results for the Btecs were a concern as well, were any pupils disadvantaged because of this – most students had College places on courses they wanted and there were no reports of anyone being without a place that wanted one.

Were there any decisions made on next year's exam timetable considering the impact that Covid-19 will have on the cohort of pupils taking these – no announcement had been made to date on this; the Board would be advised of any update.

Was there any indications on when the Ofsted inspections would resume – these inspections were put on hold following the lockdown and many Ofsted staff were redeployed to other areas. However visits would resume in the Autumn term to schools in special measures or those inadequate at the last inspection; schools would be sampled across all Ofsted grades and compliance and regulatory visits would be made where needed. Full inspections were planned to resume from January 2021.

It was reported that one Academy Trust school had volunteered to be visited so the findings of this pilot visit would be shared with the Board.

RESOLVED: That the Board notes the information provided and comments made.

CYP11 UPDATE ON OFSTED INSPECTION ACTION PLAN AND PRESENTATION ON SUFFICIENCY AND SUPPORT FOR CARE LEAVERS

The Board received a report from the Strategic Director – People, which informed of the progress against the Ofsted Inspection Action Plan.

It was reported that Part 1 of the Ofsted Action plan was in progress and an interim duty and assessment team had been established to ensure consistency of response and improve the quality of assessments and initial plans. It was noted that this additional capacity would support an anticipated increase in referrals when the schools returned full time and would also support social workers with additional capacity to undertake more direct work with children and families.

Operational
Director
Education,
Inclusion and
Provision

Members were also advised that:

- Audit work had continued to review the response on cases in response to Covid-19 and the revised quality and assurance framework would be implemented as planned by end of September;
- *Eclipse*, the new case recording system, was fully implemented from 6 September and a revised practice guidance on assessments had been issued;
- The development appraisal approach for all staff using the knowledge and skills statements had been piloted and would be launched mid-September – this would inform the workforce strategy and training and development for staff to support improvements and consistency in practice; and
- A copy of the Osted Inspection Action Plan would be emailed to Members of the Board.

Members queried the capacity to be able to take the Action Plan forward – in response it was commented that some additional capacity would be required going forward, especially considering the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic and its impacts. Further to Members comments on previous case recording systems such as CAF, it was noted that these would cease as soon as all staff were trained on *Eclipse*.

Members also received a presentation informing of the steps taken to improve the sufficiency of accommodation options and support for care leavers, as part of improving the sufficiency of placement choice. It outlined details of the project – to deliver two types of support using one provider, to care leavers in Halton in the Ashley House site.

Further to Members questions it was commented that care leavers at the site would have a pathway assessment carried out specific to the individual, so that their emotional and health needs could be established. They would also receive life skills training at the site such as budget management, shopping, how to register with a GP and dentist, banking and healthy eating.

RESOLVED: That the report and presentation be noted.

Director of
Children's
Services

Meeting ended at 7.30 p.m.

REPORT TO: Children, Young People and Families Policy & Performance Board

DATE: 23 November 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community and Resources

SUBJECT: Public Question Time

WARD(s): Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider any questions submitted by the Public in accordance with Standing Order 34(9).
- 1.2 Details of any questions received will be circulated at the meeting.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That any questions received be dealt with.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Standing Order 34(9) states that Public Questions shall be dealt with as follows:-

- (i) A total of 30 minutes will be allocated for dealing with questions from members of the public who are residents of the Borough, to ask questions at meetings of the Policy and Performance Boards.
- (ii) Members of the public can ask questions on any matter relating to the agenda.
- (iii) Members of the public can ask questions. Written notice of questions must be given by 4.00 pm on the working day prior to the date of the meeting to the Committee Services Manager. At any one meeting no person/organisation may submit more than one question.
- (iv) One supplementary question (relating to the original question) may be asked by the questioner, which may or may not be answered at the meeting.
- (v) The Chair or proper officer may reject a question if it:-
 - Is not about a matter for which the local authority has a responsibility or which affects the Borough;
 - Is defamatory, frivolous, offensive, abusive or racist;

- Is substantially the same as a question which has been put at a meeting of the Council in the past six months; or
 - Requires the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
- (vi) In the interests of natural justice, public questions cannot relate to a planning or licensing application or to any matter which is not dealt with in the public part of a meeting.
- (vii) The Chair will ask for people to indicate that they wish to ask a question.
- (viii) **PLEASE NOTE** that the maximum amount of time each questioner will be allowed is 3 minutes.
- (ix) If you do not receive a response at the meeting, a Council Officer will ask for your name and address and make sure that you receive a written response.

Please bear in mind that public question time lasts for a maximum of 30 minutes. To help in making the most of this opportunity to speak:-

- Please keep your questions as concise as possible.
- Please do not repeat or make statements on earlier questions as this reduces the time available for other issues to be raised.
- Please note public question time is not intended for debate – issues raised will be responded to either at the meeting or in writing at a later date.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

None.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 **Children and Young People in Halton** - none.

6.2 **Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton** - none.

6.3 **A Healthy Halton** – none.

6.4 **A Safer Halton** – none.

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal** – none.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 None.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

8.1 There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.

REPORT TO:	Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	23 rd November 2020
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, People
SUBJECT:	Covid Update
WARDS:	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 A presentation will be delivered to members on the current response to Covid19 and how service delivered has been altered to respond to initially Tier 3 and now lockdown restrictions.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 2.1 i) **Members are asked to consider the presentation and raise any questions they may have on the current arrangements for children and their families.**

3.0 SUMMARY

- 3.1 The Children and Families Department and the Education, Inclusion and Provision Departments have continued to provide support to Halton Children and Families. Some staff have been able to work from home and this has been encouraged where possible. Other staff have been in work and have been able to provide direct support to schools and parents and carers.
- 3.2 Members will be provided with a full update by presentation at the Board meeting on 23rd November 2020.

4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

4.1 Children & Young People in Halton

The key focus throughout COVID 19 has been to support parents and carers, schools and settings to continue to provide good quality, timely support advice and guidance.

4.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

None.

4.3 A Healthy Halton

None.

4.4 A Safer Halton

None.

4.5 Halton’s Urban Renewal

None.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

5.1 When staff are working directly with schools and parents and carers risk assessments have been completed to minimise risk. Each work place has also been assessed to ensure it is covid secure.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

6.1 Checks are undertaken to ensure that all vulnerable pupils and students receive the appropriate support if they are self-isolating.

7.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
DFE Guidance to schools and settings	DFE Website	Ann McIntyre – Operational Director – Ann McIntyre – Operational Director- Education, Inclusion and Provision & Operational Director - Resources

REPORT TO:	Children, Young People & Families Policy & Performance Board
DATE:	23 rd November, 2020
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, People
PORTFOLIO:	Children, Education & Social Care
SUBJECT:	Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Review Autumn 2020 – 2021 (CSA)
WARD(S)	Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 The report aims to provide a summary of the revised Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Report. It details any achievements since the last review and outlines Halton's current position. It also highlights any gaps in provision and how these are being addressed. Early indications of how the effects of Covid-19 are impacting the childcare sector are also discussed.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That:**

- i) **Members approve the revised Childcare Sufficiency Assessment.**

3.0 **BACKGROUND**

3.1 Sections 6 and 7 of 'The Childcare Act' (2006) and the associated statutory guidance: 'Early Education and Childcare – Statutory guidance for local authorities' (March 2018), requires all Local Authorities in England to undertake and provide an annual childcare sufficiency report to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare and to make it available to the public.

3.2 In accordance with the above, Halton's Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) has been reviewed and updated. The purpose of the document is to:

- Assist parents to find suitable childcare across the borough;
- Help inform the Local Authority regarding supply and estimated demand for childcare places in all age ranges, in particularly for the Free Early Years Entitlement places;
- Provide information for anyone who is considering setting up new childcare provision in the borough or becoming a childminder.

4.0 **ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE LAST CSA REVIEW**

4.1 Since producing the last CSA Review, the following have been achieved:

- The percentage of Day Nurseries with a good or better Ofsted outcome has remained at 100% (excluding one nursery which has not been inspected yet);
- We have increased the number of childminders who are able to deliver the Free Early Years Entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year olds from 50 to 56;
- We continue to fund an average of 540 funded 2 year old children per term;
- From September 2017, 30 hours childcare was introduced for working parents. Currently 100% of day nurseries, 87.5% of pre-schools, 100% of nursery schools, 12.5% of nursery classes, 60% of nursery academies and one Out of School Club are offering the extended hours. This is in addition to the 56 childminders registered to deliver the FEYE for 15 or 30 hours;
- We have been able to secure sufficient childcare for all vulnerable children and children of critical worker parents/carers who required a place, during lockdown.

5.0 **SUMMARY OF CSA REVIEW**

5.1 The CSA provides the following information:

- A brief introduction to the review, outlining its purpose and rationale;
- A description of the Halton context;
- A statement about Safeguarding;
- An overview of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum;
- Details of Halton's market segments and their characteristics;
- Details of Halton's Early Years market, including;
 - the percentage of Free Early Years Entitlement places by sector;
 - the numbers of 3 & 4 year old places by setting type;
 - the number of early years settings;
 - Ofsted grades for all sectors as at August 2020;
- The supply and estimated demand of childcare places;
- A brief outline of Halton's SEND provision, Disability Access Fund (DAF) and Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP);
- Details of the affordability and flexibility of Halton's childcare, sustainability and staffing;
- An overview of the changes in childcare places since the last CSA and projected new places;
- Guidance around financial help with childcare costs;

- Details of any apparent gaps in provision and an action plan to show how these gaps will be met;
- Early indications of how the effects of Covid-19 are impacting childcare and sustainability in Halton.

6.0 **CURRENT POSITION**

6.1 Overall, the Halton Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) Review 2020-2021 continues to reflect a vibrant, sufficient and high quality Early Years and Childcare market that delivers choice, high quality and affordable service to parents and carers.

However, this review has been undertaken at a time when the Early Years Sector is under increasing pressure due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Although, early indications show that the sector remains sustainable at present, it is still too early to determine the full impact of Covid-19. This will need to be carefully monitored over the coming months.

The report does identify some gaps in provision. These are as follows:

- Halton Brook CCRA has a deficit of approximately 34 places for funded 2 year olds;
- Windmill Hill CCRA has a deficit of approximately 84 extended entitlement places and 46 places for out of school care for 5-10 year olds;
- Kingsway CCRA is approximately 61 places short of funded 2 year olds;
- Upton CCRA has a deficit of approximately 96 universal FEYE places, 69 places for Extended Hours and 26 places for out of school care for 5-10 year olds.

With regards to the shortage of funded 2 year old places in Halton Brook CCRA, the Two Year Old Funding Officer reports that it has always been possible to find an alternative place in the area. Furthermore, if parents have requested a particular setting where there are no available spaces, they have been happy to wait for availability. Furthermore, one Pre-school in Halton Brook Ward are looking into the possibility of providing care for under 2's.

With regards to the shortage of Universal places in the Windmill Hill CCRA, families are willing to travel to other wards for their FEYE. This may mean accessing a setting which is outside the Windmill Hill CCRA or even out of the borough.

With regards to the shortage of 46 out of School places, local knowledge would support the fact that, in reality, no such shortage exists.

With regards to the shortage of funded 2 year old places in the

Kingsway CCRA, there is a new nursery due to open in Farnworth Ward, Spring 2021. Although this new nursery is not situated in the Kingsway CCRA, geographically it is located close by and parents may be willing to travel.

The shortage of 3 & 4 year old FEYE places (both Universal and Extended) in the Upton CCRA would appear to be due to the continued expansion of new housing estates in that area.

In recent years, prospective childcare providers have considered developing childcare in this CCRA, notably the Birchfield ward. However, no suitable buildings appeared to be available and it was proving too costly to buy land to build premises.

However, the new Day Nursery opening in Farnworth ward will help to alleviate the shortage of 3 and 4 year old places in the Upton CCRA. In particular, it will help the Birchfield ward, as Birchfield ward is next to Farnworth Ward (see map on page 7) and parents are willing to travel across wards to receive their free childcare.

In addition, Birchfield and Hough Green wards are both on the edge of neighbouring authorities e.g. St Helens, Knowsley and Warrington. They are also in close proximity to the M62 motorway. This means that, if parents work further afield, they may choose to claim their Universal/Extended FEYE in a childcare setting nearer to their work, thereby reducing demand for places in Halton.

It is also important to remember that parents do not always access childcare/school places in the ward where they live and children do not always attend a school in the ward where they live.

An Action Plan is included in the CSA showing how the Local Authority will work with a range of partners to address the above gaps to ensure sufficiency.

7.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 None identified

8.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 None identified

9.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

9.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Research has proven that the earliest years of a child's life are crucial to their development for laying the foundations of success at school and in later life. In Halton, we want to ensure we have high quality childcare available for all parents or carers that need it, in all age ranges. The Family and Childcare Trust Childcare Survey (2018) states: *'Childcare supports parents to work, keeps valuable skills in the workforce, helps children do better at school and can*

narrow the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers’.

9.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

High quality childcare which results in children experiencing success within education will increase training and employment opportunities for pupils and students.

9.3 **A Healthy Halton**

Raising children’s achievements through access to affordable and sustainable early years childcare provision will have a positive impact on the emotional health and wellbeing of challenging pupils and students.

9.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified

9.5 **Halton’s Urban Renewal**

None identified

10.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

10.1 Raising children’s achievements through access to affordable and sustainable early years childcare should reduce incidents of challenging behaviour.

11.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

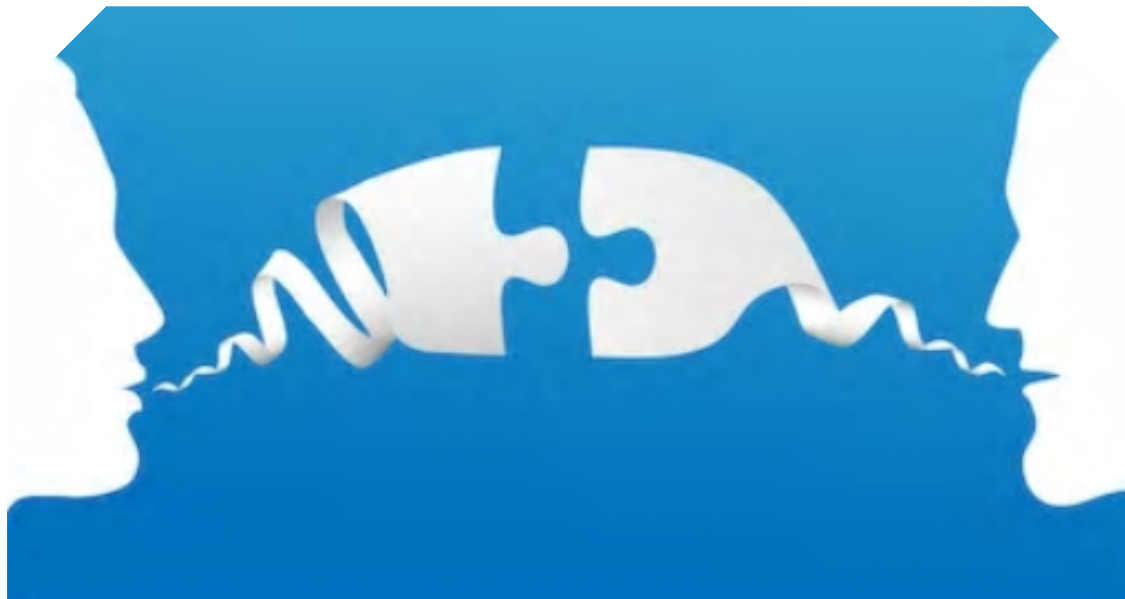
11.1 Raising children’s achievements through access to affordable and sustainable early years childcare provision should ensure that they are able to receive timely support and intervention, thereby reducing inequalities in their life chances.

12.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
The Childcare Act 2006	www.legislation.gov.uk	Operational Director – Education Inclusion and Provision & Operational Director Resources
Early Education and Childcare – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities (March 2018)	www.gov.uk	Operational Director – Education Inclusion and Provision & Operational Director Resources



Complaints Annual Report Children Social Care Services 2019 / 20



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1. Introduction

The report covers Children Social Care Services for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, it details the complaints and compliments that have been formally recorded during this period. There have been no changes to the Complaint Regulations in this financial year, with this in mind the remainder of this introduction and chapter 2 'The Statutory Process' are unchanged from last year's report.

The Children's Act 1989 require all local authorities with Children Social responsibilities in England and Wales to have a complaints procedure. The aim of The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure is for Children and Young People to have their concerns resolved swiftly and wherever possible by the people who provide the service locally. 'Getting the Best from Complaints' provides guidance for local authorities on implementing the Children's Act and defines a complaint as being:

A complaint may generally be defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child or young person, which requires a response.

Statutory complaints relate to the provision of Children Social Care and are handled in line with the national regulations referred to above, the key stages of which are set out in section 2 of this report: stage 1 - local resolution; stage 2 – investigation; stage 3 - review panel and section 4 - referral to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Complaints about Children Social Care Services that do not fall under The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure may be responded to under the Councils' Corporate Complaints Procedure these are investigated at stage 1, reviewed at stage 2 and customers may choose to progress their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman as a final stage. Some complaints may be addressed in accordance to internal HR procedures.

It is a requirement of The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure for the local authority to have a designated officer who is responsible for the management of the procedure and who is independent of social care operational line management and of direct service providers. In order to contribute effectively to service development, the Complaints Management function is managed by the Principal Policy Officer based within the Policy, Provision and Performance Division in the Education, Inclusion & Provision Department.

There are other customer contacts which allow early resolution to prevent complaint escalation and this can include advice and guidance, signposting and problem solving direct with the customer. Another and very positive aspect is the recording and reporting of compliments and positive feedback received by the People (Children Services) Directorate.

This Annual Report is produced in line with national guidance and is designed to share information more widely with members of the public.

2. The Statutory Complaints Process

Halton Borough Council aims to address any concerns as quickly as possible and we aim to acknowledge complaints within 3 working days of being received advising the customer of how their complaint will be handled. We cannot promise to deliver the outcomes that complainants want, but we do make sure that complaints are dealt with as quickly and as thoroughly as possible.

STAGE 1 – the complaint will be allocated to the appropriate team manager who is asked to investigate the complaint. We always aim to resolve the problem as quickly as possible (within 10 working days) however, sometimes the complaint is complex so may take up to 20 working days.

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the response or investigation at Stage 1 and feels that the complaint is not resolved, they or their representative can request to go to Stage 2.



STAGE 2 - An external Independent Person is commissioned by Children's Services to further investigate the complaint. The Investigating Officer and Independent Person will aim to produce a report within 25 working days. However, if the case is complex, they can have a maximum of 65 working days in which to produce their reports. Once the reports have been finalised they are sent to the Adjudication Officer (usually the Head of Service) who will, after careful consideration of the reports, provide the complainant with a written response to their complaint.

If the complainant still remains dissatisfied with the decision/outcome following the independent investigation at Stage 2, they can ask to have their complaint reviewed by the Complaints Review Panel.



STAGE 3 -. The Complaints Review Panel is made up of three external people who will review the complaint, but they will not reinvestigate or consider new complaints. The complainant can attend the panel meeting if they choose to and can bring a friend or someone they can trust.



STAGE 4 – If a complaint cannot be resolved locally, it can be investigated by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). A complainant has the right to self-refer their complaint to the LGSCO at any stage during the complaint process. However, the LGSCO normally allows the Local Authority the opportunity to process a complaint through every stage of the complaints procedure, before investigating it themselves.

3. Complaints received

Complaints and compliments are feedback received from our service users. Effective feedback, both positive and negative is very helpful, it highlights weaknesses as well as strengths that can be used to improve services. Feedback is around us all the time, every time we speak to someone we communicate feedback, it's impossible not to give feedback. For most of us in our day to day work there is that opportunity to pick up on those small signs of frustration, receive that feedback and address it there and then but sometimes regardless of best efforts or intentions they will escalate to a complaint.

- 33 Statutory complaints were made. A 25% decrease but more in comparison to previous years

- No complaints were received from children or young people under 18 years of age
- 1 complaint was received from a care leaver who was supported by Advocacy (NYAS)
- Historically and nationally numbers of complaints are low from young people

- 7 complaints were upheld
- 11 were partly upheld
- 14 were not upheld
- The majority were resolved by the explanation provided

- 1 of the 33 complaints progressed to Stage 2 Independent Investigation.
- None progressed to Stage 3

- 4 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman enquiries did not progress to investigation

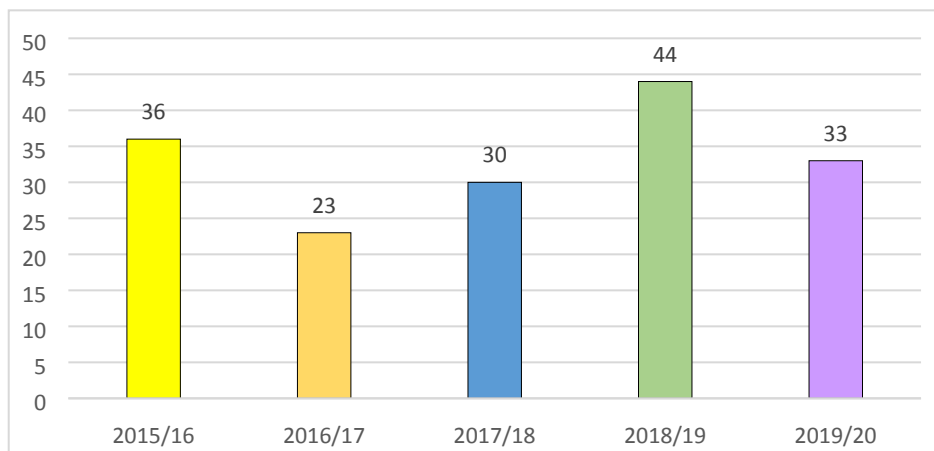
- 67 expressions of positive feedback were received.

- 18 complaints were managed under a corporate process, a 37% decrease from previous year.
- 1 was reviewed at Stage 2



4. Customer feedback data

4.1 Number of Statutory Children Social Care complaints.



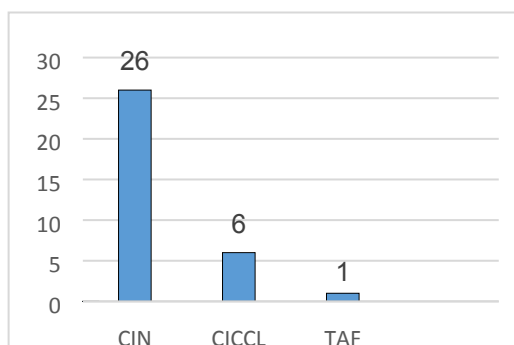
Complaints is a difficult service to measure, on one hand we want to try to reduce customer complaints to improve our services for our customers, but then on the other hand we question why they have reduced. It makes sense to eliminate as many complaints as possible and improve services however, it is really hard to predict and stop every possible imaginable problem or complaint before it happens.

Complaints don't just spring out of thin air, they are the end product of a series of negative events, problems with a service, process or people resulting in a dent or a break in that chain of events. Every time a complaint is investigated those links in the chain surrounding their complaint are examined, that link is made stronger for those using the service in the future however, complaints will continue to be raised as those different links in the chain get tested and as they have done in previous years and they will continue to fluctuate. Reducing complaints involves the entire department, it does not work without cross-team collaboration, and there is a clear sense of ownership of complaints in the Children and Families Service.



Complaints represented less than 3% of open cases to Children in Need, Children in Care and Care Leavers at 31st March 2020, the same as the previous year. There was a further 104 enquiries received that were resolved outside of the complaints process.

4.2 The teams the complaints are made about



The greatest number of complaints continues to be in the Children in Need and Child Protection Division (26 of 33), it is the frontline service dealing with a large number of cases with very difficult issues to address. The complaints were fairly evenly spread across CIN Widnes (15) and CIN Runcorn (11), this is usually the case. Of these 33 cases, 3 involved a child with a disability (9%).

4.3 How complaints are made and who makes them

E-mailing complaints continues to be the preferred method to make a complaint, this is probably due to the ease of access on mobile devices.

	2016/17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
Email	10	42%	19	64%	19	43%	19	58%
Telephone	2	30%	10	33%	14	32%	8	24%
Complaint Form	1	19%	0	4%	5	11%	4	12%
Letter	9	6%	1	3%	6	14%	2	6%
Meeting	1	3%	0	0	0	0	0	0

32 of the 33 complaints were received by parents, when comparing other local authority annual reports, as in Halton, the number of complaints received from children and/or young people remains low.

The 1 care leaver who made a complaint was supported by an advocate. Halton Borough Council commissions the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) to support Children in Care and Care Leavers, if they want one. All young people in contact with the team are offered access to an advocate so that their voices can be heard and their issues discussed, this can often be at the point of service delivery where the matter can be resolved rather than progressing to a complaint.

Staff are encouraged to resolve issues informally. If a customer has a point of contact, someone to go to at the first sign of trouble, small frustrations are less likely to escalate to the customer becoming more upset by the situation. Because of this there may be greater numbers of people who were originally dissatisfied but whose matters were resolved to their satisfaction preventing escalation to a complaint. It is not possible to capture this level of detail in the service however there were also a further 100 contacts recorded by the Principal Policy Officer that were resolved at point of contact.

Halton has a 97.8% white population. No complaints were from an ethnic minority.

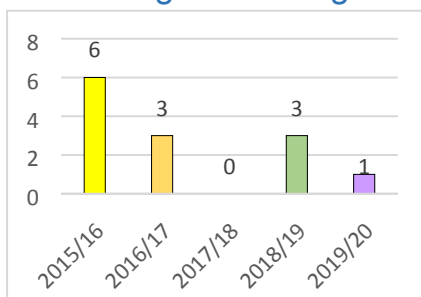
4.4 How quickly do we respond to complaints

	% within 10 days	% within 20 days	% over 20 days
2019-20	30%	67%	33%
2018-19	23%	66%	34%
2017-18	73%	91%	9%
2016-17	33%	83%	17%

This year has been a challenging year to try and make further progress on timescales and for a period it was doing ok. Manager's availability had been affecting their capacity to respond due to training away from the office and the development of the Eclipse System however, on the 24th February 2020 Halton Borough Council became the subject of a three week Ofsted Inspection during which staff resources were diverted. In addition to this, a week later the nation went into COVID-19 lockdown which placed enormous and unprecedented pressure on front line service delivery and in ensuring children and young people were safeguarded, unsurprisingly dealing with complaints in relation to matters that had already passed became less of a priority at that time.

When examining some of the delays that took responses over 20 days prior to COVID-19, we have to factor in office closures during the Christmas break, in addition managers visited a couple of the complainants to source other information as part of their investigation and complex/comprehensive responses take time to compose. The focus should always be on ensuring a thorough investigation and response that responds clearly to their concerns, if this takes slightly longer then so be it, if the complainant was dissatisfied with the response, regardless of how long it took we feel they would come back to us to progress their complaint and this has not been the case.

4.5 Stage 2 investigations



One Stage 2 complaint investigation was undertaken within the extended timescale of 65 working days, this was due to the complexity and availability of staff. The complaint was made by a parent and in relation to decision around the provision for her disabled child and it also encompassed safeguarding procedures, the investigation found that five complaints were upheld with three further complaints partially upheld.

4.6 Stage 3 Review Panels

No Stage 3 Review Panels were held in this year, there was one last year but prior to that the last one was held in 2013.

4.7 What are the complaints about

Main categories	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Staff	0	0	1	0
Service (i.e. quality, lack of, over provision & client expectations, customer care)	12 (52%)	12 (40%)	22 (50%)	19 (58%)
Assessment / Review Process (disputed or delay in decision)	11 (48%)	18 (60%)	21 (48%)	14 (42%)
Total	23	30	44	33

The Complaints Procedure is not designed to deal with allegations of misconduct by staff, they are covered under the separate disciplinary procedures of the Council but may occasionally be interwoven into the complaint as a whole.

Service Provision is about how we have done things, it is about the quality of the service we have provided.

Assessment and Review is about the process, have we done what we should have done in accordance to policy, procedure or regulations.

In the majority of cases, complaints cross over all three categories and so the Principal Policy Officer taking into consideration the main crux of the complaint, the desired outcome, and the complaint findings will determine the category.

4.8 Why complaints have been upheld

(* more than 1)

- Appointments/home visit cancelled or failed to attend*, prioritised safeguarding
- Children Social Care assess all avenues, perceived as delay when end up with what they asked for
- Communication/availability with the Social Worker* i.e. time taken to respond to emails/texts * no call backs to rearrange, resulting in very little contact
- Tell one party but not the other
- Had the correct decision been made at the time i.e. SAP progressed and fathers views sought, it would not then have resulted in dissatisfaction now
- Lack of practical support offered due to staff sickness, financial assessment was not completed
- Understanding / explanation of Consent
- Delay in assessment and reallocation, Social Worker left
- Reports for the Conference should have been provided 2 days in advance but given on day *
- Christmas contact rearranged after longstanding plans made *
- Staff late for meetings*
- Conference cancelled, social worker not completed paperwork
- Spelling errors, factual accuracy in reports
- SAP authorised 27th August 2019, letter accompanying dated 27th August 2019, received early October 2019, delivery
- Social Worker did not inform parent or foster carer of change to contact hence they turned up, she didn't.
- Delays in making contact - OFSTED ILACS
- Did not include sons views in the assessment, did not give report in timely manner
- Disputed some of the content of the assessments. Social worker left, can't determine source – case recording
- 1 Assessment missing, other 3 assessments focus on same child. Social Worker left.
- Social Worker went off sick, drift, not financially assessed, agreed to reimburse £1300.00 she paid to assist with the care of her children

A human error is an action or decision which was not intended, there are also those errors of judgement or decision-making where the “intended actions are wrong” i.e. where we do the wrong thing believing it to be right, they are unintentional errors. No complaints were determined to be as a result of deliberate deviations from rules, procedures, and regulations.

4.9 Actions taken and learnings

Learning from complaints is vital to ensure high levels of service, and there is reliance on teams/service having the capacity to advise on and deliver improvements as a result. Learning can be taken from all complaints rather than just those that were upheld or partially upheld, and it should be noted that some of the examples presented are case specific. Whilst there may be some common themes, the majority are not indicative of systemic practice issues.

Complaints including elements of workers actions are discussed in supervision to inform individual learning but should be shared within team meetings to reaffirm the impact on clients

A number of customers raised complaints when they could not get in touch with their allocated social worker directly. This was often not the main issue of concern for the customer but added to an overall feeling of dissatisfaction and frustration. In cases where the allocated social workers could not respond as quickly as they would have liked due to competing priorities or, due to their absence, staff were reminded of the importance of ensuring that parents and young people understand that they can contact the team or duty cover and to ensure they have the contact details.

The understanding and application of client consent was also a theme highlighted during the OSTED ILACS inspection along with consistency of case recording. These will be addressed through a staff development programme to address gaps in knowledge.

Customers complained about inaccuracies in reports, but the main theme was that they disagreed with the opinion of the Social Worker and the conclusions reached during the assessment process. Whilst it is understandable that a lengthy report such as the Single Assessment may have a few minor errors such as a misspelling of a name or an incorrect date, it is recognised that this may undermine customers' confidence in the assessment process. The new case recording system 'Eclipse' when introduced will have the facility to spell check, it will work on any device, anytime, anywhere enabling direct recording with clients, allowing for quality case recording that supports strength-based practice and enables a more integrated view of what life is like for adults, children, young people and families.

A clear explanation is offered to customers stating that Social Workers can use professional judgement to form opinions when making assessments and explaining the legal basis for carrying out assessments and recording them. Whilst we are not able to uphold their complaint or amend an assessment following a complaint of this nature, we are able to offer to add the customer's views onto the records and note that they should be read alongside the assessment. This approach provides greater transparency into the process and enables customers to feel that their voice has been heard, logged, and kept on record.

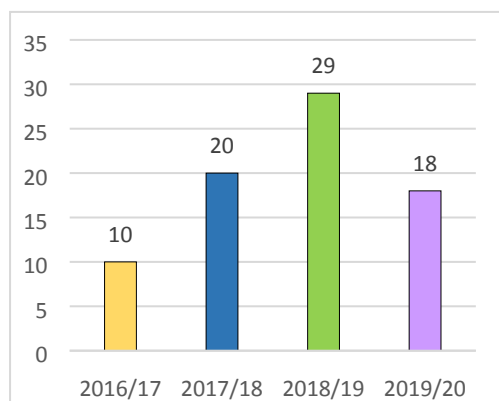
The Principal Policy Officer will continue to work proactively alongside managers making enquiries and challenging findings in order to help catch issues quickly and resolve dissatisfaction locally to prevent unnecessary escalation.

4.10 The Local Government & Social Care if the re Ombudsman (LGSCO)

Halton received 4 enquiries from the LGSCO. They responded to 3 in agreement with the Local Authorities decision not to engage the Statutory Complaint Process and not to investigate further, the other one was advised to access the statutory process which they subsequently did.

Local Government &
Social Care
OMBUDSMAN

4.11 Corporate Complaints



The number of Corporate Complaints have decreased, more comparable to previous years. This procedure is used for dealing with complaints from adults regarding Children's Social Care Services when they do not fit the criteria for their complaint to be managed under the statutory procedure. The Team Manager investigates and respond as per the statutory procedure however, if they remains dissatisfied, Stage 2 is an internal review by the Corporate Complaint Team following which they would need to approach the LGSCO.

4.12 Complaints Training and Procedures

Two training sessions were undertaken in February 2020 for front line staff in the Children and Families Service. The course was fully attended and received favourable feedback. The Principal Policy Officer is a known presence in the department and is available to support and advise staff on a one to one basis during a complaints investigation and by providing targeted training with staff and managers on request and also as part of an induction process. Complaints procedures and processes continue to be held within Tri-x which is the Web based procedure Manual for Children Social Care staff.

4.13 COVID-19

Toward the end of this year, due to the spread of COVID-19 and Government advice around social distancing, self-isolation and shielding vulnerable groups, we started to capture data on the number of complaints received specifically relating to this theme, and also the number of investigations and responses which have encountered delays as a result of critical staff prioritising the needs of our vulnerable communities. We continued to take complaints at Stage 1 however there was a temporary hold on any new escalation requests.

The Local Government Ombudsman temporarily suspended its central telephone line and would not accept new complaints, guidance issued by them was implemented;

- **Inform** - Be realistic with complainants about the timescale for response to their complaint, keeping them informed if there is going to be a further delay.
- **Consider** - Consider each complaint on its own merits, and if needs be, prioritise complaint responses, considering what the impact of any delay will be on the complainant.
- **Explain** - Make sure we explain the reason for any delay or deviation from a process and document the reason.

5. Compliments

A separate report is compiled that records all the positive comments received and so this is a snapshot. Whilst the number of compliments passed to the Principal Policy Officer has decreased this year it is more comparative to the previous two years. Staff are reminded that it is important to report compliments as it can be very helpful feedback giving a flavour of what works well and what the families using the services really value.

Year	Total
2016-17	70
2017-18	80
2018-19	101
2019-20	67

It is important to remember that the three divisions work together to support families, children in care may be open to the Children in Need Division whilst work is being undertaken. Children in need may be receiving respite in Inglefield which comes under the Children in Care Division and services provided in the family centres which can be accessed by children in need or children in care will come under the Team Around the Family Division.

Knowing that the work they do is noticed and valued is a powerful motivator for staff, people strive to do more of what brings praise from others.

	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20
CIN	18%	33%	31%	25%
CIC	26%	14%	14%	42%
TAF	54%	53%	55%	33%



She wanted to say thank you and she thinks your amazing! She said you have helped her out of so much trouble and she wanted to let you know without your help they would be homeless by now. She said things are going ok now and she appreciates what you have done for her. She has got help and things are looking better now. Just wanted to say thanks. (Client)

Needed to put into an email to you how much we, as a family have benefited from the input. At a point of which I was very low and tearful... she sat and truly listened. Straightaway she was making calls and making enquiries upon our behalf. She explained so much to us, things we never knew existed. She instigated meetings to pull all professionals together, arranged direct payments. Her confidence is improving, she is less anxious, it's become routine and most importantly planned. I know people are quick to send letters of complaint, but I believe letters to acknowledge how well something has worked should also be sent. Your department and especially her, she has had a big impact on our lives and although things are still very challenging, with her help and guidance we have been able to enjoy quality time with our son alone whilst our daughter is occupied. (Client)

I just want to say thank you for everything you have done, (please don't say it's your job) I actually don't know what mess my family would be in if it wasn't for you. And I hand on heart mean that, can never thank you enough. I am keeping your number just in case. (Client)

As the local authority funded his fees the judge instructed his

Thank you all for taking care of my daughter this year, she has really appreciated everything you have done for her and so have we. We don't know how we could ever thank you for all that you do. (Client)

The Judge stated that her Section 37 was on to Children's Directors for

You have been a superstar and helped me feel comfortable enough to discuss some very difficult events in my life during the assessment. (Client)

child's' residence and thanked her for giving him all the information he needed to make this decision in her s37 and oral evidence. (Professional)

I just want to say thank you for coming into my life and playing a big part of it, you have helped me through many of my struggles. I don't think I have the words to explain how much you really mean to me. You have helped me more than any other person ever has in my entire life. I seriously don't know what I would do without you. No one knows me like you do. No one understands me like you do, no one makes my day better like you do. You was there when I had no one, you have remained in my heart for a very long time. I am truly proud of the person I have become today and I want to say a massive thank you for helping me to achieve that. You stood by me when I thought I had lost everything, you help me make the right decisions that lead me to where I am today. I totally and utterly adore you I look up to you like a mother figure, and nothing will ever change that, take your time to read what I have wrote to you and take it all in, I want you to realise how much you have actually done for me and help me through my worst times, heart breaking times. When all I needed was a cuddle and for someone to tell me I'm going to be okay, you was that person you will always be that person, thank you. (Client)

Childcare Sufficiency Assessment Report



**Review
2020-2021**

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1. INTRODUCTION

Research has proven that the earliest years of a child's life are crucial to their development for laying the foundations of success at school and in later life. In Halton, we want to ensure we have high quality childcare available for all parents or carers that need it, in all age ranges. The Family and Childcare Trust Childcare Survey (2018) states: *'Childcare supports parents to work, keeps valuable skills in the workforce, helps children do better at school and can narrow the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers'*.

2. PURPOSE

Sections 6 and 7 of 'The Childcare Act' (2006) and the associated statutory guidance: 'Early Education and Childcare – Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities' (March 2018), require all Local Authorities in England to undertake and provide an annual childcare sufficiency report to elected council members on how they are meeting their duty to secure sufficient childcare, and to make it available to the public.

The Act places a statutory duty upon Local Authorities to play a strategic role in facilitating the childcare market, ensuring there is secure, sufficient childcare, so far as is reasonably practicable, for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment, for children aged 0-14 (or up to 18 years for disabled children). The Childcare Sufficiency Assessments give Local Authorities the chance to work with local partners, filling gaps in the market and shaping childcare services in their area, to meet the needs of local families.

The Local Authority is not under a duty to provide the childcare directly. It is intended that formal childcare should, in the main, be delivered by providers in the private and voluntary sectors.

The information in this document has been produced to:

- Assist parents to find suitable childcare across the borough;
- Help inform the Local Authority regarding supply and estimated demand for childcare places in all age ranges, but in particular for the Free Early Years Entitlement places;
- Help anyone who is considering setting up new childcare provision in the borough or becoming a childminder.

Whilst the information presented in this CSA Review provides a 'snapshot' of supply and demand for childcare places in Halton, this can change on a regular basis. Moreover, the impact of COVID-19 has yet to be determined. Early indications show that the childcare market in Halton continues to be secure and sustainable. However, Early Year's providers have expressed fears around what the future may hold, due to the uncertain nature of the pandemic. The potential impact of COVID-19 is explored in greater detail in section 25.

Note: Halton Borough Council does not guarantee the accuracy of this CSA Review, nor does the council accept any liability for any direct or indirect loss, damage or any other consequences arising from the use of the information in this document.

3. RATIONALE

Not all families require childcare. Some parents do not work, whilst others work flexibly. Furthermore, some parents rely on extended family members, such as grandparents, rather than

use formal childcare. Because of these factors, it is difficult to accurately calculate the number of children that will require childcare in Halton. The impact of COVID-19 will also have an effect, although to what extent remains to be seen.

In order to assess the level of demand for all forms of childcare provision across all market segments, a range of demand factors have been applied to the total child population by ward and age range.

The factors applied where relevant are:

- Percentage impact of unemployment rate
- Percentage impact of “day to day activities limited a little” (*this category was previously known as Limiting Long Term Illness*)
- 100% Full Time Equivalent (FTE) place take-up, less average % usage
- Average household income as a % of the LA average
- Average % vacancy
- Percentage of part-time working
- Discount for children attending schools out of borough
- Percentage impact of Extended School Services
- Percentage impact of partners looking after children
- Own holiday cover
- A percentage discount for 3 and 4 year olds based on date of birth

These factors will have varying impacts on the ultimate demand for formal childcare, for example, the higher the rate of unemployment and limited day to day activities within a ward, the lower the demand for formal childcare, whereas the higher the level of household income, the greater the demand.

It must also be noted that, unlike school place planning, which is based on compulsory attendance and defined school catchment areas, early education and childcare trends can be unpredictable. Families are able to choose whether or not they take up a place and are free to access early education and childcare wherever they wish across the borough, or even in other boroughs. Therefore, whilst some choose to access close to where they live, others may prefer to take up places closer to where they work. When it comes to the Free Early Years Entitlement (FEYE), most families use all the hours available to them. However, some choose only to access part of their entitlement. This can make it difficult to accurately forecast the number of places needed.

Childcare market management is further complicated by the fact that providers can change the age profile of the places they offer without notice. These factors make precise forecasting extremely difficult and mean that caveats must be applied to information within the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA).

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone involved in producing this document including:

- All the childcare providers who completed our surveys; and
- Members of Halton Borough Council’s Early Years Team

4. ACHIEVEMENTS SINCE THE LAST CSA REVIEW

Since producing the Action Plan for the last CSA Review, the following have been achieved:

- The percentage of Day Nurseries with a good or better Ofsted outcome has remained at 100% (excluding one nursery, which has not been inspected yet);
- We have increased the number of childminders who are able to deliver the Free Early Years Entitlement for 2, 3 and 4 year olds from 45 to 56;
- We continue to fund an average of 540 funded 2 year old children per term;
- From September 2017, 30 hours childcare was introduced for working parents. Currently 100% of day nurseries, 87.5% of pre-schools, 100% of nursery schools, 12.5% of nursery classes, 60% of nursery academies and one Out of School Club are offering the extended hours. This is in addition to the 56 childminders registered to deliver the FEYE for 15 or 30 hours;
- We were able to secure childcare for all vulnerable children and children of critical worker parents/carers who required a place, during lockdown.

5. CONTEXT

Halton is a largely urban area. Its' two biggest settlements are Widnes and Runcorn, situated 10 miles upstream from Liverpool, and separated by the River Mersey. It consists of 21 wards (see map on page 7). The ethnic composition of Halton remains predominantly white, with 97.8% of the population falling into this category. This is significantly higher than found regionally or nationally, suggesting a relative lack of ethnic diversity. From the 2011 School Census, the main first language other than English was Polish. Christianity is the main religion in Halton, well above the national average. However, this has dropped from the 2001 Census with more people stating no religion (a trend seen nationally).

Halton shares many of the social and economic problems associated with its neighbours on Merseyside. The 2019 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is one of the most comprehensive sources of deprivation indicators, and shows that Halton is ranked 13th out of 'the 20 local authority districts with the highest proportion of neighbourhoods in the most deprived 10% of neighbourhoods nationally'. Furthermore, 24.3% of children in Halton are living in families who are receiving out-of-work benefits, as compared to the North West average of 19.5%. (*'Proportion of Children in out-of-work benefit households measure for 2014' – Department for Work and Pensions statistics published 2015*)

A more in-depth breakdown of Halton's context may be found by following this link: <https://www3.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/pdfs/CensusandStatistics/Halton%20Borough%20Profile.pdf>

It is acknowledged that high quality early years and childcare provision between the ages of 0-4 years is crucial to the life chances of children, and as such makes a major contribution to breaking cycles of deprivation, thus reducing the gap in educational achievements and improving future job prospects.

Halton's ambition is to build stronger, safer communities which are able to support the development and learning of children and young people so they grow up feeling safe, secure, happy and healthy, ready to be Halton's present and Halton's future. This vision is brought to life in Halton's Children, Young People's and Families Plan 2018-2021, which sets out clear, measurable goals, in order to achieve this ambition. The plan draws on the collaboration of parents, the Council, schools, health, police, voluntary sector and young people.

Safeguarding

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure and it is a requirement for all adults working with children to take the necessary steps to safeguard children. Childcare providers must also ensure the suitability of adults who have contact with children, have the necessary policies and procedures in place and ensure that all staff are adequately trained in child protection. The Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) guidance sets out the responsibility for Early Years and Childcare and states that early year's providers should ensure that:

- Staff complete safeguarding training that enables them to recognise signs of potential abuse and neglect; and
- They have a practitioner who is designated to take lead responsibility for safeguarding children within each early years setting and who should liaise with local statutory children's services agencies as appropriate. This lead should also complete child protection training.

Settings are encouraged to ensure that their staff attend appropriate safeguarding training to ensure that they meet the requirements of the relevant legislation and also ensure that they have appropriate policies and procedures in place. All settings are requested to complete a safeguarding audit on an annual basis to ensure that they review their safeguarding practices regularly.

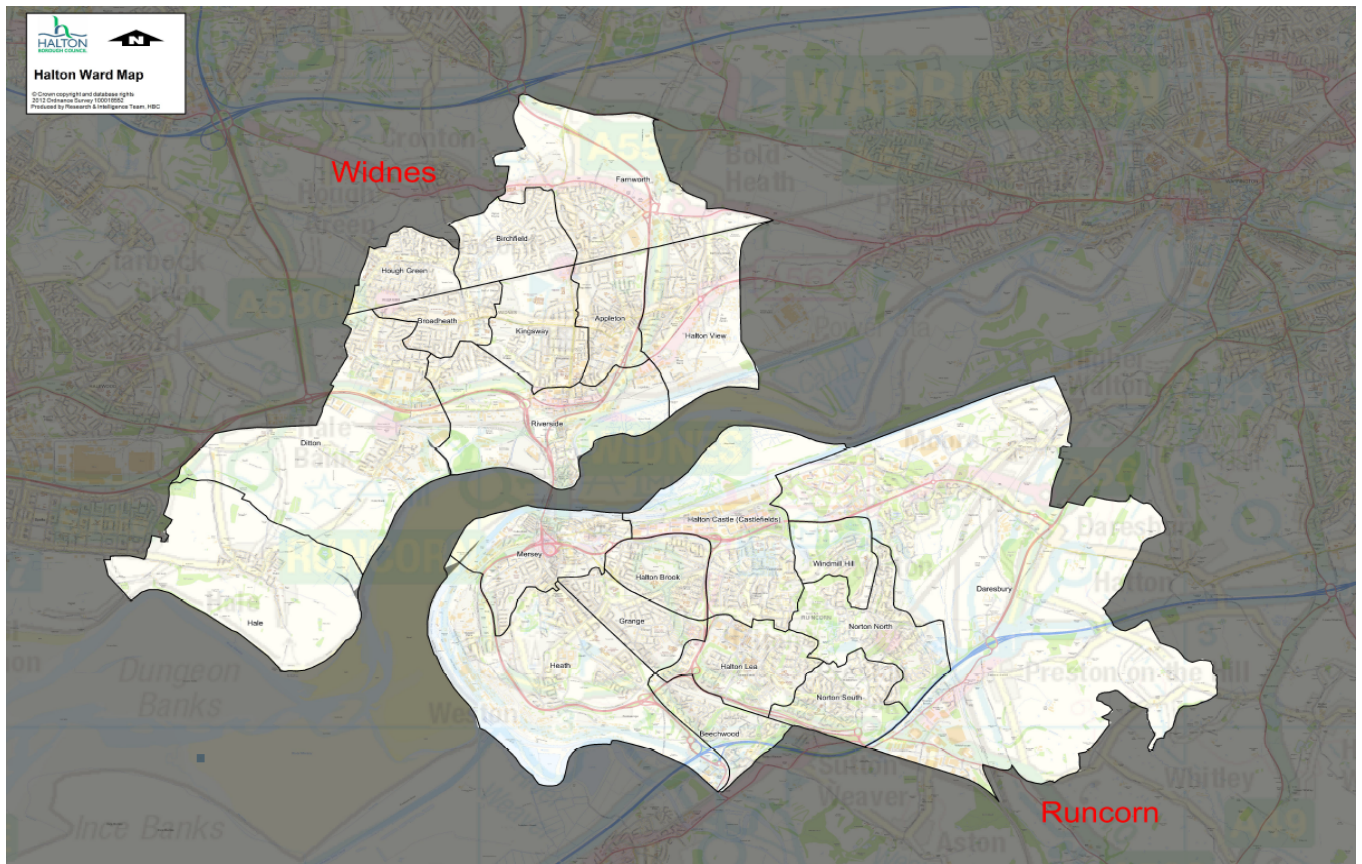
Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Statutory Framework

The EYFS sets the standards that all early years providers must meet to ensure that children learn and develop well and are kept healthy and safe. It promotes teaching and learning to give children the broad range of knowledge and skills that provide the right foundation for good future progress through school and life.

To support early years providers during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the government temporarily dis-applied and modified certain elements of the EYFS statutory framework. This was to allow providers greater flexibility to respond to changes in workforce availability and potential fluctuations in demand, while still providing safe, high quality childcare. The dis-applications came into force on 24 April 2020 and are due to end on 25 September 2020.

The EYFS is currently under revision and the new framework is due to become compulsory in September 2021.

6. MAP OF RUNCORN AND WIDNES (split by wards)



7. POPULATION OF HALTON

The table below shows the population of the children and young people in Halton, identified by age and ward.

Ward	Age Ranges																			Total	
	0-1	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18		19
Appleton	100	110	110	90	100	90	100	100	80	100	90	80	90	90	60	70	60	60	80	40	1700
Beechwood	30	30	30	40	30	40	20	40	40	30	40	40	40	50	30	40	30	30	30	30	690
Birchfield	60	60	60	70	70	80	90	110	90	110	120	110	100	110	110	90	110	90	90	90	1820
Broadheath	70	60	70	90	70	70	80	70	80	90	90	90	90	80	90	70	60	70	70	50	1510
Halton Castle	90	80	80	80	90	80	90	80	90	100	100	100	100	110	80	80	80	80	80	80	1750
Daresbury	60	60	60	60	60	60	70	70	70	60	60	70	80	70	60	70	70	50	60	50	1270
Ditton	80	90	90	90	90	90	90	100	100	90	80	90	90	90	60	80	70	70	80	70	1690
Farnworth	100	110	130	100	120	120	140	120	120	100	120	100	110	110	120	110	100	90	90	90	2220
Grange	70	90	100	90	90	120	90	110	110	110	100	100	110	110	100	80	70	80	100	70	1900
Hale	40	20	20	20	30	10	10	10	20	10	10	10	20	10	20	10	10	20	20	10	330
Halton Brook	160	90	80	90	100	80	100	110	110	120	80	100	80	100	100	90	80	90	90	80	1930
Halton Lea	20	60	80	70	70	80	80	80	80	100	90	90	90	80	90	80	90	90	90	80	1590
Halton View	70	70	80	70	90	60	70	70	70	70	70	90	70	70	70	70	50	60	60	50	1380
Heath	90	50	40	50	50	50	60	60	60	60	60	70	60	70	60	60	60	60	50	50	1170
Hough Green	70	70	70	100	80	100	90	80	110	90	80	80	80	70	70	60	70	80	70	70	1590
Kingsway	70	70	90	80	80	90	100	90	90	120	120	110	90	120	100	90	90	100	110	70	1880
Mersey	100	100	90	90	100	100	120	80	80	90	90	70	70	80	70	70	60	70	80	70	1680
Norton North	50	70	70	70	80	70	80	70	90	80	80	80	100	80	110	80	80	60	70	70	1570
Norton South	80	80	80	90	90	100	120	120	110	120	100	120	100	110	100	90	90	80	90	70	1940
Riverside	100	80	70	90	80	80	100	90	90	100	80	90	80	80	50	60	60	70	50	50	1550
Windmill Hill	30	30	40	50	50	40	40	40	40	30	50	50	40	40	40	30	30	30	30	30	760
Total	1420	1750	1540	1580	1620	1610	1740	1700	1730	1790	1710	1750	1670	1750	1560	1510	1420	1450	1480	1270	32050

Figures may not sum exactly due to rounding

Source: ONS Mid 2019

8. CHILDCARE MARKET SEGMENTS

The childcare market in Halton, in common with all local authority areas, is sub-divided into a number of specific market segments; this differentiation is based on the age of the child and the type of provision that is being delivered.

It is important to recognise each of these market segments have distinct characteristics, which will influence demand and determine the most appropriate geographical area for the measurement of childcare sufficiency.

Table 1 provides details of Halton's market segments and their characteristics.

Table 1
Market Segments

Market Segment	Characteristics
0-2 Year Old Full Day Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply is predominantly provided by PVI Day Nurseries and Childminders • Parents are required to pay for this provision, therefore price and other economic factors determine the level of demand • Provision accessed by working parents • Parents can take 12 months maternity/paternity leave so children may be 1 year old before they start using formal childcare
2 Year Old Free Early Years Entitlement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supply predominantly provided by Day Nurseries and PVI Pre-schools • Demand is determined by Government eligibility criteria. • Places are preferred close to child's home
2 Year Olds Fee Paying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places supplied by Day Nurseries, Pre-schools and childminders • Used by parents not entitled to the 2 Year Old Free Early Years Entitlement
3 & 4 Year Old Free Early Years Entitlement Universal 15 hours plus Extended 15 hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places supplied by Day Nurseries; Pre-schools; Maintained Nursery Classes, Maintained Nursery Schools, Nursery classes in Academies, Childminders and possibly Out of School Clubs
3 & 4 Year Old Wraparound	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The supply is predominantly provided by PVI Day Nurseries; Pre-schools; and childminders • Parents are required to pay for this provision, therefore price and other economic factors determine level of demand • Provision accessed by working parents

<p align="center">5-10 Year Old After School</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places provided by a range of PVI and maintained sector settings • Parents are required to pay for provision, therefore economic factors influence demand. Places are generally on school site or close to school
<p align="center">5-10 Year Old Holiday Provision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places provided by PVI sector settings. Parents are required to pay for provision, therefore economic factors influence demand • Parents generally are able to drop-off and collect their children travelling to and from work; therefore places can be accessed across a wider area

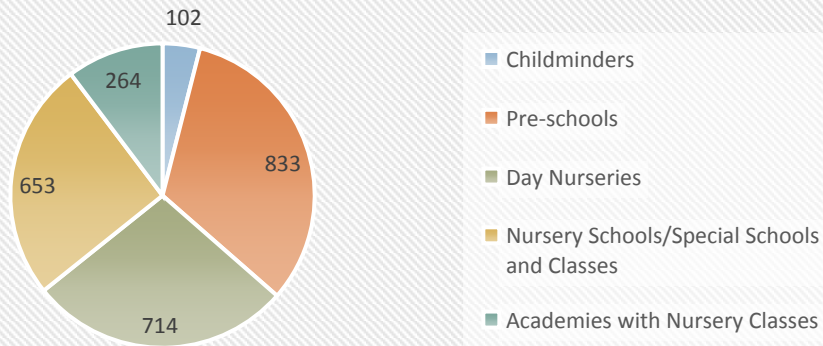
Table 2 shows the Children’s Centre Reach Areas in Runcorn and Widnes and their respective wards.

**Table 2
Children’s Centre Reach Areas (CCRAs)**

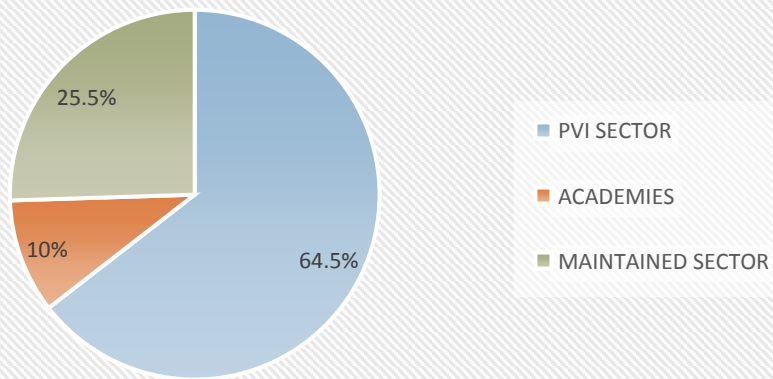
RUNCORN		WIDNES	
Children’s Centre Name	Wards covered by the Reach Area	Children’s Centre Name	Wards covered by the Reach Area
Brookvale	Beechwood Halton Lea Norton South	Ditton	Broadheath Ditton Hale
Halton Brook	Halton Brook Halton Castle	Kingsway	Kingsway Riverside
Halton Lodge	Grange Heath Mersey	Upton	Birchfield Hough Green
Windmill Hill	Daresbury Norton North Windmill Hill	Warrington Road	Appleton Farnworth Halton View

9. STRUCTURE OF THE HALTON EARLY YEARS MARKET

Number of 3 and 4 year old places by setting type (2020)



Percentage of Free Early Years Entitlement Places by Sector (2020)



Percentage of Early Years Settings split by Sector (2020)

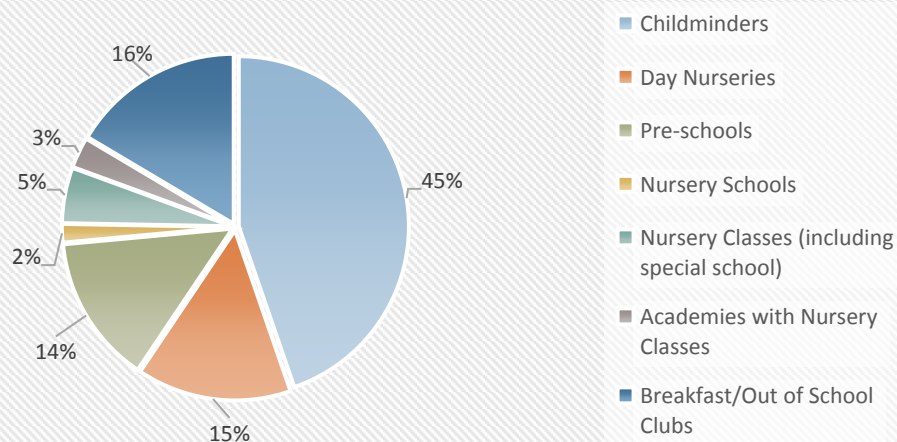


Table 3 below gives an overall picture (as at August 2020) of the size and scale of the current Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) and maintained childcare in Halton, by sector and ward.

Table 3 Number of Childcare Providers by Type



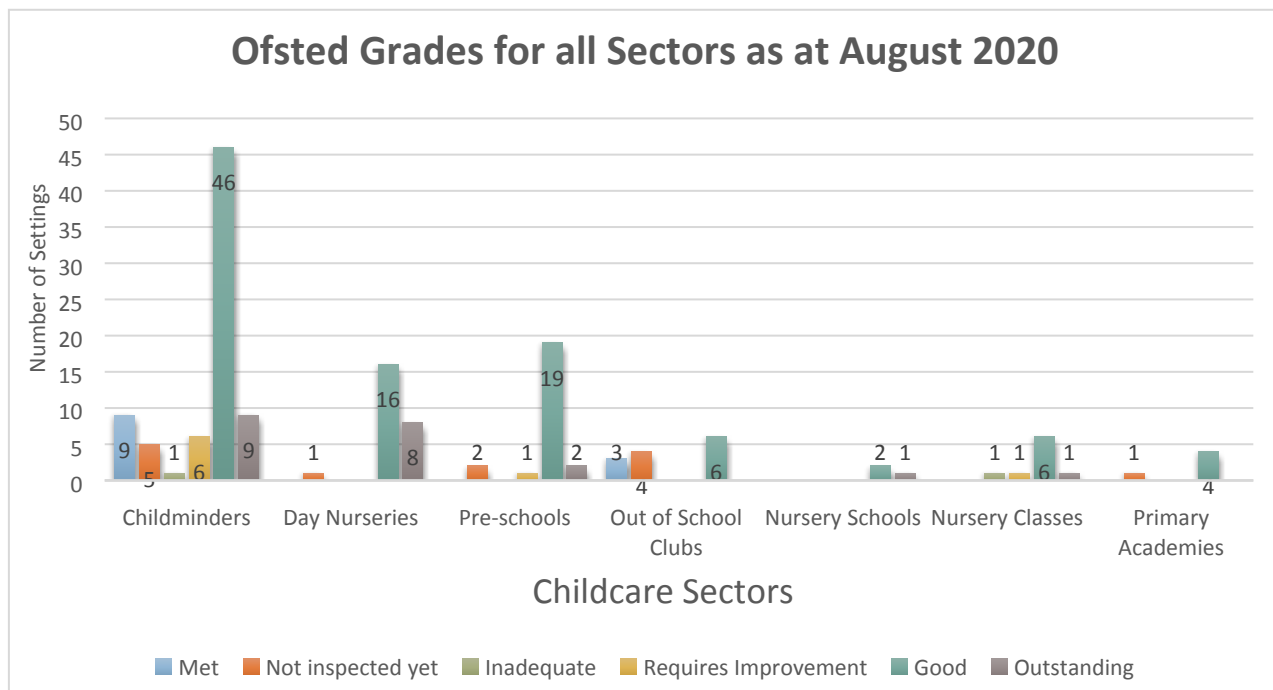
	No of Childminders	No of Day Nurseries	No of Pre-schools	No of Nursery Schools	No of Nursery Classes	No of Academies with Nursery Classes	No of SEN Nursery Classes	No of Breakfast and Out of School Clubs	No of Holiday Clubs	TOTALS
Appleton	4	4	1	0	1	0	0	3	2	15
Beechwood	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	2	2	8
Birchfield	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Broadheath	3	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	7
Daresbury	7	1	3	0	0	0	0	2	0	13
Ditton	5	1	3	0	1	0	0	2	0	12
Farnworth	9	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	12
Grange	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	6
Hale	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Halton Brook	3	0	1	0	1	1	0	1	1	8
Halton Castle	3	1	1	0	2	2	0	1	1	11
Halton Lea	2	2	2	0	1	1	0	2	2	12
Halton View	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	2	0	6
Heath	6	3	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	15
Hough Green	4	2	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	9
Kingsway	0	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	3
Mersey	1	1	2	0	0	0	0	2	2	8
Norton North	11	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Norton South	6	1	1	0	1	0	0	2	0	11
Riverside	2	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	6
Windmill Hill	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
TOTALS	76	25	23	3	8	5	1	28	15	184
Change since 2019	-6	0	-4	0	0	+1	0	+2	+3	

10. QUALITY OF CHILDCARE

It is acknowledged that the quality of childcare is a significant factor affecting a child’s future. High quality early education improves children’s school readiness.

Ofsted is the sole arbiter of quality and through the inspection process, each childcare setting will receive one of four grades: outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate.

The table below compares the Ofsted grades for all sectors in Halton, as at August 2020.



Note:

Some childminders and OSCs have a MET grade, due to the fact that they did not have any early years children on roll at the time of inspection.

11. SUPPLY AND ESTIMATED DEMAND OF CHILDCARE PLACES

The following tables show the current potential number of childcare places available in each market segment and the estimated demand for places in each.

With regards to the FEYE for 3 and 4 year olds, the summer term always has the highest occupancy and the autumn term the lowest. This is due to single point entry, as children who have turned 4 move into reception in September. Therefore the supply figures used in this Assessment are a ‘snap-shot’ from a particular week in March 2020.

Like any other business, childcare providers will respond flexibly to meet the demand of the local market, therefore the figures in this report can be subject to change.

0-2 Year Olds – This age range of childcare is delivered by day nurseries and childminders.

Not every child in this age range will require formal childcare. Maternity Leave and Shared Parental Leave, which allows parents to take up to twelve months off work after the birth of the child and can be shared between both parents, can reduce the demand for formal childcare for 0-1 year olds.

Table 4 details the supply and estimated demand for 0-2 Year Old Full Daycare

Table 4 0-2 Year Old Full Daycare

Town	0-2 year old FDC	
	Supply	Demand
Runcorn	464	355
Widnes	395	476
TOTAL	859	831
	28 surplus places overall	

*Population Source: ONS 2019 population estimates
Supply – Childcare Provider Surveys 2020
Demand Source – Halton Demand Analysis 2020*

Table 5 below gives the results from the Childcare Surveys from the Day Nurseries and childminders (who responded) detailing whether they could meet demand for 0-2 Year old places during week commencing 2nd March 2020.

Table 5 Could you meet demand?

Childcare Market - could you meet demand for places for 0-2 Year Olds during w/c 2 nd March 2020?				
Day Nurseries		Childminders		
Yes	No	Yes	No	No answer (some childminders do not take all age ranges)
92%	8%	71%	11%	18%

*Source: Childcare Provider Surveys 2020 *30 childminders responded to surveys (39%)*

The supply figures show we have an excess of approximately 28 places in this age range and can therefore meet demand across the two towns. The “Could you meet demand?” table also supports this, as it shows that day nurseries and childminders generally can meet demand for 0-2 years.

2 Year Old Free Entitlement (FEYE) – This type of childcare is delivered by day nurseries, pre-schools and childminders.

Demand for funded 2 year olds is calculated differently to other age ranges, as the figures are provided by the DfE.

Each Local Authority receives two DfE lists 8 times a year. These lists provide details of parents’ names and addresses, drawn from the DWP, who are deemed eligible to receive the funding. The information provided is, generally, three months old before it reaches each Local Authority. Postcards are sent out monthly to prospective families, prompting parents to complete a referral form. Children are placed at the setting of choice, depending on space available. Professionals across Halton, from Health, Early Help, Social care and early years settings, also complete referral forms with parents.

Over the past few years the termly DfE list has steadily risen in numbers. Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, more parents have become eligible due to changes in personal circumstances. The number of children funded in Halton is, approximately, 540 plus per term.

Table 6 below shows Halton’s current supply and demand as estimated by the DfE in July 2020 for the 2 Year Old Free Entitlement, split by Children’s Centre Reach Areas:

Table No 6 2 Year Old Free Entitlement

Children's Centre Reach Area	2 year old FEYE	
	Supply	Demand
Brookvale	117	92
Halton Brook*	43	77
Halton Lodge	175	96
Windmill Hill	99	52
TOTAL	434	317
Ditton	122	80
Kingsway*	24	85
Upton	61	48
Warrington Road	175	95
TOTAL	382	308
GRAND TOTAL	816	625
	191 surplus places overall	

Population Source: ONS 2019 population estimates
Supply – Childcare Provider Surveys 2020
Demand Source – DfE List July 2020

Table 7 gives the results from the Childcare Surveys from the Day Nurseries, Pre-schools and childminders (who responded) detailing whether they can meet demand for 2 Year old places during week commencing 2nd March 2020.

Table 7 Could you meet demand?

Childcare Market – could you meet demand for places for 2 Year Olds during w/c 2 nd March 2020?						
Day Nurseries		Childminders			Pre-schools	
Yes	No	Yes	No	No answer (some childminders do not take all age ranges)	Yes	No
92%	8%	78.5%	3.5%	18%	91%	9%

Source: Childcare Provider Surveys 2020 *30 childminders responded to surveys (39%)
Not all the pre-schools take 2 year olds

The supply figures show we can meet the DfE estimated demand overall. However, it would appear we have a deficit of places in Halton Brook and Kingsway CCRA's. The "Could you meet demand?" table indicates that day nurseries, childminders and pre-schools can generally meet demand for funded 2 years. The most difficult term for placing 2 year olds is the summer term, as most settings have filled their places by this time of year.

From September 2019, the government has decided to extend eligibility for disadvantaged two year olds to include three additional groups of children.

The new groups of children to be entitled to a free place are:

- Children of Zambrano Carers;
- Children of families with no recourse to public funds with a right to remain in the UK on grounds of private/family life under Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights;
- Children of a subset of failed asylum seekers (supported under section 4 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 – 'the 1999 Act').

In Halton we have only had 1 parent applying under the 'Children of families with no recourse to public funds with a right to remain in the UK on grounds of private/family life', under Article 8 of the European Convention of Human Right. The child was funded from January 2020.

3 and 4 Year Old Free Early Years Entitlement Places (Universal Hours) – This type of childcare is delivered by day nurseries, pre-schools, maintained nursery schools, classes, academies and childminders.

Table 8 below shows Halton's current supply and estimated demand for the 3 and 4 Year Old Universal Entitlement, in each of the Children's Centre Reach Areas:

Table No 8 3 & 4 Year Old Free Entitlement (Universal Hours)

Children's Centre Reach Area	3 & 4 year old FEYE Universal Hours	
	Supply	Demand
Brookvale	371	261
Halton Brook	379	241
Halton Lodge	404	315
Windmill Hill	266	248
TOTAL	1420	1065
Ditton	365	261
Kingsway	271	221
Upton*	118	214
Warrington Road	401	382
TOTAL	1155	1078
GRAND TOTALS	2575	2143
	432 surplus places overall	

Population Source: ONS 2019 population estimates
 Supply – Childcare Provider Surveys 2020
 Demand Source – Halton Demand Analysis 2020

Table 9 Could you meet demand?

Childcare Market - could you meet demand for places for 3 & 4 Year Olds 15 Universal Hours during w/c 2 nd March 2020?						
Day Nurseries		Childminders			Pre-schools	
Yes	No	Yes	No	No answer (some childminders do not take all age ranges)	Yes	No
96%	4%	82%	7%	11%	100%	0

Source: Childcare Provider Surveys 2020

*30 childminders responded to surveys (39%)

Table 8 shows we have approximately 432 excess places for the Universal Hours in total across the borough. Table 9 also indicates that providers can meet demand for the majority of time. The only area where there appears to be a deficit of places is Upton CCRA.

3 and 4 Year Old Free Early Years Entitlement Places (Extended Hours) – This type of childcare is delivered by day nurseries, pre-schools, maintained nursery schools, classes, academies, childminders and possibly out of school clubs.

Table 10 below shows Halton's current supply and estimated demand for the 3 and 4 Year Old Extended Hours, split Children's Centre Reach Areas:

Table 10 3 & 4 Year Old – Extended Hours

Children's Centre Reach Area	3 & 4 Year old – Extended 15 Hours	
	Supply	Demand
Brookvale	114	79
Halton Brook	62	54
Halton Lodge	193	93
Windmill Hill*	44	128
TOTAL	413	354
Ditton	103	87
Kingsway	65	51
Upton*	52	121
Warrington Road	155	134
TOTAL	375	393
GRAND TOTALS	788	747
	41 surplus places overall	

Population Source: ONS 2019 population estimates
 Supply – Childcare Provider Surveys 2020
 Demand Source – Halton Demand Analysis 2020

Table 11 Could you meet demand?

Childcare Market – could you meet demand for places for 3 & 4 Year Olds 15 Extended Hours during w/c 2 nd March 2020?						
Day Nurseries		Childminders			Pre-schools	
Yes	No	Yes	No	No answer (some childminders do not take all age ranges)	Yes	No
88%	12%	71%	7%	22%	95%	5%

Source: Childcare Provider Surveys 2020

*30 childminders responded to surveys (39%)

Not all the pre-schools offer extended hours

Table 11 indicates that providers can meet demand for the majority of time.

Table 10 shows, overall, we have sufficient supply of places except in Windmill Hill and Upton CCRAs. The 15 extended hours can be used any time between 6am and 8pm, as long as no session is longer than 10 hours per day and the child doesn't attend more than two sites on any one day. This gives parents the flexibility to use breakfast and after school care as part of the extended hours. For example, a child could attend a breakfast club and pre-school on one site in the morning and a childminder in the afternoon, still allowing the parent to work a long day.

The most difficult term for placing 3 year olds is the summer term, as most settings have filled their places by this time of year. The autumn term generally has the lowest occupancy, as any 4 year olds will have left to go to reception class.

Impact of 30 Hours (Extended Offer)

Since the Extended 15 hours was introduced in September 2017, the take-up has steadily increased, see graph on page 20, which shows termly take up.

3 and 4 Year Old Wraparound – This type of childcare is predominantly delivered by day nurseries, pre-schools and childminders.

Table 12 below shows Halton’s current supply and estimated demand for the 3 and 4 Year Old Care, split by town:

Table 12 3 and 4 Year Old Wraparound

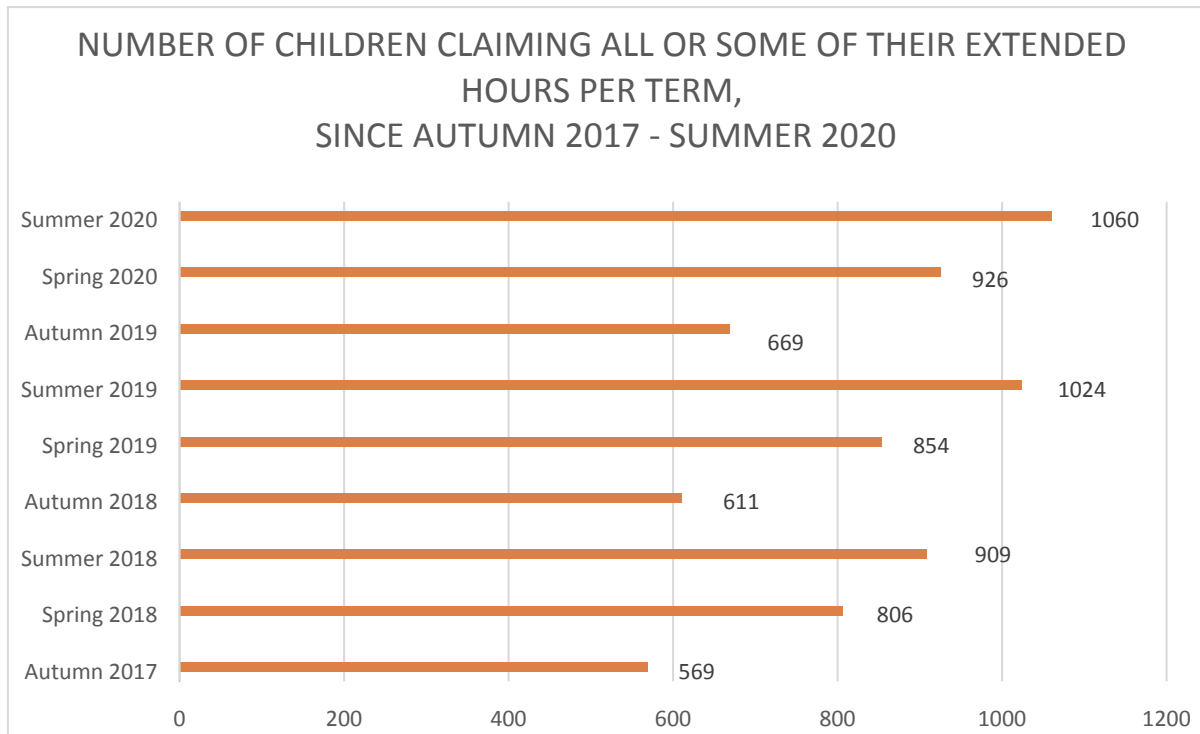
Town	3 & 4 year old Wraparound	
	Supply	Demand
Runcorn	348	231
Widnes	281	276
Totals	629	506
123 surplus places overall		

Population Source: ONS 2019 population estimates
 Supply – Childcare Provider Surveys 2020
 Demand Source – Halton Demand Analysis 2020

The supply figures show we can meet demand across the both towns for Wraparound Care.

Supply of Extended Hour Places compared to Take-Up

The graph below shows the number of children claiming Extended Hours entitlement since the Extended Offer was introduced in Autumn 2017.



The number of children claiming all or some of their Extended hours during Summer Term 2020 was 1060, which is higher than the supply of places shown in Table 10 above, however, the supply of 629 places, which have been separated for Wraparound care could also be used for Extended Hours.

We have continued to estimate demand for Wraparound Care because some families who are only entitled to 15 universal hours may need a few extra Wraparound hours. However, we may have over-estimated demand for Wraparound care, as any parents who are working the equivalent of 16 hours on minimum wage will be entitled to 30 hours. They will, therefore, use less Wraparound and more Extended Hours. It is expected that in the future, demand for Wraparound places will reduce and the supply of places allocated for Wraparound can be added to the Extended Hours supply. This will result in a larger stock of places.

In addition, we have spare capacity of approximately 432 places in the Universal Hours supply (see Table 8) which could also be used for Extended Hours, if required.

It must also be noted that the estimated supply and demand is based on Spring 2020 data and this tends to increase in the Summer Term and decrease in the Autumn Term.

A further consideration is that there are some children living in Halton who claim some or all of their FEYE in neighbouring authorities (universal and/or extended hours). Conversely, some children live outside of Halton but claim their FEYE at childcare providers based in Halton.

5-10 Year Old Before and After School Provision

Ofsted allows before and after school providers to determine the number of children they provide care for, up to a maximum number, determined by the size of their premises. It is up to

each provider, therefore, to ensure that they have the correct staff:child ratio in place for the ages of the children attending the setting.

Instead of having a separate registration for school aged children, day nurseries, childminders etc. have extended their provision to offer places to older children before and after school and during the holidays. Many schools also run breakfast and afterschool clubs, which are exempt from separate registration by Ofsted.

Table 13 below, shows supply and estimated demand for out of school care, split by CCRA.

Table 13 5-10 Year Old Before and After School Provision

Children's Centre Reach Area	5-10 Year Old Out of School	
	Supply	Demand
Brookvale	147	98
Halton Brook	77	61
Halton Lodge	153	56
Windmill Hill*	141	187
TOTAL	518	401
Ditton	121	71
Kingsway	38	21
Upton*	92	118
Warrington Road	272	113
TOTAL	523	323
GRAND TOTALS	1041	724
	317 surplus places overall	

Population Source: ONS 2019 population estimates
Supply – Childcare Provider Surveys 2020
Demand Source – Halton Demand Analysis 2020

The analysis of the 5-10 year old Out of School market (Table 13) indicates that there is sufficient childcare provision in six Children's Centre Reach Areas with deficit of places in Windmill Hill and Upton CCRAs.

Table 14 Could you meet demand?

Childcare Market – during w/c 2 nd March 2020 could you meet demand for age 5+ places ?				
Breakfast Clubs			Out of School Club	
Yes	No	n/a	Yes	No
95%		5%	95%	5%

Source: Childcare Provider Surveys 2020
(not all OSCs run a breakfast club)

The above table shows that the majority of providers are able to accommodate demand for before and after school provision.

Most schools offer extra-curricular after school activities for both primary and secondary aged children, and parents will use these as ‘childcare’. Consequently, use of these activities combined with informal childcare, such as family and friends, means that there is a lower demand for out of school care than would be expected. However, it should be noted, that these activities often only run for up to an hour and are not always consistent. Furthermore, they can be cancelled at short notice and vary from term to term. This makes the collation of any information regarding the provision of before and after school care more difficult as it is not possible to collect consistent data around extra-curricular activities.

Latest figures show that approximately 868 primary school age children, who live in Halton, attend schools in neighbouring authorities. A small discounting factor has been applied to the figures in Table 13 to take account of the fact that these children will be expected to attend Out of School provision in the borough where their school is, thereby reducing demand in Halton.

5-10 Year Old Holiday Provision

Table 15 below, shows supply and estimated demand for Holiday Care split by town.

Table 15 5-10 Year Old Holiday Provision

Town	5-10 year old Holiday	
	Supply	Demand
Runcorn	441	184
Widnes	277	204
OVERALL TOTAL	718	388
330 surplus places overall		

Population Source: ONS 2019 population estimates
 Supply – Childcare Provider Surveys 2020
 Demand Source – Halton Demand Analysis 2020

Table 16 Could you meet demand?

Could you meet demand for age Holiday Care places for age 5+ during February 2020 half term				
Holiday Care		Childminders		
Yes	No	Yes	No	No answer (some childminders do not take all age ranges)
100%		64%	11%	25%

Source: Childcare Provider Surveys 2020 *30 childminders responded to surveys (39%)

However, it must be noted that the impact of Covid-19 has meant that supply and demand for out of school and holiday provision for 5-10 year olds has been affected. Supply has been reduced due to the need to have smaller group sizes in order to minimise the risk of infection. Demand has reduced owing to the fact that some families are no longer requiring this provision due to a change in personal circumstances related to the pandemic.

11-14 Year Old Out of School and Holiday Care

Many parents and carers consider children within this age group to be 'old enough to look after themselves'. Therefore, families tend to access more informal arrangements for childcare, through play schemes, leisure and recreational activities.

With this in mind, Halton Borough Council is pro-active in commissioning a variety of services from different organisations to provide short breaks, educational, artistic and sporting activities for young people across the borough. For the purposes of the CSA, these activities are classed as 'childcare' for ages 11-19. The activities are held at various times during the evenings, weekends and school holidays throughout the year;

- Halton Play Council (www.haltonplaycouncil.co.uk)
- Polaris
(https://www.polarischildrensservices.co.uk/project_category/emotional-health-wellbeing/)
- Halton Speak out- (www.haltonspeakout.co.uk)

Full information on the different organisations that work with 11-19 year olds in Halton can be found on Halton's [Local Offer](#) and [Family Information Service](#) websites.

12. HALTON SEND PROVISION

Local Authorities have a legal responsibility to publish a Local Offer. Schools and early years providers must provide information for parents on how they support children with SEND and should regularly review and evaluate the quality and breadth of the support they offer. The [Local Offer](#) is published on the Halton Borough Council website.

In addition, childcare providers can apply for 'Top-up Funding'. The purpose of this funding is to support providers to address the needs of individual children with SEND. Currently, there are three opportunities a year for providers to apply for Top-up Funding. Once awarded, the funding remains in place for twelve months.

Halton's Families Information Service (FIS) offers a Brokerage Service to parents which, helps to find suitable childcare for their child's disability/additional needs.

Table 17 below gives details from the Childcare Surveys regarding how many children were attending various types of childcare during week commencing 2nd March, 2020, who were on a SEND Support Plan or in receipt of an Education Health Care Plan.

Table 17 Number of children attending childcare with SEND

	Number of children who	
	Were on a Support Plan?	Have an EHCP?
Day Nurseries	103	9
Pre-schools	55	7
Childminders	0	1
Out of School Clubs	5	4
Maintained Nursery Schools	20	2
Nursery Classes/Special Schools	13	6
Primary Academies	6	1
TOTALS	202	30

Source: Childcare Provider Surveys 2020

13. DISABILITY ACCESS FUND (DAF)

From April 2017, the Government introduced the Disability Access Fund (DAF) for early years providers, to support children with disabilities and/or special educational needs.

DAF should be used by early years providers to make reasonable adjustments to their settings and/or help build inclusive capacity (this may be for the child in question or to benefit children as a whole attending the setting). Detailed information about the DAF eligibility criteria, entitlement, documentary evidence required, procedure, payment and application process can be found in the DAF section of the Local Offer Website.

The DAF funding is a one-off payment of £615 per year, made directly to the childcare provider, for 3 and 4 year olds in receipt of Disability Living Allowance (DLA) and who are claiming the FEYE.

Table 18 below shows the number of children who have received DAF, since its introduction in 2017.

Table 18
Number of Children who have received DAF each term

Term	Number of children who have received DAF
Summer 2017	4
Autumn 2017	28
Spring 2018	15
Summer 2018	55
Autumn 2018	17
Spring 2019	13
Summer 2019	30
Autumn 2019	16
Spring 2020	17
Summer 2020	30

Source: Synergy Database

14. AFFORDABILITY OF HALTON CHILDCARE

This section gives details of the average prices for the various sectors as at August 2020.

DAY NURSERIES	Full Day 10 hrs £ 2019	Full Day 10 hrs £ 2020	Half Day/ Session 5hrs £ 2019	Half Day/ Session 5 hrs £ 2020	Weekly £ 50hrs £ 2019	Weekly £ 50hrs £ 2020
Halton overall	41.16	43.83	25.40	26.47	198.71	209.43
Runcorn	43.62	45.69	26.35	27.75	199.33	212.01
Widnes	40.57	42.12	24.20	25.18	198.00	207.04

Not all providers gave this information Halton Childcare Provider Surveys 2020 and FIS

PRE-SCHOOLS	3 Hour Session Price (for those not entitled to FEYE) £ 2019	3 Hour Session Price (for those not entitled to FEYE) £ 2020
Halton overall	11.03	11.00
Runcorn	11.25	11.48
Widnes	10.57	9.40

Not all providers gave this information Halton Childcare Provider Surveys 2020 and FIS

OUT OF SCHOOL CLUBS	Breakfast Club £ 2019	Breakfast Club £ 2020	3-6pm/ 6.30pm £ 2019	3-6pm/ 6.30pm £ 2019
Halton overall	4.62	4.76	9.31	9.49
Runcorn	5.10	5.16	9.20	9.36
Widnes	4.18	4.40	9.41	9.60

Not all providers gave this information Halton Childcare Provider Surveys 2020 and FIS

HOLIDAY CLUBS	Full Day £ 2019	Full Day £ 2020	Half Day £ 2019	Half Day £ 2020
Halton overall	24.02	23.70	13.66	13.80
Runcorn	24.03	23.18	14.01	13.68
Widnes	24.00	25.33	12.25	13.50

Not all providers gave this information Halton Childcare Provider Surveys 2020 and FIS

CHILDMINDERS	HOURLY RATE 2019 £	HOURLY RATE 2020 £
Halton	4.18	4.62

Not all providers gave this information

Source: Halton Childcare Provider Surveys 2020 and FIS

Table 19
Average Charges Comparison Table

Table 19 gives the Halton average rates for 2020 compared to the North West and England averages.

	Day Nursery 10hrs per day £ (age under 3)	Day Nursery 25hrs per week £ (age under 3)	Day Nursery 50hrs per week £	Childminder Hourly Rates £	After School 3 hour session £
Halton average	44.83	104.72	209.43	4.62	9.49
North West average	40.49	109.41	202.43	3.68	10.70
England average	48.98	128.96	244.91	4.65	12.31

*Source: Halton Childcare Provider Surveys 2020 and FIS
Coram Family and Childcare - Childcare Survey 2020*

The above table shows that the average Halton day nursery daily rates (10 hours per day) is higher than the North West but lower than the England average.

Halton's 25 hours per week is lower than the North West and England averages but Halton's 50 hours per week is lower than the England average but higher than the North West average.

Halton childminders average hourly rates are above the North West average but lower than the England average.

A three hour after school session in Halton, costs less than the North West and England averages.

15. SUSTAINABIITY

All childcare providers need to ensure they remain financially sustainable by ensuring they have sufficient children attending each term to cover their costs. However, childcare also needs to be affordable to parents.

To help providers with marketing their vacant places, the Families Information Service offers free advice to parents detailing local childcare providers suitable to their needs.

The FEYE funding rates for 2, 3 and 4 year olds paid to providers are determined by the amount of income received from the Government each financial year.

In April 2017, Halton introduced an additional 'Quality Supplement', which is paid to providers who have staff with a Level 5+ relevant childcare qualification.

16. STAFFING

Staffing costs are the largest expense for childcare providers and increase each year. Staff must be paid at least the minimum wage. An additional expense is the recent introduction of the Work Place Pension scheme. This will have financial implications for childcare providers regarding their sustainability.

A common difficulty childcare providers have is recruiting high quality, well experienced staff. Staff of this calibre expect higher wages, however, the childcare sector is traditionally amongst one of the lowest paid professions. Consequently, young people are not taking up childcare as a career.

Table 20 gives details of the number of staff employed in the PVI sector and whether male or female:

Table 20
Number of Staff Employed

	Staffing		
	Total	Female	Male
Pre-schools	139	133	4
Day Nurseries	452	441	11
Out of School Clubs	187	176	11
TOTALS	778	750	26
TOTALS %		97%	3%

Source: Childcare Surveys 2020

17. AVERAGE HOURLY RATES OF PAY – PVI SECTOR

	Manager £	Deputy/ Supervisor £	Room Leader/ Senior (L3+) £	Level 3 Assistant £	Level 2 Assistant £
Day Nurseries	13.75	11.20	9.58	9.20	8.56

Source – Childcare Provider Surveys 2020 but not all settings provided this information

	Manager £	Deputy/ Supervisor £	Senior Practitioner (L3+) £	Level 3 Assistant £	Level 2 Assistant £
Pre-schools	12.19	10.20	9.19	8.72	8.63

Source – Childcare Provider Surveys 2020 but not all settings provided this information

	Manager £	Deputy/ Supervisor £	Level 3 Assistant £	Level 2 Assistant £
Out of Schools	11.29	9.55	8.72	8.30

Source – Childcare Provider Surveys 2020 but not all clubs provided this information

18. EARLY YEARS PUPIL PREMIUM (EYPP)

In April 2015, the Government introduced Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP). This is additional funding designed to narrow the attainment gap between young children from low-income families and their peers.

Early Years Providers receive an extra £302 per year, paid termly, for each eligible 3 and 4 year old claiming the Universal Hours of the Free Early Years Entitlement (FEYE). This is dependent upon the family receiving one of the following:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided they are not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on, which is paid for 4 weeks after they stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit – For places starting in the summer term of 2018 (on or after 1st April 2018), or any subsequent term, if a parent is entitled to Universal Credit they must have an annual net earned income equivalent to and not exceeding £7,400, assessed on up to three of the parent's most recent Universal Credit assessment periods, or,
- They are currently being looked after by a local authority in England or Wales
- They have left care in England or Wales through:
 - an adoption order
 - a special guardianship order
 - a child arrangements order

To ensure the funding is being utilised effectively, Ofsted inspectors will look at how settings are using the funding to help disadvantaged pupils and narrow the gap between the performance of different groups of pupils.

When evaluating the achievement of pupils, inspectors will consider how well:

- Pupils make progress relative to their starting points
- Pupils are prepared for the next stage of their education
- Gaps are narrowing between the performance of different groups of pupils
- Pupils who are eligible for the EYPP have achieved since joining the setting

Once a child is eligible for EYPP, the childcare providers will receive the funding each term until the child moves into Reception Class.

19. FLEXIBILITY OF HALTON CHILDCARE

This section provides details of how the various childcare sectors offer flexibility, especially for those parents working irregular hours.

Childminders

There are currently 76 Ofsted Registered childminders in Halton (43 in Runcorn and 33 in Widnes).

Childminders can care for up to six children aged under 8 years of age – usually no more than one under 1 year old and two between the ages of 1-5 years old. They can also care for a number of children over the age of 8. If they work with another childminder or have an assistant, they can care for more.

Childminders in Halton offer a flexible service to suit parent's needs, in particular, with regards to early starts and late finishes. They provide breakfast, after school and holiday care services.

Many of the childminders delivering the FEYE are able to offer all, or some, of the FEYE hours. They also offer a drop off/pick up service to pre-schools/day nurseries/nursery schools/classes and deliver wrap-around care.

Opening hours for Halton childminders generally range between 7am-6pm, some also try to accommodate shift patterns.

Although the overall number of Ofsted registered childminders in Halton has declined each year, the number offering the FEYE has increased year on year since 2016, as shown in Table 21 below.

Table 21 – Number of Childminders Registered to Deliver the FEYE

NUMBER OF CHILDMINDERS REGISTERED TO DELIVER THE FEYE				
	Summer 2017	Summer 2018	Summer 2019	Summer 2020
NUMBER OF OFSTED REGISTERED CHILDMINDERS	96	84	82	76
NUMBER OF CHILDMINDERS SET UP TO DELIVER FEYE	45	49	50	56
% OF CMs SET UP TO DELIVER FEYE	47%	58%	61%	74%

Day Nurseries

All 25 day nurseries (including the two maintained) offer full day care to children between the ages of 0-5 years. They generally open 8am-6pm (however, some do open earlier/later).

All day nurseries in Halton offer the Free Early Years Entitlement.

Approximately 88% of the day nurseries extend the Free Early Years Entitlement over more than 38 weeks.

In Halton, 7 day nurseries also offer breakfast, after school and holiday care for children aged between 4-11+ years of age.

Pre-schools

All 24 Halton pre-schools offer the Free Early Years Entitlement (FEYE). The majority are open for morning and afternoon sessions, however, a few only open for either morning or afternoons. All open term time only and are therefore able to offer the Early Years Free Entitlement over 38 weeks.

Of the 24 pre-schools, 21 offer 30 hours.

Flexibility is further increased as 13 pre-schools now offer a lunch club. This enables parents to use their free entitlement for part of the day and pay for any additional hours, at a considerably lower rate than a day nursery.

Seven pre-schools also have before and after school clubs on the same site. This enables families to extend their daily childcare usage for more hours, which gives the child consistency of care. These families can split some of their 30 hours (if entitled) between the breakfast/after school club and pre-school.

Out of School and Holiday Clubs

Halton currently have 28 Out of School Clubs and 15 Holiday Clubs, all except two, are based either in a school, on school sites, or, are part of a day nursery or pre-school.

Opening times for breakfast clubs range between 7:30am-9am, and after school clubs generally run between 3pm-6pm.

One Out of School Club is offering the FEYE extended hours to children, as they are using some of their FEYE hours in breakfast club.

Some primary schools in Halton run their own breakfast clubs. The majority of remaining primary schools have access to either an independently run (Ofsted registered) breakfast club on school site, or, off site registered OSCs and childminders who offer breakfast clubs and a drop-off service.

The majority of primary schools offer after school activities ranging from 1-2 sessions per week up to 5 sessions per week. Many of these activities are free and reduce demand for formal after school care run by Ofsted registered clubs.

Families may use after school activity clubs for their childcare needs as they are usually less expensive (or in some cases, free of charge). However, these clubs are not consistent as they

may not cover the whole of term and can sometimes be cancelled at short notice. These activities can reduce demand for formal OSC care.

Holiday Clubs generally open between 7:30/8:00am and 6:00/6.30pm.

**Source: Childcare Provider Surveys 2020 and FIS*

20. CHANGE IN CHILDCARE PLACES SINCE LAST CSA AND PROJECTED NEW PLACES

Table 22 below gives details from the Childcare Surveys regarding whether the PVI sector intend to create more places or open further settings in Halton, in the next 18 months:

Table 22
Changes in Childcare Places

Provider Type	Future plans to expand			Opening another setting		
	Yes	No plans at present	No plans at all	Yes	Maybe	No
Pre-schools	4%	58.5%	37.5%	0	4%	96%
Day Nurseries	12%	52%	36%	8%	0	92%
Out of Schools Clubs	0	62%	38%	0	10%	90%

This section details any settings who have closed, open, or are hoping to open, since the last CSA.

Note: The number of places for any settings which have already closed have been deducted from the Supply figures, however, any new settings due to open have not been included in the Supply and Demand Tables in Section 11.

Day Nurseries

A new day nursery in Farnworth Ward, registering for approximately 84 children, aged between 0-4 years, is due to open Spring 2021.

An existing day nursery in Farnworth Ward has received planning permission to extend their building, which will accommodate approximately an extra 48 3 and 4 year olds.

Out of School/Holiday Clubs

One Out of School Club has closed in Heath Ward due to lack of demand.

A Day Nursery in Heath Ward, who had previously been offering breakfast and after school care has stopped offering this service due to lack of demand, however, they do intend to continue to offer Holiday Care.

Sessional Care

One Pre-school in Norton North has closed, due to staff leaving.

One Pre-school in Appleton Ward has closed temporarily, whilst waiting for new registration from Ofsted.

One Pre-school in Mersey Ward has closed temporarily due to lack of demand and also the condition of the building next door is affecting their accommodation.

One Pre-school in Halton Brook Ward are looking into the possibility of providing care for under 2's.

Childminders

The number of registered childminders in Halton has reduced from 82 to 76. However, 56 of these are now delivering the FEYE.

21. HELP WITH CHILDCARE COSTS

The cost of childcare can be a major expense and this may be a deciding factor in whether parents return to work or training, and if so, whether they use 'formal' (registered or approved) or 'informal' (family and friends) childcare.

Financial help is available, providing the childcare provider is a:

- Registered childminder/play scheme/nursery or club
- Childminder with an Ofsted registered Childminding Agency
- Registered school

The Government introduced the '[Childcare Choices](#)' website which provides details of all the financial help available towards the cost of childcare. This is a 'one-stop shop' which allows parents/carers to see if they are eligible and, if so, to apply directly on-line. The website contains information regarding:

- 15 hour free childcare for two year olds (FEYE)
- 15 hours universal childcare for all 3 and 4 year olds (FEYE)
- 30 hours extended entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds of working parents (FEYE)
- Tax Free Childcare*
- Tax Credits towards Childcare
- Universal Credit towards Childcare
- Financial support whilst studying

The website also has a calculator, which gives estimates of amount of help available to enable parents decide which scheme is the most beneficial to them financially.

The date the child becomes eligible for FEYE depends on the child's birthday.

If child's birthday is between	Child becomes eligible
1 January to 31 March	The beginning of term on or after 1 April
1 April to 31 August	The beginning of term on or after 1 September
1 September to 31 December	The beginning of term on or after 1 January

Example: If child was born on 15th April, the child is eligible from the next term, which starts September.

Since September 2018, Foster Carers who work the equivalent of 16 hours on minimum wage, outside of their foster caring role, may also be entitled to claim 30 hours childcare (subject to specific criteria). Foster Carers should contact their Social Worker for more information.

22. DETAILS OF WHICH OUT OF SCHOOL CLUBS PICK UP FROM WHICH SCHOOLS

Below is a list of all Halton schools, split into Runcorn and Widnes, giving details of which out of school clubs drop off/pick up from them (as at August 2020):

RUNCORN

RUNCORN SCHOOLS	Out of School Clubs who offer a pick up/drop off service to this school
Astmoor Primary	Acorn Link Club
Beechwood Primary	Beechwood Link Club (<i>on school site</i>)
Bridgewater Park Academy	Acorn Link Club
Brookvale Primary	Brookvale OSC (<i>on school site</i>)
Castle View Primary	Grange Link Club (<i>pick up only</i>) Beechwood Link Club
Cavendish High School	
Daresbury Primary	Daresbury Kids Club (<i>on school site</i>)
Gorsewood Primary	Beechwood Link Club
Hallwood Park Primary	Beechwood Link Club
Halton Lodge Primary	Willow Link Club
Hillview Primary	Beechwood Link Club Hillview Link Club (<i>on school site</i>) Willow Link Club
Moore Primary	Cygnets of Moore (<i>on school site</i>)
Murdishaw West Primary	Beechwood Link Club
Ormiston Bolingbroke Academy	
Our Lady Mother of the Saviour	Beechwood Link Club
Palace Fields Primary Academy	Palace Fields Link Club (<i>on school site</i>)
Pewithall Primary	Willow Link Club
Runcorn All Saints	Early Learners OSC Hillview OSC

	Willow Link Club
St Augustine's Primary	Acorn Link Club Willow Link Club
St Berteline's Primary	Beechwood Link Club
St Chad's High School	
St Clement's Primary	Willow Link Club
St Edward's Primary	Victoria Road Link Club Early Learners OSC Willow Link Club
St Martin's Primary	
St Mary's Primary	Acorn Link Club Beechwood Link Club
The Brow Primary	Beechwood Link Club Willow Link Club
The Grange Academy	Grange Link Club <i>(on school site)</i>
The Heath High School	
The Holy Spirit Primary	Grange Link Club <i>(if sufficient demand)</i>
Victoria Road Primary	Victoria Road Link Club <i>(on school site)</i> Early Learners OSC
Westfield Primary	
Weston Point Primary	Willow Link Club
Weston Primary	Weston Kids Club <i>(on school site)</i>
Windmill Hill Primary	Windmill Hill Nursery <i>(on school site)</i>
Woodside Primary	Willow Link Club

WIDNES

WIDNES SCHOOLS	Out of School Clubs who offer a pick up/drop off service to this school
All Saints Upton Primary	Upton Link Club <i>(on school site)</i>
Ashley Special School	
Brookfields Special School	
Chesnut Lodge Special School	
Ditton Primary	Early Learners Link Club
Fairfield Infants	Kids Space Ltd <i>(on school site)</i>
Fairfield Juniors	Kids Space Ltd <i>(on school site)</i>
Farnworth Primary	Wizzkids <i>(on school site)</i>
Hale Primary	Hale Kids Club
Halebank Primary	
Lunts Heath Primary	Early Learners Link Club
Moorfield Primary	Funky Monkey's Kids Club
Oakfield Primary	
Our Lady of Perpetual Succour	Our Lady's 1st Steps Link Club <i>(on school site)</i>
Simms Cross Primary	
St Basil's Primary	St Basil's Link Club <i>(on school site)</i>

St Bede's Infants	The Village Care Club (<i>on school site</i>) Early Learners Link Club
St Bede's Juniors	The Village Care Club (<i>on school site</i>) Early Learners Link Club
St Gerard's Primary	
St John Fisher Primary	St John Fisher Care Club (<i>school site</i>)
St Michael's Primary	St Michael's Link Club (<i>on school site</i>)
St Michaels with St Thomas	Upton Link Club
St Peter & Paul High School	
The Bankfield High School	
Wade Deacon High School	
Widnes Academy	Jiggy's Childcare (West Bank)

Note: Some childminders will also offer a pick up/drop off service to the schools in Runcorn and Widnes



23. 'AT A GLANCE' TABLE

Table 23 shows 'at a glance' which areas have sufficient/insufficient places to meet demand in each age range/childcare category.

Please note: some childcare sectors are measured by Children's Centre Reach Areas and others are measured by town.

Table 23 – 'At a Glance' Table

Key: ✓ = Sufficiency ✗ = Insufficiency (includes number of places)

Ward	0-2 Year Old Places <i>(measured by town)</i>	2 Year Old Places FEYE <i>(measured by CCRA area)</i>	3 & 4 Year Old FEYE Universal hours <i>(measured by CCRA area)</i>	3 & 4 Year Old FEYE Extended hours <i>(measured by CCRA area)</i>	3 & 4 Year Old Wrap-Around Care <i>(measured by town)</i>	5-10 After School Care <i>(measured by CCRA area)</i>	5- 10 Year Old Holiday Care <i>(measured by town)</i>
RUNCORN	✓				✓		✓
WIDNES	✓				✓		✓
BROOKVALE CCRA		✓	✓	✓		✓	
HALTON BROOK CCRA		✗ (-34 places)	✓	✓		✓	
HALTON LODGE CCRA		✓	✓	✓		✓	
WINDMILL HILL CCRA		✓	✓	✗ (-84 places)		✗ (-46 places)	
DITTON CCRA		✓	✓	✓		✓	
KINGSWAY CCRA		✗ (-61 places)	✓	✓		✓	
UPTON CCRA		✓	✗ (-96 places)	✗ (-69 places)		✗ (-26 places)	
WARRINGTON CCRA		✓	✓	✓		✓	

24. GAPS IN PROVISION

Table 23 indicates that the majority of areas in Halton have sufficient supply of childcare places in all age ranges except for the following:

- Halton Brook CCRA has a deficit of approximately 34 places for funded 2 year olds.
- Windmill Hill CCRA has a deficit of approximately 84 extended entitlement places and 46 places for out of school care for 5-10 year olds.
- Kingsway CCRA is approximately 61 places short of funded 2 year olds.
- Upton CCRA has a deficit of approximately 96 universal FEYE places, 69 places for Extended Hours and 26 places for out of school care for 5-10 year olds.

However, it is important to remember that parents do not always access childcare in the ward where they live and children do not always attend a school in the ward where they live.

Halton Brook CCRA

With regards to the shortage of funded 2 year old places in Halton Brook CCRA, the Two Year Old Funding Officer reports that it has always been possible to find an alternative place in the surrounding area. Furthermore, if parents have requested a particular setting where there are no available spaces, they have been happy to wait for availability.

Furthermore, one Pre-school in Halton Brook Ward are looking into the possibility of providing care for under 2's.

Windmill Hill CCRA

With regards to the shortage of Universal places in the Windmill Hill CCRA, families are willing to travel to other wards for their FEYE. This may mean accessing a setting, which is outside the Windmill Hill CCRA or even out of the borough.

With regards to the shortage of 46 out of School places, local knowledge would support the fact that, in reality, no such shortage exists.

Kingsway CCRA

With regards to the shortage of funded 2 year old places in the Kingsway CCRA, there is a new nursery due to open in Farnworth Ward, Spring 2021. Although this new nursery is not situated in the Kingsway CCRA, geographically it is located close by and parents may be willing to travel.

Upton CCRA

The shortage of 3 & 4 year old FEYE places (both Universal and Extended) in the Upton CCRA would appear to be due to the expansion of new housing estates in that area.

In recent years, prospective childcare providers have considered developing childcare in this CCRA, notably the Birchfield ward. However, no suitable buildings appeared to be available and it was proving too costly to buy land to build premises.

However, the new Day Nursery opening in Farnworth ward will help to alleviate the shortage of 3 and 4 year old places in the Upton RA. In particular it will help the Birchfield ward, as Birchfield ward is next to Farnworth Ward (see map on page 7) and parents are willing to travel across wards to receive their free childcare.

In addition, Birchfield and Hough Green wards are both on the edge of neighbouring authorities e.g. St Helens, Knowsley and Warrington. They are also in close proximity to the M62 motorway. This means that if parents work further afield, they may choose to claim their Universal/Extended FEYE in a childcare setting nearer to their work, thereby reducing demand for places in Halton.

25. COVID-19 – EFFECTS ON CHILDCARE AND SUSTAINABILITY

The outbreak of the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic has radically changed the way we live our lives. It is too early, as yet, to know the full extent of the impact Covid-19 will have on the Early Years childcare sector. However, it is inevitable that some repercussions will be felt.

Early Years providers in Halton have already faced challenges over the past few months due to Covid-19. The main challenges have been around staffing, learning and development, blended learning, policy changes, risk assessments and safeguarding (See table below).

Type of Setting	Key Challenges due to COVID-19 (shown in %) *					
	Staffing	Learning and Development	Bended Learning	Policy Changes	Completion of Risk Assessments	Safeguarding
Pre-Schools	41.5	12.5	41.5	37.5	41.5	8
Day Nurseries	24	20	0	16	8	4
Childminders	0	7.5	0	11.5	4	0
Out Of School Clubs	47	16	5	5	0	0

**Percentages based on number of settings who returned their CSA surveys*

Other issues identified around Covid-19 are as follows:

- Issues around staffing due to;
 - Difficulties in maintaining ratios when staff have to self-isolate. For childminders, self-isolation can mean no income coming in;
 - Staff requiring time off to look off children at home, due to Covid-19 related incidences;
 - Trying to ensure groups are small and consistent. Some settings use staff 'flexibly', but this is not possible during current pandemic. This is creating problems for cover, e.g. holiday/sickness, covering drop-off and pick-ups;
 - High levels of anxiety in staff around returning to work;
- Delays in learning and development, especially in the areas of social and emotional development, communication and language. This is of particular concern for those children who are already disadvantaged. Settings have shared fears that children will not be ready for school in September 2021;

- Delays in testing and in the Track and Trace system;
- Issues around blended learning. Some settings have shared that, whilst this was manageable during lockdown, it would be difficult to support small groups of children self-isolating, when all staff are back working in session. Some settings have also experienced difficulties in engaging families with blended/home learning;
- Completing and up-dating risk assessments, which is very time consuming;
- Keeping up to date with constant amendments/updates to government guidance and ensuring all relevant policies are up to date;
- Settling in new children has been more challenging as parents/carers are not permitted into the settings;
- Issues around social distancing and the need to reduce the number of people accessing the setting;
- Some parents are not being proactive with regard to shielding and/or wearing face masks;
- Increased workload generally;
- Some early years practitioners work between two or more settings. This is proving to be challenging due to government guidance and the fact that settings are now staggering start and finish times;
- For childminders, the need to limit contact between different social bubbles, potentially reducing numbers of children.

Furthermore, Early Years providers in Halton have indicated some concerns around sustainability (see table below).

Type of Setting	% of settings* who foresee Sustainability issues in the following terms:		
	Autumn Term 2020	Spring Term 2021	Summer Term 2021
Pre-Schools	29	29	25
Day Nurseries	32	24	12
Childminders	23	15	11.5
Out of School Clubs	58%	53%	32%

**Percentages based on number of settings who returned their CSA surveys*

The main reasons given as to why sustainability may be an issue are as follows:

- Low numbers of children due to:
 - A reduction in capacity in order to enable settings to remain Covid-19 secure. For some settings this may mean opening for less sessions, e.g. mornings only; for others they may be unable to open breakfast and after school provision. This will have a negative impact on income that will not be sustainable long-term;
 - The loss of new starters in the summer term, which, again, has meant a reduction in income;
 - Parents choosing not to send their children to an Early Years setting due to fears around contracting Covid-19 or having found alternative childcare with family members;

- Children having left the setting to start school in September, and the lack of potential new children to replace them;
- Parents not being able to visit prior to children starting has left some settings with lower numbers than expected in September;
- Parents working from home and no longer requiring child care;
- Rise in unemployment, resulting in parents no longer requiring, or able to afford childcare;
- Where settings have seen a drop in numbers, this has meant reducing staff hours and, for some, the prospect of laying staff off;
- Some smaller settings have expressed concerns around needing to close if staff contract Covid-19;
- Continued underfunding by government and lack of financial support for children with SEND;
- Parents are reluctant to pay for childcare in advance in case they do not need it, due to self-isolation, unemployment etc;
- Restrictions on families and staff may cause some issues, which cannot be predicted at this time;
- Concerns over the effect further lockdowns may have;
- Covering additional staffing and running costs, such as;
 - Funding for cleaning materials and PPE;
 - Staffing costs to cover additional cleaning;
 - Some pre-schools have seen increases in the cost of hiring premises.

Despite the above, the majority of settings in Halton have indicated that, as long as funding continues they would remain sustainable. The hardest hit sector, to date, has been the Out of School Clubs. However, fears have been expressed around the impact of any further lockdowns, both locally and nationally, and how this would affect the childcare market.

26. CONCLUSION

Overall, the Halton Childcare Sufficiency Assessment (CSA) Review 2020-2021 continues to reflect a vibrant, sufficient and high quality Early Years and Childcare market that delivers choice, high quality and affordable service to parents and carers.

The report does identify some gaps in provision and the Action Plan below details how the Local Authority will work with a range of partners to address these gaps to ensure sufficiency.

However, this review has been undertaken at a time when the Early Years Sector is under increasing pressure due to the Coronavirus pandemic. Although, early indications show that the sector remains sustainable at present, it is still too early to determine the full impact of Covid-19. This will need to be carefully monitored over the coming months.



CHILDCARE SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

ACTION PLAN 2020-2021

OBJECTIVE 1 – IMPACT OF COVID-19	ACTION REQUIRED	BY WHOM AND WHEN
To monitor the impact of Covid-19 on the childcare sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to collect regular information from our early years providers to gain local intelligence around the impact of Covid-19. ○ Carry out a survey of early years providers in January. 	Early Years Team – ongoing January
OBJECTIVE 2 – GAPS IN PROVISION	ACTION REQUIRED	BY WHOM AND WHEN
Halton Brook CCRA – shortage of 2 Year Old Funded Places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to monitor DfE estimates. ○ Encourage existing providers in this area to expand their provision or re-configure their buildings, if possible, to accommodate more funded 2 Year Olds. ○ Encourage new providers to enter the local childcare market in these areas. ○ Promote the FEYE funding to childminders with either a Good or Outstanding Ofsted Grade and encourage them to register to deliver the FEYE. 	Early Years Team – ongoing
Windmill Hill and Upton CCRA – shortage of Universal and Extended Entitlement Places for 3 and 4 Year Olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encourage existing providers in these areas to expand their provision or re-configure their buildings, if possible, to accommodate more funded 3 and 4 Year Olds. ○ Encourage new providers to enter the local childcare market in these areas. ○ Promote the Universal and Extended FEYE funding to childminders and encourage them to register to deliver the FEYE. ○ Promote the Extended FEYE funding to maintained nursery schools/classes not currently offering the extended offer. ○ Promote the Extended FEYE funding to Out of School Clubs and encourage them to register to deliver the FEYE. 	Early Years Team – ongoing

Windmill Hill and Kingsway CCRA – shortage of Out of School Places for 5-10 Year Olds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Encourage existing Out of School Clubs to offer a drop off/pick-up service to the schools where there is no provision. ○ Encourage new providers to enter the local childcare market in these areas. ○ Ensure schools in these areas make parents aware that they have the 'Right to Request' Wraparound and/or Holiday Care. Schools should work with local providers to offer a service or offer the service themselves. For link to DfE guidance click Here 	Early Years Team – ongoing
OBJECTIVE 3 – PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITY	ACTION REQUIRED	BY WHOM AND WHEN
<p>Continue to promote:</p> <p>Free Early Years Entitlement (FEYE) for 2, 3 and 4 Year olds</p> <p>Tax Free Childcare (TFC) to parents and childcare providers</p> <p>Disability Access Fund (DAF) to childcare providers</p> <p>Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) to childcare providers</p> <p>Local Offer website to parents of children with SEND</p>	All via literature, social media, HBC Website, outreach events (when possible)	<p>Early Years Team, especially FIS – ongoing</p> <p>As above, plus Local Offer Team</p>
OBJECTIVE 4 – ENSURE HALTON CONTINUES TO HAVE A CHOICE OF HIGH QUALITY CHILDCARE IN DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS	ACTION REQUIRED	BY WHOM AND WHEN
Ensure all Halton childcare providers remain high quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Continue to offer support, guidance and training to existing and new childcare providers regarding EYFS, Safeguarding and Welfare requirements and Learning and Development 	Early Years Team - ongoing, especially the Quality Improvement Officer and the Safeguarding and Welfare Officer

27. GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

ABBREVIATION	DEFINITION
CCRA	Children's Centre Reach Area
CSA	Childcare Sufficiency Assessment
DAF	Disability Access Fund
DfE	Department for Education
DLA	Disability Living Allowance
DWP	Department for Work and Pensions
EHCP	Education Health Care Plan
EYPP	Early Years Pupil Premium
FIS	Families Information Service
FEYE	Free Early Years Entitlement
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
HBC	Halton Borough Council
HCYPSP	Children and Young People Safeguarding Partnership
HMRC	Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
PVI	Private, Voluntary and Independent
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
ONS	Office of National Statistics
OSC	Out of School Club
SEND	Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

Definition of a 'Reach' Area

A Reach Area is a number of wards based around a Children's Centre that is meaningful and accessible to local parents.

28. REFERENCES

Halton Children & Young People's Plan 2018-2021

www.gov.uk

www.ofsted.gov.uk

Halton Families Information Service

Halton council democracy statistics and census information

Halton's Synergy Children's Database (Servelec)

2011 Census

Office of National Statistics

Childcare Provider Surveys 2020

Coram Family and Childcare – Childcare Survey 2020

Child and Family Poverty – Department for Work and Pension Statistics (2011)

Proportion of children in out-of-work benefit households measure for 2014 – Department for Work and Pensions (2015)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)

29. CONTACTS

If you would like any further information regarding this CSA Review, contact:

Gail Vaughan-Hodkinson, Early Years Team Lead on 0151 511 8815
or e-mail: Gail.vaughan-hodkinson@halton.gov.uk

For any general information regarding childcare in Halton, contact:

Families Information Service on 0151 511 7375,
e-mail: haltonfis@halton.gov.uk or visit: www.halton.gov.uk/fis

For advice on how to set up childcare, see document entitled:

“Local Authority Guide to setting up childcare provision on non-domestic premises”.

Click [Here](#)







REPORT TO: Children, Young People & Families Policy and Performance Board

DATE: 23rd November 2020

REPORTING OFFICER: Milorad Vasic, Strategic Director, People

SUBJECT: Annual Report - Comments, Complaints and Compliments relating to Children's Social Care Services 1st April 2019 - 31st March 2020.

PORTFOLIO: Children, Education and Social Care

WARDS(S): Borough Wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To meet the statutory requirement to publish an Annual Report which provides an analysis on complaints processed under the Children Act 1989, Representation's Procedure and evidence how feedback from service users has been used to improve service delivery.
- 1.2 To provide the Board with an update and feedback on compliments made by clients and positive feedback from workers/professionals relating to Children Services in the People Directorate. This report will demonstrate the positive impact and outcomes on the lives of people accessing services in this Directorate.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That

- 2.1 The reports presented are accepted as the mechanism by which Elected Members can monitor and scrutinise children's social care complaints and compliments.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The aim of The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure is for Children and Young People to have their concerns resolved swiftly and wherever possible by the people who provide the service locally.
- 3.2 A complaint may generally be defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child or young person, which requires a response.
- 3.3 There are 4 categories to the representation process.
 - i. Statutory Complaints - the complainant is eligible as stated in the Representations Procedure to make a formal complaint.

- ii. Representations - where a complainant is not eligible under the Statutory Complaints Procedure to make a formal complaint, but their comments are noted and responded to. If it is not a complaint under the Statutory Procedure then the Corporate Complaints procedure may apply. These will often be as complex and take as much time as a statutory complaint and are recorded as Customer Care issues.
- iii. Customer Care issues – can also include advice and guidance, signposting, problem solving and early resolution to prevent complaint escalation.
- iv. Compliments – positive feedback

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Where identified through the complaints process, policies can be amended to improve service delivery. The learning taken from complaints, comments and compliments ensures the ongoing development of services to provide better outcomes for children, young people and their families.
- 4.2 Halton Council is a member of the North West Regional Complaints Managers Group. The aim of the regional groups, which meet bi-monthly, is to provide a forum in which peer professionals can discuss and learn about regional and national issues. Here there are opportunities to develop local practice standards, discuss performance and problem solve. The group also discuss proposed changes to legislation and procedures and prepare consultation responses where necessary.

5.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 5.1 Failure to implement an efficient service could result in the Local Authority being challenged for not dealing with complaints in a timely and efficient manner and could result in the customer not receiving a service which could then detrimental to their safety and wellbeing.
- 5.2 Investing in a timely and thorough complaint investigation and response at Stage 1 identifies potential savings for the Local Authority which can prevent the complaints progressing to Stage 2 where there is a cost. It also prevents staff resources being directed to Stage 2 investigations.
- 5.3 Failure to meet the standards as prescribed in the Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure and the Guidance “Getting the Best from Complaints” can potentially impact on the overall findings of an Ofsted Inspection.

6.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 6.1 No matter who makes a complaint or a compliment they receive the same equality of access and provision.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 Children and Young People

The learning taken from complaints and compliments ensures the ongoing development of services to provide better outcomes for children, young people and their families. The transparency of the process enables children, young people and their families to challenge our provision of services if they feel unhappy about any aspect of it and provides independent oversight if required.

7.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Any findings from a comment, complaint or compliment relating to this priority will be used to inform the relevant service.

7.3 A Healthy Halton

Any findings from a compliment relating to this priority will be used to inform the relevant service.

7.4 A Safer Halton

Any findings from a compliment relating to this priority will be used to inform the relevant service.

7.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

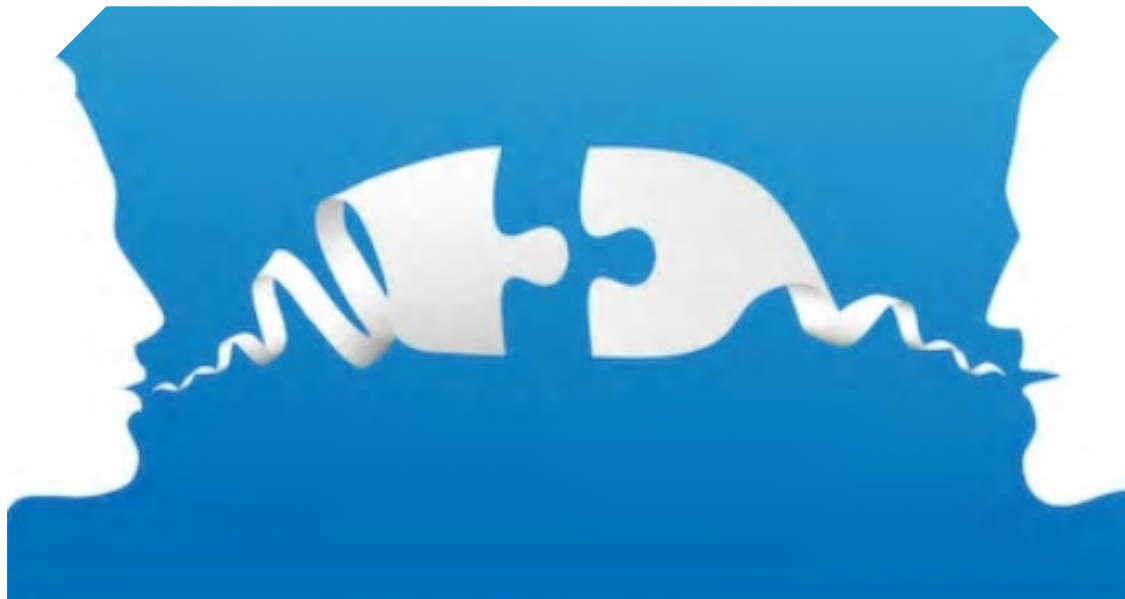
Any findings from a comment, complaint or compliment relating to this priority will be used to inform the relevant service.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Representation Procedure 1989	Rutland House	Dorothy Roberts Principal Policy Officer



Complaints Annual Report Children Social Care Services 2019 / 20



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1. Introduction

The report covers Children Social Care Services for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020, it details the complaints and compliments that have been formally recorded during this period. There have been no changes to the Complaint Regulations in this financial year, with this in mind the remainder of this introduction and chapter 2 'The Statutory Process' are unchanged from last year's report.

The Children's Act 1989 require all local authorities with Children Social responsibilities in England and Wales to have a complaints procedure. The aim of The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure is for Children and Young People to have their concerns resolved swiftly and wherever possible by the people who provide the service locally. 'Getting the Best from Complaints' provides guidance for local authorities on implementing the Children's Act and defines a complaint as being:

A complaint may generally be defined as an expression of dissatisfaction or disquiet in relation to an individual child or young person, which requires a response.

Statutory complaints relate to the provision of Children Social Care and are handled in line with the national regulations referred to above, the key stages of which are set out in section 2 of this report: stage 1 - local resolution; stage 2 – investigation; stage 3 - review panel and section 4 - referral to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Complaints about Children Social Care Services that do not fall under The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure may be responded to under the Councils' Corporate Complaints Procedure these are investigated at stage 1, reviewed at stage 2 and customers may choose to progress their complaint to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman as a final stage. Some complaints may be addressed in accordance to internal HR procedures.

It is a requirement of The Children Act 1989 Representations Procedure for the local authority to have a designated officer who is responsible for the management of the procedure and who is independent of social care operational line management and of direct service providers. In order to contribute effectively to service development, the Complaints Management function is managed by the Principal Policy Officer based within the Policy, Provision and Performance Division in the Education, Inclusion & Provision Department.

There are other customer contacts which allow early resolution to prevent complaint escalation and this can include advice and guidance, signposting and problem solving direct with the customer. Another and very positive aspect is the recording and reporting of compliments and positive feedback received by the People (Children Services) Directorate.

This Annual Report is produced in line with national guidance and is designed to share information more widely with members of the public.

2. The Statutory Complaints Process

Halton Borough Council aims to address any concerns as quickly as possible and we aim to acknowledge complaints within 3 working days of being received advising the customer of how their complaint will be handled. We cannot promise to deliver the outcomes that complainants want, but we do make sure that complaints are dealt with as quickly and as thoroughly as possible.

STAGE 1 – the complaint will be allocated to the appropriate team manager who is asked to investigate the complaint. We always aim to resolve the problem as quickly as possible (within 10 working days) however, sometimes the complaint is complex so may take up to 20 working days.

If a complainant is dissatisfied with the response or investigation at Stage 1 and feels that the complaint is not resolved, they or their representative can request to go to Stage 2.



STAGE 2 - An external Independent Person is commissioned by Children's Services to further investigate the complaint. The Investigating Officer and Independent Person will aim to produce a report within 25 working days. However, if the case is complex, they can have a maximum of 65 working days in which to produce their reports. Once the reports have been finalised they are sent to the Adjudication Officer (usually the Head of Service) who will, after careful consideration of the reports, provide the complainant with a written response to their complaint.

If the complainant still remains dissatisfied with the decision/outcome following the independent investigation at Stage 2, they can ask to have their complaint reviewed by the Complaints Review Panel.



STAGE 3 -. The Complaints Review Panel is made up of three external people who will review the complaint, but they will not reinvestigate or consider new complaints. The complainant can attend the panel meeting if they choose to and can bring a friend or someone they can trust.



STAGE 4 – If a complaint cannot be resolved locally, it can be investigated by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO). A complainant has the right to self-refer their complaint to the LGSCO at any stage during the complaint process. However, the LGSCO normally allows the Local Authority the opportunity to process a complaint through every stage of the complaints procedure, before investigating it themselves.

3. Complaints received

Complaints and compliments are feedback received from our service users. Effective feedback, both positive and negative is very helpful, it highlights weaknesses as well as strengths that can be used to improve services. Feedback is around us all the time, every time we speak to someone we communicate feedback, it's impossible not to give feedback. For most of us in our day to day work there is that opportunity to pick up on those small signs of frustration, receive that feedback and address it there and then but sometimes regardless of best efforts or intentions they will escalate to a complaint.

- 33 Statutory complaints were made. A 25% decrease but more in comparison to previous years

- No complaints were received from children or young people under 18 years of age
- 1 complaint was received from a care leaver who was supported by Advocacy (NYAS)
- Historically and nationally numbers of complaints are low from young people

- 7 complaints were upheld
- 11 were partly upheld
- 14 were not upheld
- The majority were resolved by the explanation provided

- 1 of the 33 complaints progressed to Stage 2 Independent Investigation.
- None progressed to Stage 3

- 4 Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman enquiries did not progress to investigation

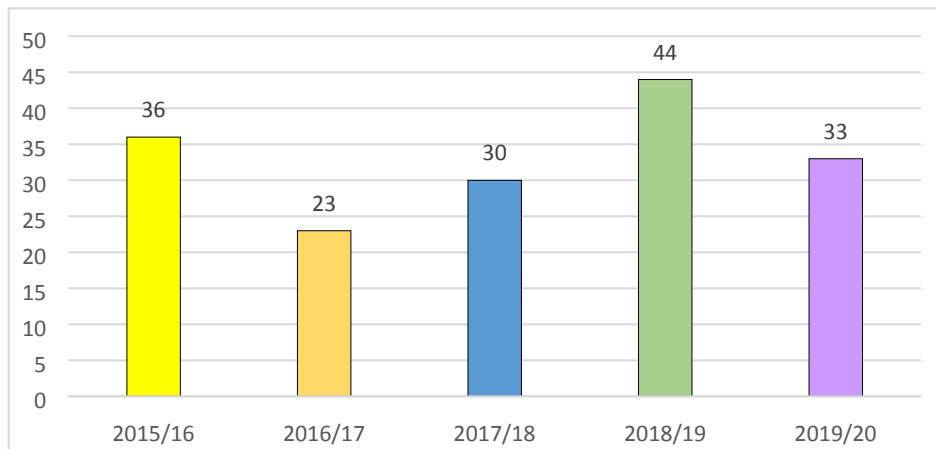
- 67 expressions of positive feedback were received.

- 18 complaints were managed under a corporate process, a 37% decrease from previous year.
- 1 was reviewed at Stage 2



4. Customer feedback data

4.1 Number of Statutory Children Social Care complaints.



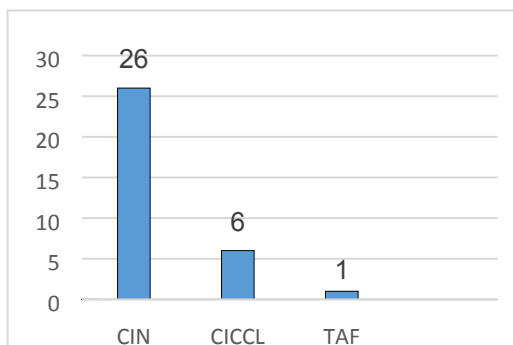
Complaints is a difficult service to measure, on one hand we want to try to reduce customer complaints to improve our services for our customers, but then on the other hand we question why they have reduced. It makes sense to eliminate as many complaints as possible and improve services however, it is really hard to predict and stop every possible imaginable problem or complaint before it happens.

Complaints don't just spring out of thin air, they are the end product of a series of negative events, problems with a service, process or people resulting in a dent or a break in that chain of events. Every time a complaint is investigated those links in the chain surrounding their complaint are examined, that link is made stronger for those using the service in the future however, complaints will continue to be raised as those different links in the chain get tested and as they have done in previous years and they will continue to fluctuate. Reducing complaints involves the entire department, it does not work without cross-team collaboration, and there is a clear sense of ownership of complaints in the Children and Families Service.



Complaints represented less than 3% of open cases to Children in Need, Children in Care and Care Leavers at 31st March 2020, the same as the previous year. There was a further 104 enquiries received that were resolved outside of the complaints process.

4.2 The teams the complaints are made about



The greatest number of complaints continues to be in the Children in Need and Child Protection Division (26 of 33), it is the frontline service dealing with a large number of cases with very difficult issues to address. The complaints were fairly evenly spread across CIN Widnes (15) and CIN Runcorn (11), this is usually the case. Of these 33 cases, 3 involved a child with a disability (9%).

4.3 How complaints are made and who makes them

E-mailing complaints continues to be the preferred method to make a complaint, this is probably due to the ease of access on mobile devices.

	2016/17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20	
Email	10	42%	19	64%	19	43%	19	58%
Telephone	2	30%	10	33%	14	32%	8	24%
Complaint Form	1	19%	0	4%	5	11%	4	12%
Letter	9	6%	1	3%	6	14%	2	6%
Meeting	1	3%	0	0	0	0	0	0

32 of the 33 complaints were received by parents, when comparing other local authority annual reports, as in Halton, the number of complaints received from children and/or young people remains low.

The 1 care leaver who made a complaint was supported by an advocate. Halton Borough Council commissions the National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) to support Children in Care and Care Leavers, if they want one. All young people in contact with the team are offered access to an advocate so that their voices can be heard and their issues discussed, this can often be at the point of service delivery where the matter can be resolved rather than progressing to a complaint.

Staff are encouraged to resolve issues informally. If a customer has a point of contact, someone to go to at the first sign of trouble, small frustrations are less likely to escalate to the customer becoming more upset by the situation. Because of this there may be greater numbers of people who were originally dissatisfied but whose matters were resolved to their satisfaction preventing escalation to a complaint. It is not possible to capture this level of detail in the service however there were also a further 100 contacts recorded by the Principal Policy Officer that were resolved at point of contact.

Halton has a 97.8% white population. No complaints were from an ethnic minority.

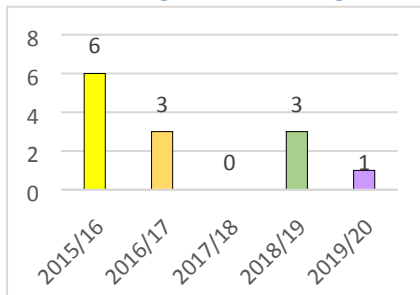
4.4 How quickly do we respond to complaints

	% within 10 days	% within 20 days	% over 20 days
2019-20	30%	67%	33%
2018-19	23%	66%	34%
2017-18	73%	91%	9%
2016-17	33%	83%	17%

This year has been a challenging year to try and make further progress on timescales and for a period it was doing ok. Manager's availability had been affecting their capacity to respond due to training away from the office and the development of the Eclipse System however, on the 24th February 2020 Halton Borough Council became the subject of a three week Ofsted Inspection during which staff resources were diverted. In addition to this, a week later the nation went into COVID-19 lockdown which placed enormous and unprecedented pressure on front line service delivery and in ensuring children and young people were safeguarded, unsurprisingly dealing with complaints in relation to matters that had already passed became less of a priority at that time.

When examining some of the delays that took responses over 20 days prior to COVID-19, we have to factor in office closures during the Christmas break, in addition managers visited a couple of the complainants to source other information as part of their investigation and complex/comprehensive responses take time to compose. The focus should always be on ensuring a thorough investigation and response that responds clearly to their concerns, if this takes slightly longer then so be it, if the complainant was dissatisfied with the response, regardless of how long it took we feel they would come back to us to progress their complaint and this has not been the case.

4.5 Stage 2 investigations



One Stage 2 complaint investigation was undertaken within the extended timescale of 65 working days, this was due to the complexity and availability of staff. The complaint was made by a parent and in relation to decision around the provision for her disabled child and it also encompassed safeguarding procedures, the investigation found that five complaints were upheld with three further complaints partially upheld.

4.6 Stage 3 Review Panels

No Stage 3 Review Panels were held in this year, there was one last year but prior to that the last one was held in 2013.

4.7 What are the complaints about

Main categories	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Staff	0	0	1	0
Service (i.e. quality, lack of, over provision & client expectations, customer care)	12 (52%)	12 (40%)	22 (50%)	19 (58%)
Assessment / Review Process (disputed or delay in decision)	11 (48%)	18 (60%)	21 (48%)	14 (42%)
Total	23	30	44	33

The Complaints Procedure is not designed to deal with allegations of misconduct by staff, they are covered under the separate disciplinary procedures of the Council but may occasionally be interwoven into the complaint as a whole.

Service Provision is about how we have done things, it is about the quality of the service we have provided.

Assessment and Review is about the process, have we done what we should have done in accordance to policy, procedure or regulations.

In the majority of cases, complaints cross over all three categories and so the Principal Policy Officer taking into consideration the main crux of the complaint, the desired outcome, and the complaint findings will determine the category.

4.8 Why complaints have been upheld

(* more than 1)

- Appointments/home visit cancelled or failed to attend*, prioritised safeguarding
- Children Social Care assess all avenues, perceived as delay when end up with what they asked for
- Communication/availability with the Social Worker* i.e. time taken to respond to emails/texts * no call backs to rearrange, resulting in very little contact
- Tell one party but not the other
- Had the correct decision been made at the time i.e. SAP progressed and fathers views sought, it would not then have resulted in dissatisfaction now
- Lack of practical support offered due to staff sickness, financial assessment was not completed
- Understanding / explanation of Consent
- Delay in assessment and reallocation, Social Worker left
- Reports for the Conference should have been provided 2 days in advance but given on day *
- Christmas contact rearranged after longstanding plans made *
- Staff late for meetings*
- Conference cancelled, social worker not completed paperwork
- Spelling errors, factual accuracy in reports
- SAP authorised 27th August 2019, letter accompanying dated 27th August 2019, received early October 2019, delivery
- Social Worker did not inform parent or foster carer of change to contact hence they turned up, she didn't.
- Delays in making contact - OFSTED ILACS
- Did not include sons views in the assessment, did not give report in timely manner
- Disputed some of the content of the assessments. Social worker left, can't determine source – case recording
- 1 Assessment missing, other 3 assessments focus on same child. Social Worker left.
- Social Worker went off sick, drift, not financially assessed, agreed to reimburse £1300.00 she paid to assist with the care of her children

A human error is an action or decision which was not intended, there are also those errors of judgement or decision-making where the “intended actions are wrong” i.e. where we do the wrong thing believing it to be right, they are unintentional errors. No complaints were determined to be as a result of deliberate deviations from rules, procedures, and regulations.

4.9 Actions taken and learnings

Learning from complaints is vital to ensure high levels of service, and there is reliance on teams/service having the capacity to advise on and deliver improvements as a result. Learning can be taken from all complaints rather than just those that were upheld or partially upheld, and it should be noted that some of the examples presented are case specific. Whilst there may be some common themes, the majority are not indicative of systemic practice issues.

Complaints including elements of workers actions are discussed in supervision to inform individual learning but should be shared within team meetings to reaffirm the impact on clients

A number of customers raised complaints when they could not get in touch with their allocated social worker directly. This was often not the main issue of concern for the customer but added to an overall feeling of dissatisfaction and frustration. In cases where the allocated social workers could not respond as quickly as they would have liked due to competing priorities or, due to their absence, staff were reminded of the importance of ensuring that parents and young people understand that they can contact the team or duty cover and to ensure they have the contact details.

The understanding and application of client consent was also a theme highlighted during the OSTED ILACS inspection along with consistency of case recording. These will be addressed through a staff development programme to address gaps in knowledge.

Customers complained about inaccuracies in reports, but the main theme was that they disagreed with the opinion of the Social Worker and the conclusions reached during the assessment process. Whilst it is understandable that a lengthy report such as the Single Assessment may have a few minor errors such as a misspelling of a name or an incorrect date, it is recognised that this may undermine customers' confidence in the assessment process. The new case recording system 'Eclipse' when introduced will have the facility to spell check, it will work on any device, anytime, anywhere enabling direct recording with clients, allowing for quality case recording that supports strength-based practice and enables a more integrated view of what life is like for adults, children, young people and families.

A clear explanation is offered to customers stating that Social Workers can use professional judgement to form opinions when making assessments and explaining the legal basis for carrying out assessments and recording them. Whilst we are not able to uphold their complaint or amend an assessment following a complaint of this nature, we are able to offer to add the customer's views onto the records and note that they should be read alongside the assessment. This approach provides greater transparency into the process and enables customers to feel that their voice has been heard, logged, and kept on record.

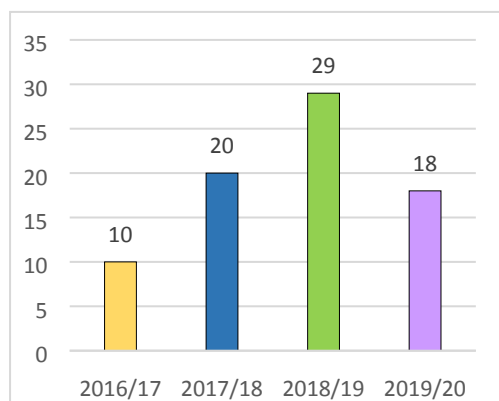
The Principal Policy Officer will continue to work proactively alongside managers making enquiries and challenging findings in order to help catch issues quickly and resolve dissatisfaction locally to prevent unnecessary escalation.

4.10 The Local Government & Social Care if the re Ombudsman (LGSCO)

Halton received 4 enquiries from the LGSCO. They responded to 3 in agreement with the Local Authorities decision not to engage the Statutory Complaint Process and not to investigate further, the other one was advised to access the statutory process which they subsequently did.

Local Government &
Social Care
OMBUDSMAN

4.11 Corporate Complaints



The number of Corporate Complaints have decreased, more comparable to previous years. This procedure is used for dealing with complaints from adults regarding Children's Social Care Services when they do not fit the criteria for their complaint to be managed under the statutory procedure. The Team Manager investigates and respond as per the statutory procedure however, if they remains dissatisfied, Stage 2 is an internal review by the Corporate Complaint Team following which they would need to approach the LGSCO.

4.12 Complaints Training and Procedures

Two training sessions were undertaken in February 2020 for front line staff in the Children and Families Service. The course was fully attended and received favourable feedback. The Principal Policy Officer is a known presence in the department and is available to support and advise staff on a one to one basis during a complaints investigation and by providing targeted training with staff and managers on request and also as part of an induction process. Complaints procedures and processes continue to be held within Tri-x which is the Web based procedure Manual for Children Social Care staff.

4.13 COVID-19

Toward the end of this year, due to the spread of COVID-19 and Government advice around social distancing, self-isolation and shielding vulnerable groups, we started to capture data on the number of complaints received specifically relating to this theme, and also the number of investigations and responses which have encountered delays as a result of critical staff prioritising the needs of our vulnerable communities. We continued to take complaints at Stage 1 however there was a temporary hold on any new escalation requests.

The Local Government Ombudsman temporarily suspended its central telephone line and would not accept new complaints, guidance issued by them was implemented;

- **Inform** - Be realistic with complainants about the timescale for response to their complaint, keeping them informed if there is going to be a further delay.
- **Consider** - Consider each complaint on its own merits, and if needs be, prioritise complaint responses, considering what the impact of any delay will be on the complainant.
- **Explain** - Make sure we explain the reason for any delay or deviation from a process and document the reason.

5. Compliments

A separate report is compiled that records all the positive comments received and so this is a snapshot. Whilst the number of compliments passed to the Principal Policy Officer has decreased this year it is more comparative to the previous two years. Staff are reminded that it is important to report compliments as it can be very helpful feedback giving a flavour of what works well and what the families using the services really value.

Year	Total
2016-17	70
2017-18	80
2018-19	101
2019-20	67

It is important to remember that the three divisions work together to support families, children in care may be open to the Children in Need Division whilst work is being undertaken. Children in need may be receiving respite in Inglefield which comes under the Children in Care Division and services provided in the family centres which can be accessed by children in need or children in care will come under the Team Around the Family Division.

Knowing that the work they do is noticed and valued is a powerful motivator for staff, people strive to do more of what brings praise from others.

	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20
CIN	18%	33%	31%	25%
CIC	26%	14%	14%	42%
TAF	54%	53%	55%	33%



She wanted to say thank you and she thinks your amazing! She said you have helped her out of so much trouble and she wanted to let you know without your help they would be homeless by now. She said things are going ok now and she appreciates what you have done for her. She has got help and things are looking better now. Just wanted to say thanks. (Client)

Needed to put into an email to you how much we, as a family have benefited from the input. At a point of which I was very low and tearful... she sat and truly listened. Straightaway she was making calls and making enquiries upon our behalf. She explained so much to us, things we never knew existed. She instigated meetings to pull all professionals together, arranged direct payments. Her confidence is improving, she is less anxious, it's become routine and most importantly planned. I know people are quick to send letters of complaint, but I believe letters to acknowledge how well something has worked should also be sent. Your department and especially her, she has had a big impact on our lives and although things are still very challenging, with her help and guidance we have been able to enjoy quality time with our son alone whilst our daughter is occupied. (Client)

I just want to say thank you for everything you have done, (please don't say it's your job) I actually don't know what mess my family would be in if it wasn't for you. And I hand on heart mean that, can never thank you enough. I am keeping your number just in case. (Client)

As the local authority funded his fees the judge instructed his

Thank you all for taking care of my daughter this year, she has really appreciated everything you have done for her and so have we. We don't know how we could ever thank you for all that you do. (Client)

The Judge stated that her Section 37 was on to Children's Directors for

You have been a superstar and helped me feel comfortable enough to discuss some very difficult events in my life during the assessment. (Client)

child's' residence and thanked her for giving him all the information he needed to make this decision in her s37 and oral evidence. (Professional)

I just want to say thank you for coming into my life and playing a big part of it, you have helped me through many of my struggles. I don't think I have the words to explain how much you really mean to me. You have helped me more than any other person ever has in my entire life. I seriously don't know what I would do without you. No one knows me like you do. No one understands me like you do, no one makes my day better like you do. You was there when I had no one, you have remained in my heart for a very long time. I am truly proud of the person I have become today and I want to say a massive thank you for helping me to achieve that. You stood by me when I thought I had lost everything, you help me make the right decisions that lead me to where I am today. I totally and utterly adore you I look up to you like a mother figure, and nothing will ever change that, take your time to read what I have wrote to you and take it all in, I want you to realise how much you have actually done for me and help me through my worst times, heart breaking times. When all I needed was a cuddle and for someone to tell me I'm going to be okay, you was that person you will always be that person, thank you. (Client)

Compliments Annual Report

People Directorate Children Services

2019 / 20



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1. Introduction

The report details the compliments that have been formally recorded for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 in respect of the Children Services Department of the People Directorate.

A compliment is “*an expression of praise, commendation, admiration or respect,*” for someone and for something they have done, it is given freely.

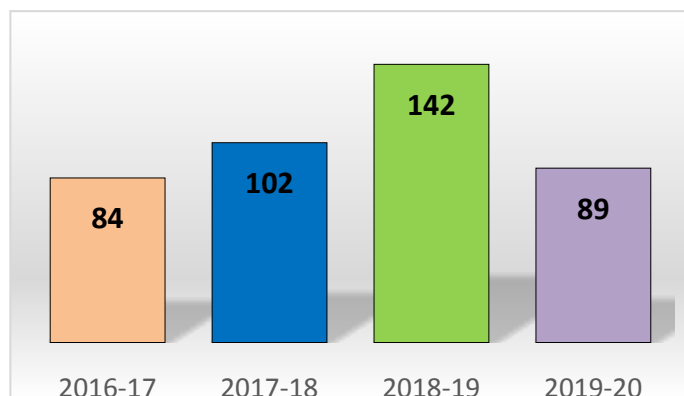
There is a statutory complaint process for Children Social Care that handles negative feedback and affords customers the opportunity to let us know when we have not performed to their expectation. Complaints get logged, formalised and circulated however, compliments and thanks were often just expressed to one individual and never acknowledged again. It is these comments that make the job rewarding and that measure our success or impact on a family and so this report was developed to capture those positive comments and balance this negative input from complaints, with the positive feedback and compliments that are received.

It's hard to quantify the impact of a compliment, much less to describe its effect in a few bullet points. Nonetheless, here are a few observations about compliments.

- Compliments are a measure of awareness from our Service Users; it is their acknowledgment of the positive relationships developed with staff supporting them and of the good developments and positive effects services have had on their family.
- Staff benefit from receiving compliments, knowing that they are noticed and that they are valued is powerful in motivating continued efforts enhancing their performance and contributing to their improved skills.
- Compliments affirm the right behaviour and actions. If someone is questioning their ability or actions, a compliment can give them a clear sense of their direction. People strive to do more of what brings praise from others, it stimulates and strengthens their purpose and enthusiasm for their work.
- Compliments can be used as a form of quality assurance, on a service level compliments can influence the development or continuation of service provision, identifying the things that need to be kept or identifying what needs to change.



2. Customer Feedback Data



There has been 53 less compliments and positive feedback recorded this year, however this figure is perhaps more comparable to previous years. Staff continue to be reminded to forward compliments and positive feedback. In terms of where compliments and positive feedback comes from, there have been fewer client compliments recorded, this is perhaps in line with the fewer amount of compliments received overall.

Number of Service Users providing a Compliment for Children Services

	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20
%	68%	72%	70%	63%
Number	57	73	100	56

Number of Professionals who provided positive feedback to services

	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20
%	32%	28%	30%	37%
Number	27	29	42	33

Recognition from external agencies and other internal departments demonstrate good working relationships. Recognising the value of working together and the contribution each makes to achieve positive outcomes for families is a recognition of the excellent work undertaken in Halton. No compliments in this year were noted from young people (under 18)

How Service User Compliments are received

Electronic communication continues to be the most accessible means to provide compliments and positive feedback with;

- 58% using email
- 15% providing verbal feedback
- 8% purchasing a card
- 8% completing feedback forms
- 6% writing a letter

Compliments by Operational Directorate

The Children's Services compliments report relates to the Education, Inclusion & Provision Department (EIP), and the Children and Families Service (C&F).

	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20
C&F	83%	78%	71%	75%
EIP	17%	22%	29%	25%

3. Children and Families Service

Year	Total
16-17	70
17-18	80
18-19	101
19-20	67

	16-17	17-18	18-19	19-20
CIN	18%	33%	31%	25%
CIC	26%	14%	14%	42%
TAF	54%	53%	55%	33%

In regard to CIC numbers increasing, Inglefield generates compliments. The break it provides to carers with overnight respite and the enjoyment and development of children when in their care is recognised and valued by parents. As a service provider this services work in conjunction with other Divisions in the department.

3.1 Child Protection and Children in Need

1. Telephone - She wanted to say thank you and she thinks your amazing! She said you have helped her out of so much trouble and she wanted to let you know without your help they would be homeless by now. She said things are going ok now and she appreciates what you have done for her. She has got help and things are looking better now. Just wanted to say thanks. (Client)
2. Verbal - In a very complex set of care proceedings. Social Worker facilitated contact sessions for over a 20 month period in some very difficult circumstances. At the conclusion of care proceedings with a positive outcome for family mum said "I'd just like to say thank you, throughout this you've been amazing. (Client)
3. Telephone - Requested I pass on a compliment for 2 ladies who visited yesterday 5.30 EDT, she wanted to praise them, they were very kind, very reassuring, she stated she suffered with nerves, anxiety and mental health and they made her feel better, they were very good staff and they were very nice. (Client)
4. Email - I just wanted to say I was very impressed by her practice. She was undertaking direct work with a child in school and it is clear she has spent the time to develop a positive working relationship with them, she was well prepared for the visit, could answer any and all questions I had about the family on our way to the school and responded well to the unpredictability of working with children and what they may say, but was able to make sure she asked questions in a non-leading and responsive manner which meant she was able to gather relevant information for her work. The child we visited told me that Jenny is "nice and kind and helpful" and it is clear that she enjoyed spending time with Jenny, colouring in and talking about what is important to her. Just thought I would share how well she had done. (Professional)
5. Verbal - The Judge stated that her Section 37 was very thorough and clear and this was highlighted within his judgement. He also recognised how difficult it was to make a decision either way in relation to 'the child's' residence and thanked her for giving him all the information he needed to make this decision in her s37 and oral evidence. (Professional)
6. Feedback form -She was always a good listener, patient, understanding, was great at making clear achievable suggestions and put my family needs alongside that of the individual on equal footing. She never lost focus that we needed help also. She has helped way beyond our expectations and apportioned blame. (Client)
7. Email - She dealt with the situation in a calm, but direct way, listening to professionals concerns and acting in a very difficult situation. It was dealt with in a very honest and professional manner which stopped the situation from escalating and sought the support that the family needs. (Professional)

8. Email - The contact she completed in ICART was very good. The contact was well presented, relevant information noted, she has taken into account the chronology and cycle of behaviour with regards to the domestic abuse in parents relationship. Clear risk assessment and summarised all the information in a clear analysis and decision making around level of need. (Professional)
9. Letter - I wanted to tell you that you are an amazing social worker, I couldn't have asked for someone better to work with. I am so grateful that you believed in us and supported our wishes from day 1. I know she also appreciates everything you have done. Thanks again for everything you have done for us. (Client)
10. Verbal - I heard from the children's Social Worker, whose evidence I found to be impressive. Statements and parenting assessments are well prepared. Social Worker was able to see both the positives and negatives. (Judge)
11. Email - She was very complementary about your supportive understanding manner during the process and your professionalism. I was good to hear and did make my job of engaging with the family easier. Many thanks. (Professional)
12. Email - Just want to take this opportunity before I leave to say thank you for the opportunities I have had in Halton since I started in 2012. I have been given the opportunity to further my education and study my degree part-time whilst still being able to work and this has allowed me to further my career. I've had some great experiences over the years, particularly in my current iCART team, where this has been at times challenging but also the most enjoyable, working with dedicated and skilled colleagues, helping families and professionals. I have really enjoyed working in Halton and would like to thank X for her ongoing support and guidance during the past 6 years as my Manager. I feel I've contributed what I can to the iCART team and it's time for me to move on but it is with mixed feelings I am leaving. I am excited about the new role but sad I will be leaving great colleagues, team and local authority. I would like to wish Halton's Children's Services the best of luck for the future. (Professional)
13. Email - Positive feedback from my presentation yesterday. This lady came up to me afterwards and said how good my presentation was and how well I did! I have sent her some information on our contact challenge meetings which, Cheshire East are now looking to introduce. (Professional)
14. Email - I just wanted to log a compliment about one of your social workers, She visited our home and from the first point of her contact she was professional yet empathetic to the situation. She spoke to both of my children and made them feel at ease. Her professionalism throughout her involvement made the interaction less stressful. She was aware of the sensitive nature but prioritised my children views and wishes above both my own worries and the children's fathers. Her swift interaction and writing of the assessment meant the whole process which was an anxious one was dealt with immediately and she took notice of what the children wanted and that their lived experiences are. She spoke clearly and explained the processes even though she knew I was aware of the processes. She was confident, professional and thorough throughout. (Client)
15. Email - We didn't of course work with the family alone. It was a team effort, agencies worked successfully together and you in particular built a positive relationship with the family that allowed for direct and honest dialogue. This led to definite changes, allowing the family to move forward. It is not often that this challenging work and practise is acknowledged so thank you it is very much appreciated. (Professional)
16. Verbal - You don't get paid enough, you're the only person I feel comfortable asking these questions. People get you all wrong, and think you want to take children away when you don't. (Client)

17. Text - I just had to message to just say thank you so much for your kind words of encouragement this morning. It really helps me feel like I am on the right track to getting us all through this and helps me so much. So thank you! (Client)

3.2 Children in Care and Care Leavers

18. Email - He has a new social worker from the child in care team, she keeps me fully informed, listens to my concerns & has been far more proactive in trying to help him as much as possible with his difficulties. She is helping me talk to them about how we help him move forwards into adulthood. (Client)
19. Email - Thanks very much for the support shown towards our young lad throughout his stay with you - it is truly greatly appreciated. It's the little touches like the photo album that outline the quality of Inglefield. (Client)
20. Email - Many thanks for your excellent and committed care of him and flexibility all of which proves your skilled professionalism and our children should be extremely grateful to have the benefit of great caring staff, I want to pass on my thanks for all you've done for him and continue to do every day. (Professional)
21. Email - Thanks for sharing the photos, looks like he had a great time! I spoke with Mum and was really happy to hear how well the weekend went. Thanks for providing such great support. I think the photo album is a brilliant idea! (Professional)
22. Verbal - As the local authority funded his fees the judge instructed his solicitor to include a note within the order to thank the local authority for supporting him with this and following his wishes and feelings. He wanted me to pass on to Children's Directors for Halton in that he felt it demonstrates positive practice. (Professional)
23. Email - The guardian and her solicitor were very complementary about Halton CSC, both stating that they enjoy working with Halton and the positive relationships they share with us. The Judge also commented on how he liked the LAC review documents being wrote to the child, he thought it was 'the way forward'. (Professional)
24. Letter - I just want to say thank you for coming into my life and playing a big part of it, you have helped me through many of my struggles. I don't think I have the words to explain how much you really mean to me. You have helped me more than any other person ever has in my entire life. I seriously don't know what I would do without you. No one knows me like you do. No one understands me like you do, no one makes my day better like you do. You was there when I had no one, you have remained in my heart for a very long time. I am truly proud of the person I have become today and I want to say a massive thank you for helping me to achieve that. You stood by me when I thought I had lost everything, you help me make the right decisions that lead me to where I am today. I totally and utterly adore you I look up to you like a mother figure, and nothing will ever change that, take your time to read what I have wrote to you and take it all in, I want you to realise how much you have actually done for me and help me through my worst times, heart breaking times. When all I needed was a cuddle and for someone to tell me I'm going to be okay, you was that person you will always be that person, thank you. (Client-Care Leaver)
25. Feedback form -She has loved her time at Inglefield and loves the staff, it will be a sad time when she leaves. Would just like to say thank you to everyone who supported us, listening to me. We will miss Inglefield very much and all the staff there. Thank you all so much. (Client)
26. Email - I believe management and staff team have gone above and beyond, they have recently supported this child to travel to school, following overnight breaks. Ultimately, this

would have led to the child missing education or their overnight stays at the setting; which is very important to the child. Furthermore, the staff team and manager have been accommodating to the carers of the child; offering advice and inviting the carers to the setting to gather further information. (Professional)

27. Email - Some of the young people I support have very challenging behaviours and can be difficult to manage, however I am always impressed with how the staff manage to calm and settle the young people in their care. The environment is welcoming and clean and comfortable. All of the Parents have only good things to say about the provision and staff. I am impressed with how staff get to know the young people and how much individual support they provide to ensure their needs are being met. The staff work in partnership with parents when setting targets for the young people which works towards improving outcomes for young people and builds on the young person's independent skills which can be transferred to other areas / environments. (Professional)
28. Email - I have to say I have worked and visited with Inglefield over a number of years. The standards the staff set themselves has in my view always been high. The children in residence very much come first. I have to say this recent visit did not disappoint in terms of quality of care, child centred approach, professionalism, commitment of staff to the children. (Professional)
29. Card - Thanks for all the hard work, advice, time, caring and kindness you have given you have helped our son and grandson so much. We will miss you our son always came back from contact with confidence in the belief it could be the best dad ever to his son And you have helped him get there, we won't forget that. Thanks again. (Client)
30. Verbal - Parents stated how happy they are with the work that Inglefield do with their son and how well he has settled and behaves when he is there. Mum said she wished she had started him at Inglefield years ago with seeing how he settles and is thriving here. Mum made special thanks to staff who have lots of patience for him and work hard to understand his needs and he loves going there. Mum especially loves that he has formed friendships while there and is building up his social skills and mum keeps in touch with another parent whose daughter grew a strong friendship with him now that she has moved on to adult services. (Client)
31. Email - I just want to say thank you to everyone who put so much effort in to yesterday's Forum and Celebration event and making the lovely hampers. The food looked lovely and I thought it went really well, thanks. (Client)
32. Email - I just wanted to say thank you to the fostering team for all the effort that went into today's celebration event, and especially to those of you in the crèche for looking after X. I know it takes a lot of work to put on occasions like this, so please could you pass on my thanks to everyone involved? It's lovely to be part of it. (Client)
33. Verbal - She could not sing your praises enough, she said you have been an absolute star and the high level of professionalism and support that she has had from you has ensured that she has a) stayed sane and b) stayed with fostering. She told me that she was told repeatedly by friends in Fostering Solutions that she should not move to a local authority but she feels she can honestly say that the level of support and the way in which foster carers are regarded in Halton has made her feel blessed that she came to Halton. It was her view that in an IFA, carers are treated like a commodity but in Halton they are treated like professional people and she feels valued. (Client)
34. Verbal - Appreciate the additional support we have had from you 'nothings too much'. (Client)
35. Verbal - You have been a superstar and helped me feel comfortable enough to discuss some very difficult events in my life during the assessment. (Client)

36. Verbal - You are approachable, easy to talk to and you always do what you say you will do. (Client)
37. Verbal - Please pass on our thanks for today. Also thanks to the girls in the fabulous crèche x (Client)
38. Email - We will be sad to see you go, a good SW that is so passionate about the kids on their caseload. I have been grateful for your input with my son. You have always done what you have said you will and I have always been confident that you have had his best interest at heart. (Client)
39. Email - I would like to compliment her for our Christmas contact yesterday, even though she wasn't feeling well she still made our contact pleasurable, helped take photos while I was cleaning up after children, and made sure I had a room with a kitchen to heat up food. And also played Christmas songs for the children to make it more festive. I am very grateful and we all enjoyed the contact very much. (Client)
40. Card - Thank you all for taking care of my daughter this year, she has really appreciated everything you have done for her and so have we. We don't know how we could ever thank you for all that you do. (Client)
41. Card - Your support has been so welcome. You have enabled us with a chance to recharge our batteries. (Client)
42. Card - Just a card to say a huge thank you to you all for taking such good care of her while she attended. She really loved her Inglefield family and I know she will never forget you all. I cannot tell you what a difference you have made to our lives. Giving your child to any to care for is a very trusting thing to do, we have nothing but happy memories of her time in your care. We will miss you all, thank you. (Client)
43. Email - I just wanted to let you know I filled in the Ofsted questionnaire. You know Inglefield and your staff will always get top marks of us. We have always known he is safe, secure, happy and looked after properly while in your care. And we really appreciate the break. I can't thank you enough for your help now and over the years xx (Client)
44. Email - He wanted to pass on his thanks as his son returned home today with a photo of himself sitting with 2 other young people and 2 staff all eating tea together. Positive Behaviour Team attended his home this morning regarding issues around his not eating at a table and the issues this brings to the family, they were all delighted with the photo and the progress he is making at Inglefield. (Client)
45. Email - At the end of her review today, which was very positive, her carer made a point of telling me how very supportive the social worker had been over the last six months as she had navigated herself through her own personal crisis. Testament to this is the fact that the carers commitment has not faltered and the quality of care has not diminished. The overall outcome, is that the social worker is once again in a position to be able to consider planning to match the young person to her and her husband in the next few months. It is clear to me that the social workers support has been instrumental in securing this outcome. (Client)

3.3 Team around the Family

46. Email - Also just to say a personal thank you to you too, for all your help and support with Sam's budget over all these years and for being so flexible to meet his needs. (Client)
47. Email - He has had certificates this morning for Student of the Week and for completing English work that he has been very reluctant to do in the past. We are so proud of the

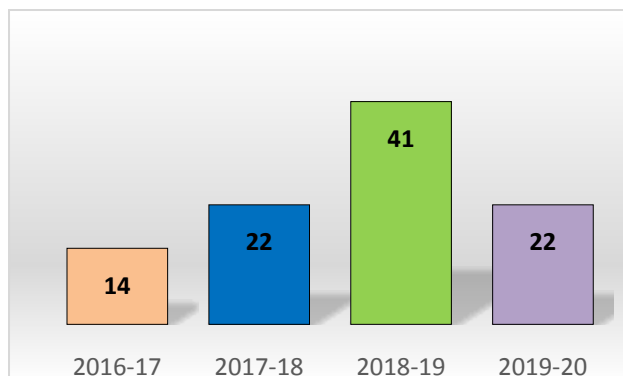
progress he has made. He can't wait for trampoline this afternoon. Thank you so much for making a big improvement to his life. (Professional)

48. Feedback form - I would 100% recommend Disabled Children's Service. The ladies are so helpful and it's amazing to know these services are around .I find going out with my son A makes me very anxious today I felt totally at ease and I could relax. Very happy mummy. (Client)
49. Feedback form -The family event is good, lots of variety, something for all the children irrespective of their needs. (Client)
50. Letter - Being able to access support/personal budget has been invaluable, it has allowed her to socialise and meet new people, make her own decisions, do age appropriate activities. Thank you to the Disabled Children Service. (Client)
51. Email - Needed to put into an email to you how much we, as a family have benefited from the input. At a point of which I was very low and tearful... she sat and truly listened. Straightaway she was making calls and making enquiries upon our behalf. She explained so much to us, things we never knew existed. She instigated meetings to pull all professionals together, arranged direct payments. Her confidence is improving, she is less anxious, it's become routine and most importantly planned. I know people are quick to send letters of complaint, but I believe letters to acknowledge how well something has worked should also be sent. Your department and especially her, she has had a big impact on our lives and although things are still very challenging, with her help and guidance we have been able to enjoy quality time with our son alone whilst our daughter is occupied. (Client)
52. Text - I just want to say thank you for everything you have done, (please don't say it's your job) I actually don't know what mess my family would be in if it wasn't for you. And I hand on heart mean that, can never thank you enough. I am keeping your number just in case. (Client)
53. Email - Thank you for everything it does mean a lot and I'm no longer feeling I'm in over my depth. (Client)
54. Email - Just wanted to let you know and the people who ran the last course, I really enjoyed the course and found it really useful in supporting my daughter. It has made a massive difference to our relationship and my daughter has responded really well to the positive praise. I would be happy to chat to new parents and to talk about her experiences. (Client)
55. Card - To everyone at Inglefield, we're so very grateful for all of your care and kindness. (Client)
56. Feedback form - I feel like the CAF has helped to bring us all together and help to deal with situations a lot better. By taking me out to talk about how I felt. She has also helped to build a stronger and better bonds with my dad. It helped me more because I went through a stage of self-harming. (Client)
57. Feedback form -It has had a massive impact on me, she has helped me hugely get out of a route, I was in a terrible place before she came to help and words cannot express my appreciation thank you so much. My children have received so much help since our CAF came into place I'm watching her how they have come out of their shells is fantastic I just want to say a massive thank you from me my family you have changed our lives. (Client)
58. Email - I attended the review for the family today .I wanted to let you know the carers made very positive comments about the support you give them in advice re behavioural approaches and guidance on their daily recordings. Well done. (Professional)
59. Feedback form -Mix of comments from event - Fabulous event for both children and adults. Lovely to mix with other families in similar situations and meet up with friends old and new.

The children had a great time staff were all really friendly and helpful. We are finding these events helpful it can be a struggle understanding our son's needs. We were able to get a lot of helpful information all while our son could happily play. Meeting families and hearing the story doesn't make us feel so alone in our journey. Super place, amazing staff. (Client)

60. Email - Give me that light at the end of the tunnel but I didn't think was there. Even though she hasn't changed it's given me the different outlook. You were at the end of the phone when I needed you, you were a great support to us. (Client)
61. Verbal - You were fantastic, you were like a breath of fresh air in the group ☺ (Client)
62. Email - On behalf of the whole of our team can I just say a huge "THANK YOU" for your unending, non-complaining, ever jovial support. Alongside 'the (not-just-admin) job,' your humour, kindness, sarcasm and care keeps us all going and more importantly keeps us sane – you never let us get too big for our boots, you keep us grounded, plus of course your vigilance making sure all our needs are met. You are massively appreciated by us all and we just want to make sure you know that. (Professional)
63. Verbal - He is a man of his word and we have worked with many people who say that they will do something and then they don't but he follows through on everything that he says and he "is very good at what he does". (Client)
64. Letter - My husband and I would like to express how impressed we are, with the support he has provided us with since he was assigned to us. He has not only given us the support that we needed during a very difficult time, but he has also tirelessly followed up lines of communication to varying agencies, when we have been unable to. He proved to be well organised, efficient and shared genuine compassion towards our family. He helped us to enable our son to accessing education we are truly grateful. He has provided us with an absolutely exceptional service and although we are happy to no longer require a family support worker we are sad to see his role end. We think that it is also pertinent to mention that he was able to build a relationship very quickly with our son, which is extremely significant when you consider that he has a history of selective mutism and social anxiety disorder. Although we thanked him at our last meeting we would like to formally thank him and ensure he is given the credit he deserves. (Client)
65. Email - Our time at this event was fantastic, it was very well organised with extremely helpful staff whom took my sons needs into thoughtful consideration. The farm was decorated absolutely beautifully, and most definitely gave us Christmas spirit. I'd like to thank all those involved for giving us this opportunity. It was fabulous, we won't forget it. (Client)
66. Email - Would you please pass on my thanks for organising the Christmas party on Thursday and for the very generous gifts. My son absolutely loved it, especially seeing Santa and is still asking can he go back and see the animals!! (Client)
67. Letter - She has helped us to move forward, I was able to put things in place, she couldn't do enough to help us and was always there when we needed her. His has moved forward with his behaviour and emotional trauma, he has turned a corner. I can't thank her enough for everything she has helped us with. (Client)

4. Education, Inclusion & Provision Department



4.1 Inclusion 0 - 25

68. Email - I would just like to thank you for the support you have provided for school and CIC. At yesterday's meeting there were some very negative comments about other LAs and obviously I could not agree as you are all so supportive and hardworking. The training opportunities you provide seem very unique to Halton. It is much appreciated. (Professional)
69. Email - Oh my god I'm so happy I could kiss you thank you so much for everything you have done for us! Xx (Client)
70. Email - I just wanted to let you both know that X supporting us with our EHCP reviews has been absolutely fantastic. I'm sure it isn't of a surprise to either of you, but her extensive knowledge of the young people in the borough is so impressive but also, she is a brilliant help. I think she fully understands the college's offer and a result of this the recent reviews have been both meaningful and purposeful. She has been going above and beyond to help us resolve issues and update the plans. I'm not sure if this is even appropriate but I wanted to make you both aware that I am so impressed by her and the support she is giving to us. (Client)
71. Email - I am just emailing to say a big Thank you for your support over the last 6 weeks ensuring we have the meetings for the EHCP learners leaving college. It makes a big difference to plan for the learners transition out of college and both of you have had valuable input to the young people's lives in Preparing for Adulthood. I really appreciate your time and support and knowledge in the meetings. Thanks again for your Support (Professional)
72. Card - I just wanted to say a really sincere and grateful thank you for the decision you made yesterday. I admire your amazing talent for remaining completely calm and unflappable in all situations. I'm not sure if anyone ever thanks you for what you do but today I definitely am. Thank you. (Client)

4.2 Policy, Provision & Performance

73. Email - Can I take this opportunity to thank her for her exemplary professionalism. (Professional)
74. Email - May I take this opportunity, on behalf of my family, to say a HUGE THANK YOU to each and every person involved in in my sons mental health care, which has taken an incredible length of time with difficulties along the way. E, you have been paramount in supporting his poor attendance and have given him the time to get well and recuperate. F and G thank you for your hard work in arranging and re-arranging your wonderful, kind and caring tutors, a huge thank you to you all, much appreciation. H, just WOW! You are an inspirational young man whose support has got (and kept) my son mentally well and able to

confidently, independently return to socialising, coping with daily challenges and giving him all your time and effort with your telephone calls and home visits when he (or I) could not manage visiting the Clinic. We will enjoy working with you for as long as you are able. The LA, a huge thanks for your never ending support and guidance. J, you're FAB! I'm pleased my son has matured and is now able to communicate with you in person and keep our meetings more succinct! I do apologise if I've embarrassed anyone by complimenting you - I've refrained actually - it's just I cannot express my family's thanks enough for everyone's support. (Client)

75. Email - A massive thank you to X for all his help, support and the contribution. He has been so professional in his commitment and preparation, he has accessed the relevant systems to provide up to date information regarding children and young people to best inform the discussion and influence their appropriate support plan to minimise delay. Crucially he has been consistent and reliable in his attendance for the meetings which is so very much appreciated. (Professional)
76. Email - Can I send my thanks to two heroes of HBC. They are both tireless in their efforts and so highly professional year on year. (Professional)
77. Email - Before I begin (!) you won't remember me or probably my son as you will deal with tons of students and will have done so over the years!!This is just a quick note in thanks for everything you did for him when you sourced his Games Design course in Warrington 2 years ago. He thoroughly enjoyed the course and got 2 x Distinctions and 1 Merit in his BTEC and goes to UCLan on Sunday studying Games Design, without your help, support and encouragement he would never have got to this stage. I seriously cannot thank you enough for everything you did, I can still remember his beaming face after your first interview with him, he was actually buzzing!!!! Something he'd wanted to do but never thought it possible. Once again, a humongous thanks!!!! (Client)
78. Email - I am writing to inform of how very thankful I am for all the support and heartfelt care that she has provided to my daughter over the past year. She has shown her great patience, kindness and a happy learning environment. My daughter has enjoyed every moment of working with her and her nurturing nature has allowed her to gain confidence and trust in an adult and a teacher. Over the months she developed a wonderful Bond of trust. I will always be grateful for all your support. (Client)
79. Email - I just wanted to let you know what an asset she is. She has been the best EWO we have had since I became Head ten years ago. Her determination and passion for her job is a great asset to Halton EWO. Sometimes it is good to just email with some positive feedback! I am even copying her into this email to say thank you – keep up the good work. (Professional)
80. Email - I just wanted to pass on some feedback – X and Y attended our coffee afternoon for parents and it was really successful. Parents were really pleased to be able to have informal chats about behaviour concerns at home X and Y were great with them – they even took contact details to send resources on to parents for them to use at home. So I Just wanted to say thank you to them and you. (Professional)

4.3 Education 0-19yrs

81. Card - It was a real honour to present the cup, there must have been so much work involved, the children were so excited and happy. A heartfelt thank you. (Client)
82. Email - I am delighted to share the news that our School Games Organiser has just been awarded the National Award for "Emerging School Games Organiser of the Year." We are thrilled for him, it is thoroughly deserved and also wonderful for Halton to be promoted nationally. I felt it was important to share the national recognition that he has received. (Professional)
83. Email - One of our Governors attended the training last night and was extremely impressed so she has asked for a copy. (Professional)
84. Flowers and Card- Thank you for simply listening. (Client)

4.4 Commissioning

85. Email - They feedback that of all the LAs that they have dealt with you have stood out in terms of how responsive and helpful you have been with them – they described you as a real credit to our placements team. Well done!! and thanks for your ongoing work. (Professional)
86. Email - I just wanted to say a big 'thank you' she has recently completed a particularly challenging piece of work for us. This has been completed in her usual efficient manner with considerable accuracy and attention to detail. Can you please pass on my sincere appreciation to her. Nothing is ever too much trouble for her, she has quickly become an integral part of our team and should be recognised for her hard work ethic. It's a pleasure to work with her. (Professional)
87. Email - I just wanted to let you know that we have recently took part in some Makkah training for the whole of the team I just wanted to let you know that you know how impressive the training was and what a difference it's made to the staff and the children of the group. We use it every single day for different kinds of communication and children at different levels I think other groups would benefit from a massively I would just like to thank you all in Halton for enabling us to access the training. The trainer was excellent and extremely supportive. (Professional)

4.5 Placements

88. Email - Just wanted to say thank you for all the work you have done over the last few days for 3 very challenging placement searches. None of them have been easy, with external pressure from other agencies like Ofsted, providers and health to do something, and creating a lot of pressure for everyone. Just shows the value of having a team of people doing this role and it is much appreciated. (Professional)
89. Email - Thank you, also for your speedy response. Wish I had more dealing with creditors like you. (Professional)

REPORT TO:	Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board
DATE:	23 November 2020
REPORTING OFFICER:	Strategic Director, Enterprise, Community & Resources
PORTFOLIO:	Children, Young People and Families
SUBJECT:	Performance Management Report for Quarter 2 2020/21
WARD(S)	Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider, and to raise any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for the second quarter period 01 July to 30 September 2020.
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2020/21 were agreed by Members and included in the Business Plan, for the various functional areas reporting to the Board as detailed below:
 - Education, Inclusion, Provision Services
 - Children and Families Services

The report details progress made against objectives and milestones and performance targets and provides information relating to key developments and emerging issues that have arisen during the period.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the Policy and Performance Board

- 1) Receive the first quarter's performance management report;**
- 2) Consider the progress and performance information and raise any questions or points for clarification; and**
- 3) Highlight any areas of interest and/or concern where further information is to be reported at a future meeting of the Board.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Departmental objectives provide a clear statement on what services are planning to achieve and to show how they contribute to the Council's strategic priorities. Such information is central to the Council's

performance management arrangements and the Policy and Performance Board has a key role in monitoring performance and strengthening accountability.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no other implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Departmental service objectives and performance measures, both local and national are linked to the delivery of the Council's priorities. The introduction of a Thematic Priority Based Report and the identification of business critical objectives/ milestones and performance indicators will further support organisational improvement.

6.2 Although some objectives link specifically to one priority area, the nature of the cross - cutting activities being reported, means that to a greater or lesser extent a contribution is made to one or more of the Council priorities.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTIONS 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Not applicable.

Children and Young People Priority Based PPB Report

Reporting Period: Quarter 2 2020/21

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides an overview of issues and progress that have occurred during the period of the report towards the priority of Children and Young People (CYP). The way in which traffic light symbols have been used to reflect progress is explained within Appendix 1 (section 8).
- 1.2 Please note initials have been provided to indicate which officer is responsible for the commentary to aid Members, as requested by the Children and Young People Policy and Performance Board. A key is provided in Appendix 1 (section 8).

2.0 Key Developments

2.1 **Social Worker Recruitment of Children in Care Team**

The Children in Care and Care Leavers team has successfully recruited to its social work and practice lead posts with one remaining post to be filled due to recent departure of a social worker. **TC**

2.2 **Personal Advisors Service**

The Personal Advisors (PA) service has concluded the restructure and now consists of five full time PA's and a Practice Lead.

Ashley Share Accommodation has now successfully been refurbished and ready for use. The commissioning team are currently working on a schedule to commission the running of the unit, but due to local Tier 3 restrictions this timescale will now be delayed.

The Divisional Manager has revised and amended a Supported Lodgings scheme for 16 year olds and over in response to sufficiency, this will be launched fully by November 2020, with an increased offer of accommodation for Halton Care Leavers. **TC**

2.3 **Social Work Recruitment and Retention in Child in Need Teams**

Halton have seen a turnover of staff within CIN Teams and the remained current issues is in terms of recruitment of permanent Social Workers. We are currently reliant of larger numbers of agency works. **TC**

2.4 **National Tutoring Programme**

It is likely that disadvantaged and vulnerable groups will have had their education disrupted most by the coronavirus outbreak and this is why the National Tutoring Programme is being introduced. The programme will comprise of at least 2 parts in the 2020-21 academic year, including:

- a 5 to 16 programme that will make high-quality tuition available to 5 to 16 year olds in state-funded primary and secondary schools
- A 16 to 19 fund for school sixth forms, colleges and all other 16 to 19 providers to provide small group tutoring activity for disadvantaged 16 to 19 students whose studies have been disrupted as a result of coronavirus.

The 5 to 16 programme will begin from the second half of the autumn term and increase through spring term 2021. Schools will be able to use their catch-up premium to cover the subsidised cost of the programme which will have 2 parts;

1 Tuition partners

Schools in all regions will be able to access subsidised tuition from an approved list of tuition partners.

Tutoring organisations will be invited to apply from September 2020 and the offer will be available to schools from 1st November 2020. These organisations will be given government support and funding to reach as many disadvantaged pupils as possible; the DfE will be working in partnership with the Education Endowment Foundation to deliver this part of the programme.

Tuition Partners will offer a range of approaches, including online, face-to-face and hybrid models, and small group and one-to-one tuition. Participating schools will be able to decide which Tuition Partner in their area to work with and which of their pupils will benefit the most from additional support.

2 Academic Mentors

Schools in the most disadvantaged areas will be supported to employ in-house academic mentors to provide support tailored to their school, but most Academic Mentors will support subject-specific work (both one-to-one and in small-groups), revision lessons, and provide additional support for those shielding or not in school. Some academic mentors will start working in schools from October half term, with the remainder starting in spring term 2021 and they will be part of their school's staff team.

Teach First will be supporting the recruitment, training and placement of the first cohort of academic mentors and their salaries will be subsidised by the government. **AMc**

2.5 Primary Assessment in 2020-21

Following the cancellation of all statutory primary assessment in 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, the DfE's intention is that the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) and Phonics Screening Check, together with KS1 and KS2 statutory assessments, will resume in 2020/21, following their usual timetable. The Multiplication Tables Check, that was due to be mandatory for all Y4 pupils for the first time in 2020, will also take place next summer. DfE has announced the following statutory assessment for Y2 pupils in the autumn term:

Phonics Screening Check – autumn 2020 check for all year 2 pupils

Cancellation of the phonics screening check in June 2020 meant that pupils going into Y2 in September did not take the check in Y1. Under the existing arrangements, all Y2 pupils would therefore have been required to take the statutory check in June 2021.

The Standards Testing Agency (STA)'s current proposal is that (subject to the necessary legislation being made, and for **2020-21 only**) schools will administer a past version of the check to Y2 pupils during the second half of the 2020 autumn term. Y2 pupils who meet the expected standard in the autumn check, will not be required to complete any further statutory assessments in phonics. Those Y2 pupils who do not meet the expected standard in the autumn check, will be expected to take the statutory check in June 2021.

Further guidance is expected to be published in September 2020.

In June, the DfE announced there would be £1 billion of funding to support children and young people to catch up following the disruption to their education, as a result of COVID-19. This funding consists of:

- a one-off universal £650 million catch-up premium for the 2020-21 academic year, available for all state-funded mainstream and special schools, and alternative provision, to ensure they have the support needed to help all pupils make up for lost teaching time;
- A £350 million National Tutoring Programme to provide additional, targeted support for those children and young people who need the most help. **AMc**

2.6 **Blended Learning**

As schools experience more and more students and staff required to self-isolate either due to illness or having been in direct contact with a positive COVID-19 case, there has been the need to develop carefully considered blended learning plans. These will ensure that students who are well enough to access education but unable to attend school are able to continue their studies at home whilst self-isolating. This could be through a range of home learning tasks, use of online platforms, e-learning or other method that the school are able to utilise to reach all students. These plans will need to ensure any disadvantaged or vulnerable students are also able to access materials, whilst considering how needs can be met if a high proportion of staff are either unwell or self-isolating. This is also an area that Ofsted will be asking school leaders if they were to receive an Ofsted visit during the autumn term, or if the school receive a formal inspection from January 2021 onwards. **AMc**

2.7 **Schools Admissions**

The Local Authority, as the admission authority for all community and voluntary controlled schools will, in accordance with the DfE School Admissions Code, be undertaking its annual consultation on the proposed admission arrangements for community and voluntary controlled schools and the coordinated primary and secondary schemes which will apply to all schools in Halton (community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided and academy) for the September 2022 intake. The consultation will be available to view on the Halton Borough Council website via the following link:

[School Admissions - September 2022 intake](#) commenced on 1st October 2020 and will close at 5pm on 12th November 2020.

Anyone wishing to comment on the proposed arrangements can do so by emailing Schooladmissions@halton.gov.uk. Responses received will be included for consideration in the report to the Council's Executive Board. Any response received after the consultation deadline will not be considered.

Own admission authority schools – voluntary aided and academy schools, must also ensure that they undertake the appropriate admissions consultation as set out in the School Admissions Code if they intend on amending their admission arrangements for the September 2022 intake. **AMc**

2.8 **Regional SEND Flexible Purchasing System (framework)**

For the past 18 months Halton have been working as a member of the steering group alongside colleagues from Cheshire East, Cheshire West, Warrington and Cumbria to formulate a regional process for making SEND Educational placement referrals to providers. This process has been a long standing aspiration for the region and will sit alongside the other successful regional processes developed for Residential placement, Fostering placements and Leaving Care placements.

The work has involved detailed service specification development, costing breakdown development taking account of the latest research and practice from across the UK

The purpose is to enable increased consistency of referrals, build, maintain and develop relationships with the provider sector, enable transparent, consistent costs for the regions LAs as well as increasing choice of types of provision. Overtime this will also mean that the local market is more in line to meet local needs

The developments to date have Parent/Carer forum reps, three provider engagement events, links with regional CCG colleagues and recently virtual sub regionally based explanation events which Halton have been involved with

All 23 North West authorities are signed up to the framework – the majority from the go live date, some from the 6 months point

Key Features:-

- Follows SEND COP and legislation
- Enable LAs to find placements from birth to 25 in line with SEND legislation at
- Independent and non-maintained special schools and special post-16 institutions

Initially 3 types of placements:-

- Day placements
- Residential 38 weeks
- Residential 52 weeks
- Expect to add more Lots over time

Sourcing Placements

Information to support referrals will be collected at the application stage of the framework, will use info on referral spreadsheet to filter ensuring that schools receive appropriate referrals from commissioners.

LA will retain decision making processes, FPS will not replace this

The offers of potential placements from providers will then be evaluated in terms of meeting the individual child's specific needs

Further phases of development:-

- Want to work with providers and commissioners to meet the needs of learners and develop the framework further
- Innovation – different types of services to meet children's Educational support needs
- Bring in more types of providers – will broaden the scope of the contract and expect general providers and FE to come on in the future
- Will all be informed by data and evidence, collate information how many places will be sourced and what these look like, to have conversations about outcomes and service quality.

Timeline

1. Cheshire East publish tender opportunity 4th November 2020
2. Return tenders 14th December 2020
3. Evaluate tenders begin 8th January 2020
4. Contract to commence 5th Feb 2021 **AMc**

2.9 OFSTED Update

At the beginning of July 2020, HMCI Amanda Spielman explained Ofsted's plans for the autumn term.

Routine inspections will remain suspended for the term, with a plan to resume in January. Instead, during the autumn term, Ofsted will be carrying out 'visits' to schools and colleges, not inspections. These visits will look at how schools and colleges are getting pupils back up to speed after so long at home. The intention is to help them through collaborative conversations, without passing judgement.

Visits will be used to listen to school leaders' experiences and plans, and to provide constructive challenge; they will not be graded. Ofsted will publish the outcomes of their discussions with leaders in a short letter so that parents can understand what steps are being taken to help children back into full-time education. Ofsted will use what is learned from their visits to report on the picture across England. Visits will be piloted with volunteer

schools and colleges from September, with the full programme starting from October. Ofsted will be having further conversations with unions and others about how the visits will operate and will publish more details as appropriate. This is the link to the relevant section of Ofsted's website so that you can access updates when they are published:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/ofsteds-autumn-2020-plans> **AMc**

3.0 Emerging Issues

3.1 Education Welfare Service

Due to the COVID-19 lockdown during the end of the Spring Term and throughout the Summer Term, there was an impact upon children, families and schools, and as a result, the workload of the Education Welfare Service has significantly increased as parents have had concerns about sending their children back into school as schools fully re-opened in September. Schools have also sought a great deal of advice and guidance from the service. Whilst this appears to be settling, it is likely that there will continue to be some attendance issues for a small number of pupils during this time, and the Education Welfare Service will continue to work with and support parents and schools during this time. **AMc**

3.2 Catch-Up Premium Funding

The catch-up premium funding for each school will be calculated on a per pupil basis, providing each mainstream school with a total of £80 for each pupil in year's reception through to 11.

This means a typical primary school of 200 pupils will receive £16,000 while a typical secondary school of 1,000 pupils will receive £80,000. Special, Alternative Provision and hospital schools will be provided with £240 for each place for the 2020 to 2021 academic year. Payments will be made in three tranches, the first of which will be in the autumn term, the second in early spring 2021 and the third during the summer term 2021.

School leaders are able to use this funding in the way they think best for their pupils/students and school circumstances but it should be for specific activities to support their pupils to catch up for lost teaching over the previous months. There is an expectation that they will take note of the government's guidance available on the link below:

[Curriculum expectations for the next academic year.](#) **AMc**

3.3 Early Years Reforms and Early Adopter Schools

On 1st July 2020, the DfE published its response to the Early Years Reforms Consultation and confirmed a number of changes to the Educational Programmes, the assessment and moderation process for EYFSP and a change to the safeguarding and welfare requirements to promote good oral health.

These reforms will become statutory in September 2021 but earlier this year, before COVID-19, schools were given the opportunity to sign up to be one of the Early Adopter Schools implementing the changes from September 2020. Schools that agreed at the time to be an early adopter have since been contacted to confirm or cancel their participation.

Being an early adopter school of the EYFS reforms is not connected to being a participant in the Reception Baseline Assessment Early Adopter year. Schools can be both, either or neither.

The new EYFS Early Adopter statutory framework and EYFSP Handbook for the Early Adopter Schools were published on 1st July; below are links to the two documents:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-adopter-schools-eyfs-framework>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-adopter-schools-eyfs-profile-handbook>

The current EYFS Statutory Framework remains in force until September 2021 for everyone other than early adopters and the 2021 EYFS Profile Handbook will be published later in the year. **AMc**

3.4 **Halton Behaviour Support Service**

Following the school closures for Covid-19 the Behaviour Support Service have provided advice to all schools about the need to amend and publish addenda to their behaviour policy to give specific guidance to members of the school community about how behaviours will be managed in a time of social-distancing. Schools were asked to pay particular attention to how they would handle incidents requiring physical intervention and additional advice was offered in this area.

Schools have also been provided with advice from both the Behaviour Support Service and the Educational Psychology Service about how to support children and young people with additional anxiety following the prolonged period of school closures. Schools are expected to implement their behaviour policy with an understanding that some behaviours are demonstrably linked to anxiety and may need to be explored further and support offered.

AMc

4.0 Risk Control Measures

- 4.1 Risk control forms an integral part of the Council's business planning and performance monitoring arrangements. As such, directorate risk registers were updated in tandem with the development of the 2020/21 business plan.

5.0 Progress against high priority equality actions

- 5.2 Equality issues continue to form a routine element of the Council's business planning and operational decision-making processes. Additionally the Council must have evidence to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which came into force April 2011.


The council's latest annual progress report in relation to achievement of its equality objectives is published on the Council's website

<http://www4.halton.gov.uk/Pages/councildemocracy/Equality-and-Diversity.aspx>

6.0 Performance Overview

The following information provides a synopsis of progress for both milestones and performance indicators across the key business areas that have been identified by the Directorate. It should be noted that given the significant and unrelenting downward financial pressures faced by the Council there is a requirement for Departments to make continuous in-year adjustments to the allocation of resources in order to ensure that the Council maintains a balanced budget. Whilst every effort continues to be made to minimise any negative impact of such arrangements upon service delivery they may inevitably result in a delay in the delivery of some of the objectives and targets contained within this report.

Objective: Improve outcomes for children and young people through effective multi-agency early intervention (PED01)

Ref	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED01 01	Increase the number of children with an early help assessment (measured as those subject to CAF, pre-CAF or specific target interventions in Children's Centres at any point in the year) (financial year cumulative to end of quarter)	421 open 1047 activity 290 pre CAF	N/A	415 open 590 Activity 131 pre CAF 01/04/20 to 04/09/20		N/A

Supporting Commentary: Val Armor

The number of early help assessments continues to rise despite the COVID-19 restrictions. Whilst new referrals have been slower in terms of priority open cases have needed extra support and intervention during these unprecedented times. The pre CAF is continuing to be used as part of the initial assessment. A lot of work has taken place within early help on the transition from CAF to multi agency plan (MAP) this will commence in September 2020 but will be a slow transition through internal staff in the first instance and then external colleagues. Workshops continue to help and support external staff with taking the lead on CAF as a high percentage are still led by the local authority.

Early help has continued throughout the lockdown and creative ways have successfully been explored and implemented to support families from a virtual platform.

All cases open to early help have completed case summaries and a COVID-19 risk assessment in place to assess the needs of individual families and respond to them as appropriate.

PED01 02	Maintain overall attendance at schools: Primary –Pri PRU – PRU Secondary – Sec Special – Spec Total	To follow	95%	Refer comment	N/A	N/A
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Supporting Commentary: Debbie Houghton

The Spring term 2020 was significantly affected by COVID-19 lockdown and finished early. In the summer term only vulnerable children attended. Further information will be provided in Q3 2020/21.

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED01a	Work with schools to maintain the level of attendance at Primary and Secondary Schools. Martin West / Debbie Houghton (March 2021)	Refer comment

Supporting commentary: Martin West / Debbie Houghton

School attendance has been significantly impacted upon for academic year 2019/20 due to COVID-19. The last available data on school attendance is Autumn 2019. Schools closed in March 20 due a national lockdown, they remained open to vulnerable pupils in the Summer 2020 and have now fully re-opened to all pupils in September 2020. The DfE will not be collecting attendance data from school census until Jan 2021 so spring and Summer 2020 will not be collected by DfE and next data release is Autumn 2020 which will be released in May 2021.

PED01b	As a result of the review of Early Help Services, plan and implement transformation model. Val Armor (March 2021)	
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Supporting commentary: Val Armor

Work is ongoing in the transition from Common Assessment Framework (CAF) to Multi Agency Plan (MAP) Halton's new early help assessment. Multi agency workshops have been held and consultations have taken place to change the paperwork to a more child and family friendly version. This will be used for internal staff from September 2020









There has already been a reduction in some of the universal provision offered in each children centre ward to offer savings. The children centres are working closely with other community projects to deliver joint working in order to produce efficiency. The centres have been open during lockdown for staff purposes but limited groups have taken place. This has led to two Children's Centres not being used during this time. This will be reviewed going forward on how to make best use of these facilities








The early intervention board has been reviewed and dismantled in order for a more targeted approach in looking at early help services the first six months will look changes to the early help assessment and to establish an operational parenting pathway. This process has been delayed due to COVID-19.



Specialist drug and alcohol youth service now sits under early help from August 2020 this will be embedded into the early help model to support families affected from substance misuse, more data will be available next quarter

PED01c	Workforce development, including targeted training, to be further developed and implemented Val Armor (March 2021)	
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Val Armor</i></p> <p>The borough adopted the Solihull approach within the children's workforce, to date there have been over 400 staff from Social Care, Early Help, Fostering, Education, Health and private and voluntary sectors have been trained. There has been no training since March 2020 due to COVID-19 however we are looking into an online training package.</p> <p>Level 4 in integrated children and young peoples practice has been secured through the apprenticeship levy and will has now started. Staff from Social Care, Early Help and schools will be trained.</p> <p>Targeted training on parental conflict due to be rolled out from March 2020 has been delayed but forma part of the parenting operational group targets.</p> <p>Early intervention staff have started systemic training, play therapy and nurture parenting, which will all contribute to improving outcomes or children and families.</p>		





Objective: Keeping Children and Young People safe by improving practice (PED02)

Ref:	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED02 01	Monitor the rate of referrals to Children's Social Care per 10000 0-18 year olds (Forecast annualised rate at end of financial year)	422	500 (full year)	177 01/04/20 to 04/09/20	N/A	
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Angela Povey</i></p> <p>The referrals to social care have increased due to COVID-19 and are likely to continue to increase until the end of the financial year. Halton are currently in local Tier 3 lockdown following a full national lockdown. This has increased professional anxiety for children and young people, who are not able to access and attend universal services. Halton have improved the quality of contacts and referrals by introducing an Assessment Toolkit. The Multi-Agency Contact challenge meetings continue to review and monitor the responses and decision making.</p>						
PED02 02	Monitor the rate of children in need per 10000 0-18 year olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	362	380	180	N/A	
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Angela Povey</i></p> <p>The number of children in need has continued to increased, the Ofsted Inspection February 2020 identified plans/cases were subject to drift and delay. A temporary Duty and Assessment Team has been formulated to support the progression of cases and plans. The increase is linked to surge of new cases coming in as a result of COVID-19.</p>						
PED02 03	Monitor the rate of children subject to a child protection plan per 10000 0-18 year olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	54	45	68		
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Angela Povey</i></p> <p>There is an increase of children subject to CP Plans, this is linked to new cases coming in, and other cases not progressing. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions professional anxiety has prevented cases stepping down and interventions to reduce the level of risk not being available. Our numbers appear to have more recently stabilised, however, increased activity it is not unusual following an Ofsted Inspection.</p>						
PED02 04	Monitor the rate of children in care per 10000 0-18 year olds (snapshot at end of quarter)	99	90	104		
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Liz Davenport</i></p> <p>Halton's Children in Care numbers have increased to 296. The ability to progress with discharges of Care Orders was significantly delayed due to capacity and demand on the Departments Legal service. This was escalated by the DM and additional staffing resource allocated to progress with discharge applications to court.</p> <p>Children entering care is only at the approval of the Divisional Manager (DM) and cases are routinely tracked at monthly legal gateway meetings chaired currently by Divisional Manager</p>						
PED02 05	Reduce the number of children and young people who enter the care system (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	95	68	35 01/04/20 to 04/09/20		

Ref:	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Angela Povey</i></p> <p>The Ofsted Inspection February 2020 identified children and young people had been subject to neglect for too long, we had a number of CP Plans that had exceeded two years without a reduction of risk. These legacy cases have now appropriately progressed into care proceedings, this has therefore increased our child in care population. There is an improvement in the timely recognition of risk, therefore we are likely to see a further increase until the legacy cases have progressed and dealt with at the correct level. During COVID-19 restrictions and lockdown, there was an increase of very young children sustaining significant none accidental injuries, therefore this has also increased our CIC population.</p>						
PED02 06	Reduce the average caseload in CIN Teams (snapshot end of quarter)	21	18	20 (04/09/20)		
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Angela Povey</i></p> <p>There has been specific action taken as detailed above with regards to the introduction of the Duty and Assessment Team. This has enabled the CIN Teams to focus on CIN cases in order to progress plans and appropriately reduce the level of need and progress cases to Early Help where appropriate.</p>						
PED02 07	Increase the proportion of missing incidents where a return interview is completed (financial year, cumulative to end of quarter)	72%	85%	78% 01/04/20 to 04/09/20		
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Clare Hunt</i></p> <p>For this time period, there have been 154 return interviews completed with 81 young people. 78% of young people completed a return interview and 79% were completed within 72 hours. Declines for return interviews Declines have decreased and for August by more than half; nine declines down from 21 in July 2020, bringing the overall percentage down from 33% in July 2020 to 19% in August. This corresponds with the increase of return interviews completed during August and the overall reduction in incidents reported.</p>						
PED02 08	Reduce the number of children who repeatedly run away in Halton (in last 12 months, snapshot end of quarter)	114	N/A	14 01/04/20 to 04/09/20		N/A
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Angela Povey; Liz Davenport; Clare Hunt</i></p> <p>For this reporting period, there has been a total of 296 notifications, there have been 14 CYP with repeat missing incidents totalling 180 missing incidents produced. The commissioned service has supported the repeat cohort to reduce missing episodes this quarter through direct work, taking a different approach by working jointly on cases, escalating concerns and issues including issues with placement and parent boundaries.</p> <p>There are a small number of Children in Care who are persistent in missing from Care, these are tracked daily and all protocol and procedures followed. We have successfully managed to move those persistent Children in Care who are persistent in missing from Care to alternative placements with two young people currently in secure accommodation.</p>						
PED02 09	Reduce the number of children who go missing in the year (number of children recorded as missing in last 12 months, snapshot end of quarter)	265	N/A	Refer comment	N/A	N/A
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Angela Povey; Liz Davenport; Clare Hunt</i></p> <p>Due to COVID-19 there has been a reduction in missing incidents for the period April to June 2020, this was down by 59 compared to same period last year. Average age of missing young people's age 14 years with boundaries, to see family and peer pressure as significant reasons for missing. Within this cohort there have been more females during this period which are Halton Children in Care.</p>						
PED02 10	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (snapshot end of quarter)	26	20	12 (04/09/20)		
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Angela Povey</i></p> <p>High risk cases continue to be are discussed at the operational multi-agency partnership meetings, these meetings are currently held virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. A revised pan-Cheshire exploitation strategy is nearing agreement, which merges the previous separate policies a clearer pathway and revised tool.</p>						
PED02 11	Record the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Criminal Exploitation (snapshot end of quarter)	N/A	12	22 (04/09/20)	N/A	N/A
<p><i>Supporting commentary: Angela Povey</i></p> <p>High risk cases continue to be are discussed at the operational multi-agency partnership meetings, these meetings are currently held virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. A revised pan-Cheshire exploitation strategy is nearing agreement, which merges the previous separate policies a clearer pathway and revised tool.</p>						

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED02a	Embed a systemic model of social work practice across the whole service; social workers, managers and senior leaders. Tracey Coffey (March 2021)	
<i>Supporting commentary:</i> This is now underway		
PED02b	Review and update Workforce Strategy in line with the Knowledge and Skills framework and the Professional Capabilities Framework. Developing the competencies, skills and knowledge of the workforce making them motivated, stable and ambitious will improve the outcomes for families and keep them at the heart of everything we do. (Tracey Coffey) March 2021	
<i>Supporting commentary:</i> This is underway but with a delay as efforts have focused on ensuring that the service managed the demands and impact arising from COVID-19; a new model of annual development reviews linked to the KSS will be implemented this autumn and inform the training and workforce strategy.		
PED02c	With a focus on multi-agency risk assessment, reduce caseloads to a sustainable and manageable level to give workers capacity to deliver quality and focussed interventions to improve outcomes for vulnerable children. Angela Povey (March 2021)	
<i>Supporting commentary:</i> We have formulated and implemented a temporary Duty and Assessment Team which have been operational since 10.08.2020. This will enable the CIN Teams to focus on multi-agency risk assessments. This will also address drift and delay of cases and ensure plans progress, ultimately reducing caseloads to a sustainable and management level to give workers capacity to deliver quality and focused interventions to improve outcomes for vulnerable children. However, we are anticipating a further surge of referrals as a result of the impact of COVID-19 and a consequence of restrictions and lockdown.		
PED02d	Monitor demand for statutory services for children and young people Angela Povey (March 2021)	
<i>Supporting commentary:</i> The demand for statutory services will continue to be monitored and consideration given to capacity due to the impact of COVID-19 all LA's are predicting a surge of referrals as a consequence and result of restrictions of lockdown.		

Objective: Improve outcomes for Children in Care and Care Leavers (PED03)

Ref:	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED03 01	Reduce the number of children who are placed in residential care (snapshot at end of quarter)	31	20	37 (04/09/20)		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Liz Davenport</i> The residential to foster care placement project has been revised in terms of the targeted cohort of CIC and continues to make progress, but due to C19 and Local Tier 3 restrictions progressing this will now prove difficult although the meeting still meets. This is tracked through the Permanency Leadership board.						
PED03 02	Reduce the number of children who are placed in independent fostering agencies (snapshot at end of quarter)	61	35	55 (04/09/20)		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Liz Davenport</i> Due to increase in our fostering recruitment there are more CIC placed local than in previous years, it remains an active targeted work stream to continue to reduce the number of CIC placed with Independent Fostering Agencies'.						
PED03 03	Increase the percentage of children in care making progress against their expected outcomes (based on termly Personal Education Plan (PEP) outcomes of children making the expected rate of progress in line with their peers with the same prior attainment across reading, writing and maths)	N/A	N/A	Refer comment	N/A	N/A

Supporting Commentary: Sharon Williams

During the national lockdown period schools operated as child care facilities for children of key workers and those classed as vulnerable. Therefore, pupils did not access any formal learning from 23rd march 2020. As a result many children in care have fallen even further behind their peers, making achieving their expected progress very challenging. Since the return in September 2020 there has continued to be disruption to children's learning due to the ongoing COVID-19 situations and the increases in infection rates. This has meant that more and more children are now having to access their learning through a blended approach of some face to face teaching and remote activities. For children in care this can be a detrimental approach as they require higher levels of support to sustain their engagement and need timely feedback on tasks.



As there was no formal learning taking place during the Spring and Summer term 2020, progress was not measured in schools. The PEP document was amended to reflect the change to home learning and a focus on SEMH. During the Autumn 2020, schools are focussing on baselining pupils and following a catch up programme. The Virtual School is asking for all baseline data to be included in the Autumn PEP so that progress can be measured throughout the rest of the year.

PED03 04	Increase the percentage of children in care with 95% or above attendance (attendance is cumulative across an academic year – data is based on the term that the QMR falls within)	N/A	N/A	Refer comment	N/A	N/A
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Supporting Commentary: Sharon Williams

During the lockdown period, 41% of children in care attended their education provision. Daily attendance checks were undertaken by the Virtual School. All children in care had a risk assessment undertaken as to whether it was appropriate for the child to be in school and this was regularly reviewed by schools, the Virtual School and Social Workers. Where there were concerns raised in regards to accessing education these were identified early and the Virtual School addressed these with both schools and carers to try to ensure that the child returned to school in accordance with the risk assessment. Where this was not possible the Virtual School ensured that appropriate support was put in place to engage the child in remote learning activities.

72.4% is the average percentage attendance for the Autumn 2020 term across both phases. This represents a decrease across both phases. Of the children in care currently under 95% attendance 22% have had periods of absence due to self-isolation or COVID-19 related issues. The Virtual School link Education Welfare Officer continues to ensure that any absence of more than three days is addressed in a timely manner and steps are taken to tackle the attendance concerns raised.



PED03 05	Maintain the percentage of Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (snapshot at end of quarter)	92%	95%	94% (04/09/20)		
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Supporting Commentary: Sam Murtagh/Liz Davenport

The Care Leavers accommodation group continues to meet. Further work has been started with a not for profit organisation who deliver services in the Midlands – they are currently purchasing a property in Halton.

A further Registered Social Landlord locally has expressed interested in offering properties for Care Leavers pre age 18 with the local authority acting as guarantor.

Care Leavers accommodation group set up and Chaired by Divisional Manager for Children in Care and Care Leavers Team now progressing and monitoring the allocation of suitable housing with key partners. This now includes working together with more Registered Social Landlord (RSL), with more joining the regular Care Leavers accommodation group Referrals for accommodation continue to be collated via the Halton Placements team.

PED03 06	Increase the percentage of Care Leavers in Education, Employment or Training (snapshot at end of quarter)	68%	65%	55% (04/09/20)		
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Supporting Commentary: Liz Davenport



The 14-19 workers have a targeted cohort of Care Leavers they are working with which is reviewed by the DM and Virtual Headteacher on a monthly basis.

PED03 07	Benchmarking year – Percentage of CIC Residential and Leaving Care placements that have received a Quality Assurance Visit from the Placements Team within the previous 12 months (cumulative from April to end of quarter)	N/A	N/A	Residential 47% Leaving Care 60%	N/A	N/A
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Supporting Commentary: Sam Murtagh

The delivery of on-site quality assurance visits has been significantly impacted by COVID-19 lockdown, however throughout this period urgent visits have continued to take place. More recently following appropriate risk assessments a virtual pre visit has been implemented following providers submitting self-assessment documents, this has then been followed up by a virtual visit prior to a time-limited on site visit – adhering to all the required COVID-19 guidance and law.

This % figure is expected to increase in the coming reporting periods. There has also been an 11.5% rise in Residential placements from the outset of COVID-19.

PED03 08	Report on the budget spent on independent and out of borough placements for Children in Care (Forecast end of year) (Liz Davenport/Sam Murtagh)	9,672,589	N/A	Projected Residential £8,820,599 IFA £2,373,796 Total £11,194,396		
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Supporting Commentary: Liz Davenport/Sam Murtagh

There has been an 11.5% increase in the number of Residential placements currently commissioning since the onset of COVID-19. All associated COVID-19 costs relating to inability for young people to move into other types of placements due to lockdown directives have been apportioned elsewhere. Of note, this year we also had three young people placed into secure placements, these have all been for significant periods of time.

Health have been asked to undertake Continuing Health Care Assessments for five young people with a view to some jointly funded placements and recently Educational costs associated with a number of Residential placements have been agreed to be reallocated to Direct Schools Grant.

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED03a	Review the process for children entering and exiting care to ensure there is a sufficient range and choice of provision to meet their needs. Tracey Coffey (March 2021)	

Supporting Commentary: Tracey Coffey

PED03b	Review and quality assure the commissioning of services for Children in Care and Care Leavers to ensure that they meet the needs of Halton's population and inform future commissioning decisions. Sam Murtagh (March 2021)	
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Supporting Commentary: Sam Murtagh

Quality assurance of currently accessed placements is ongoing as highlighted in PED03 07. A procurement risk assessment has been submitted to commission a Leaving Care support service to deliver into an existing council owned site in Runcorn which will operate as a four bed Leaving Care group living, the same provider will also deliver some floating support to young people in their own accommodation – either Registered Social Landlords property or sourced from the private sector. The timescale for this tender has been impacted by COVID-19 due to provider's capacity to engage with a pre tendering engagement exercise and the practicalities of hosting on site visits. It is planned this will be in place early in 2021.



PED03c	Through the quality assurance of Personal Education Plans (PEP), identify areas of need and support to improve outcomes for individual Children in Care. Sharon Williams (March 2021)	Refer comment
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Supporting Commentary: Sharon Williams

During the lockdown period the PEP document was amended to reflect the fact that there was no formal learning taking place in schools, that the majority of children were accessing remote learning activities in accordance with a risk assessment, and also placed a higher emphasis on monitoring social emotional mental health (SEM) issues and their impact. The PEP also focused on preparing children to return to school in September 2020.


Autumn 2020 PEPs are focussing on supporting children in care to catch up particularly in English and Maths and in addressing any social and emotional concerns. Pupil Premium Plus requests are reflecting this. PEP Coordinators have arranged meetings with Educational Psychologists and schools during the first half term to provide strategies to support children transitioning back to school and also to ensure that appropriate academic support is tailored to the child's individual needs. These meetings have also highlighted any children that may require further assessments through the Education Partnership Team. Progress Improvement clinics have also provided an opportunity to discuss children who the Virtual School feel may need additional support through other agencies.

Objective: Improve the offer for children and young people with disabilities and those with Special Educational Needs (PED04)

Ref:	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED04 01	Increase the percentage of EHCP assessments completed within 20 weeks (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	49%	75%	46.%		

Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach/ Eileen Picton

The 20 week success rate is improving however it is at slower rate than we would like or anticipated this is due to reduced capacity in the team.

PED04 02	Reduce the number of incidents of fixed term exclusion (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	707	500	47	Refer comment	Refer comment																				
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Vanessa Nice / Sharon Williams</i></p> <p>Due to the national lockdown there has been reduced data for Fixed Term Exclusions after 23rd March 2020 as a result of schools closing and only operating as child care facilities for vulnerable children and the children of key workers. There were 2 Fixed Term Exclusions and no Permanent Exclusions in Summer 2020.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>September 2020</th> <th>September 2019</th> <th>Comment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>45</td> <td>26</td> <td>→</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Primary</td> <td>9</td> <td>9</td> <td>→</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Secondary</td> <td>36</td> <td>17</td> <td>↑ of 19</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of CYP</td> <td>40</td> <td>23</td> <td>↑ of 17</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Some of the increase in Fixed Term Exclusions can be accounted for by increased anxieties in schools about adherence to the government guidelines around Covid and we have seen several Fixed Term Exclusions in the 'public health' exclusion category that was introduced in September 2020. For example, three secondary Fixed Term Exclusions have been given for 'Wilful and repeated transgression of protective measures in place to protect public health.' In September 2020, the DfE updated the exclusion categories for the 2020-2021 academic year. This has been reflected in the notification form and has been communicated to all schools.</p>							Year	September 2020	September 2019	Comment	Total	45	26	→	Primary	9	9	→	Secondary	36	17	↑ of 19	Number of CYP	40	23	↑ of 17
Year	September 2020	September 2019	Comment																							
Total	45	26	→																							
Primary	9	9	→																							
Secondary	36	17	↑ of 19																							
Number of CYP	40	23	↑ of 17																							
PED04 03	Reduce the number of children subject to fixed term exclusions (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	349	350	42	Refer comment	Refer comment																				
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Vanessa Nice / Sharon Williams</i></p> <p>There were 2 incidents of Fixed Term Exclusions in Summer 2020, each incident was a different child. In September 2020, the number of children subject to an FTE has increased from 23 in September 2019 to 40 in September 2020.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>September 2020</th> <th>September 2019</th> <th>Comment</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Number of CYP</td> <td>40</td> <td>23</td> <td>↑ of 17</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of Primary CYP</td> <td>9</td> <td>8</td> <td>↑ of 1</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Number of Secondary CYP</td> <td>31</td> <td>15</td> <td>↑ of 16</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>This can be accounted for due to the increased anxiety being experienced by children (as reported in the State of the Nation Report September 2020) and increase staff anxiety and inflexibility due to the strict Covid guidance and the need to maintain 'bubbles'.</p>							Year	September 2020	September 2019	Comment	Number of CYP	40	23	↑ of 17	Number of Primary CYP	9	8	↑ of 1	Number of Secondary CYP	31	15	↑ of 16				
Year	September 2020	September 2019	Comment																							
Number of CYP	40	23	↑ of 17																							
Number of Primary CYP	9	8	↑ of 1																							
Number of Secondary CYP	31	15	↑ of 16																							
PED04 04	Reduce the number of children subject to a permanent exclusion (academic year cumulative to end of quarter)	21	30	3	Refer comment	Refer comment																				
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Vanessa Nice / Sharon Williams</i></p> <p>From March 2020, there were no permanent exclusions until the end of the academic year. In September 2020 there have been three permanent exclusions, one primary child and two secondary children (one incident in one school). This compares to two permanent exclusions in September 2019 (both secondary).</p>																										
PED04 05	Report on the proportion of children subject to EHCP placed in independent and out of borough provisions (snapshot end of quarter) – long term target is to reduce	N/A	N/A	96	N/A	N/A																				
<p><i>Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach Eileen Picton</i></p> <p>There has been an increase in out of borough provision mainly these are CYP with Social Emotional Mental Health needs where we do not have appropriate provision within Halton.</p>																										
PED04 06	Report on the budget spent on independent and out of borough (OOB) provision for SEND (Forecast end of year)	N/A	£250000 reduction	ISS/NMSS OOB Schools Projected £3,986,274 Overspend of £813,824	N/A																					

Supporting Commentary: Sam Murtagh

The number of young people referred for an OOB SEN school placement with the Independent / Non Maintained sector has continued to rise – since April 2020 41 requests have been made with 33 being placed (the remainder were able to be supported elsewhere in the borough). Work has begun to outline a SEND Sufficiency report – this involves reviewing all current available placements in borough including Mainstream, Resource bases and Special Schools whilst at the same time being clear about likely future needs both in terms of number of pupils and types of needs. Due to the urgency this will be a time limited focussed activity to then begin reshaping and changing local provision with the assistance of some commissioned support services to assist pupils being maintaining in mainstream settings, possibly with some additional focussed support, re-categorising the Resource bases and enhancing the types of offer. Recently a new SEMH Re-integration service level agreement has been implemented with The Bridge School in Halton, this will enable pupils to return to their home mainstream school.

PED04 07	Increase the percentage of children subject to EHCP placed in mainstream provision (snapshot end of quarter)	44%	30%	44%		
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Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach Eileen Picton

There are 776 pupils from Reception to Y11 with an EHCP. Of these, 341 are in mainstream settings.

PED04 08	Monitor the percentage of Special Schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	100%	100%	Refer comment	N/A	N/A
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Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell

The OFSTED inspection regime has been suspended due to COVID-19

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED04a	Develop and Implement the Social Emotional and Mental Health Strategy (SEMH) by March 2021. Impact to be monitored through the action plan. (Adrian Leach)	

Supporting Commentary: Adrian Leach

The proposed SEMH Strategy is embedded within the broader revision of Halton's SEND Strategy which is going for consultation subject to approval at end of 2020. Monitoring and progress and delivery of the SEND strategy is undertaken by the SEND strategic partnership.

PED04b	Review the current framework of support for children and young people with disabilities, including short breaks provision and direct payments (March 2021) with all recommissions co-produced with parents and young people. (Sam Murtagh/ Val Armor)	
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Supporting Commentary:

The direct payments component has been delayed due to COVID-19 as the priority has been to maintaining commissioned service support to the most vulnerable young people, particularly during the National lockdown. The current commissioned providers have worked extremely hard to offer innovative ways of supporting young people with disabilities and their families throughout, zoom calls, online design activities, social activities, shopping delivery etc. – some service continued to offer face to face services to our most vulnerable young people. All short breaks services have been commissioned in a co-produced manner involving parents and young people, an example of this has been the setting up of swimming lessons for young people with disabilities – this came from a conversation with a number of parents when we were evaluating the most recent tenders for short breaks.

All commissioned short breaks now in place with regular performance reports being submitted and interrogated.

PED04c	Improve the quality of assessment criteria for Education Health and Care Plans. (Adrian Leach)	
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Supporting Commentary

A multi-agency task and finish group has been reviewing and revising the local areas graduated response. The graduated response sets out clearly for schools families and professionals the expectations about how children and young people with SEND should be supported prior to needing and EHCP. The expectations around levels of need requiring an EHCP.





PED04d	Quality assure all provision currently being utilised to ensure that provision meets the needs of our children and young people (Sam Murtagh)	
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Supporting Commentary: Sam Murtagh




A process, documentation and links to the key people have all been established. Prior to COVID-19 visits had begun however this was short lived due to the National lockdown. Following appropriate risk assessments visits are now taking place both virtually and on site in a time limited manner. We now have a visit prioritisation process that takes account of OFSTED inspection grading, any grumbles raised from SEN colleagues / families regarding the provision, number of pupils placed and cost. As part of Liverpool City Region commissioning a specific special educational needs group has been established. This will enable sharing of the workload as we will all use similar self-assessments with the providers and will also enable some development work for officers involved.

PED04e	Review in borough specialist provision and revise to meet the needs of Halton's children and young people (Ann McIntyre)	
<i>Supporting Commentary:</i> We are now finalising our plan to provide Flexible responsive provision that would meet local needs and reduce dependency on out of borough provision		









Objective: Raise achievement across Early Years and all Key Stages, and diminish the difference between vulnerable groups and their peers (PED05)

Ref:	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED05 01	Ensure all eligible children for the vulnerable 2 year old funding access quality EY provision (internally collected termly information – may not match to published data from Jan census)	90%	100%	74%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell /Belinda Yen/Gail Hodgkinson-Vaughan</i>						
PED05 02	Increase the take up of Early Years Entitlement for 3 to 4 year olds.	93%	96%	82%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell/Belinda Yen/Gail Hodgkinson-Vaughan</i> 2265 funder of 2754 population						
PED05 03	Monitor the percentage of Early Years settings (pre-schools, day care, out of school clubs, childminders) with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding (snapshot end of quarter)	95%	N/A	88%	Refer comment	N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell/Belinda Yen/Gail Hodgkinson-Vaughan</i> With 11% not yet inspected therefore 99% good or above.						
PED05 04	Monitor the percentage of Primary schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding N.B. 6 out of the 8 schools are academies. (snapshot end of quarter)	87.8%	N/A	Refer comment	N/A	N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> The OFSTED inspection regime has been suspended due to COVID-19						
PED05 05	Monitor the percentage of Secondary schools with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding (snapshot end of quarter)	50%	N/A	Refer comment	N/A	N/A
<i>Supporting Commentary: Jill Farrell</i> The OFSTED inspection regime has been suspended due to COVID-19						

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED05a	Monitor and evaluate educational outcomes and the impact of funding streams (including Free EY Entitlement, Pupil Premium) to raise achievement for all and diminish the difference between vulnerable groups and their peers (March 2021). (Jill Farrell)	
<i>Supporting Commentary:</i> The data officer is analysing and feeding back to schools and settings at borough level and individual provision level. We now have much more detailed information in order to target specific groups and individuals to implement strategies to diminish the difference. Unfortunately due to COVID-19 Plans are not being revised to ensure the appropriate catch up and remote learning is taking place.		
PED05b	Review the process of risk assessment for schools and settings to target support and drive improvement. Jill Farrell (March 2021)	
<i>Supporting Commentary:</i> The risk assessment process has been refined for schools and settings. These changes have been implemented. Schools that have been downgraded have received categorisation letters being sent out to schools. Pre-warning meetings have also been held for schools that are causing concern in order to identify appropriate co-ordinated support and challenge.		





Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
<i>Challenge and support will be targeted appropriately to meet the needs of establishments with the greatest vulnerabilities, whilst capacity will also be drawn upon from effective practice within the sector. This is in line with DfE and Central Government policies.</i>		
PED05c	Build engagement, capacity and understanding of the strategic role of governors (Jill Farrell) (March 2021)	
<i>Supporting Commentary:</i> Unfortunately due to COVID-19 governors meeting are now held virtually. The directors reports have been sent out in hard copy. Governors continue to provide advice support and guidance where needed.		
PED05d	In partnership with schools, review and design an effective curriculum model for the region that meets pupils needs whilst raising ambitions (Jill Farrell) (March 2021)	
<i>Supporting Commentary:</i> Initial meetings were held with primary and secondary sector to design a Halton curriculum. It was found that many schools are members of different academy trusts and or diocesan boards and have their own curriculum requirements. It was therefore decided that work would focus upon developing shared principles and aims for all schools and that this would be developed through the Halton Learning Alliance. Halton Learning Alliance is a long term, borough wide development that will work with all educational, business partners and the wider community to develop a Halton vision and raise aspiration, ambition leading to successful, healthy, contributing citizens of Halton.		
PED05e	Launch Halton Learning Alliance Strategic Partnership to develop an inclusive, ambitious approach developing contributing, successful citizens locally, nationally and globally. All educational stakeholders and community members acting with morale purpose for Halton children, young people and community members (March 2021, Jill Farrell)	
<i>Supporting Commentary:</i> There were be a range of events planned throughout the year and longer term reading initiatives developed. This would have reflected the vision and ambitions from the Halton Learning Alliance whilst promoting a passion for reading and enhancing the purpose and value of reading for all. Unfortunately due to COVID-19 these have been put on hold		

Objective: Improve participation and skills for young people to drive Halton's future (PED06)

Ref:	Measure	19/20 Actual	20/21 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED06 01	Maintain the percentage of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training (snapshot end of quarter, end of year information February)	4.0%	4.0%	5.1%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> Whilst the direction of travel looks positive the reality is our NEET figure is lower because our Not Known figure (below) is so much higher, we don't actually know who some of our NEET are.						
PED06 02	Maintain the percentage of 16-17 year olds whose activity is not known (snapshot end of quarter, end of year information February)	0.3%	0.3%	1.6%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> Our ability to track the activity of young people has been hindered by the limitations on our ability to contact young people other than by phone, email or letter.						
PED06 03	Increase the percentage of 16-17 year olds with an offer of learning (September guarantee)	97.4%	98%	93.3%		
<i>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</i> There has been a reduced number of young people with confirmed offers of learning or training for September 2020, with some young people waiting to see how the national picture in relation to COVID-19 developed before making a decision about what they would do next.						
PED06 04	Increase the percentage of 16-17 year olds participating in education or training that meets the Government definition of full participation (known as Raising the Participation Age)	91.8%	92%	90%		

Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell

The annual measure is taken in March each year. Working to ensure our data collection and recording was more detailed last year we achieved an increase in performance at the time of the annual measure in March 2020, this is why we show as being higher than the same period last year. We anticipate if the effects of COVID-19 continue and impact on the availability of Apprenticeships for young people, and the potential that some young people may feel the post 16 experience isn't as they anticipated pre COVID-19, may mean there are more young people who are not participating in education or training by the time the next annual measure is taken in March 2021.




Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED06a	Closely monitor the cohort of young people not in education, employment or training and identify common patterns/issues to inform actions, guide the effective use of resources and to identify any future commissioning needs (Háf Bell) (March 2021)	
<u>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</u> The focus has been on ensuring young people are aware of mental health resources they can access from home.		
PED06b	Work with schools, the College and training providers to review the post 16 offers of learning made to young people and increase the amount of offers made before the end of an academic year (Háf Bell) (July 2020)	
<u>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</u> Whilst we continued to have excellent communication with and from schools and the College the process of supporting young people into the next phase of education or training post 16 became more difficult being done at a distance. All schools continued to maintain contact with young people and support where they could, but some young people were not sure what they wanted to do in September 2020 because of the COVID-19 situation.		
PED06c	Work with schools, the College and training providers to report where young people progress to Post 16 as quickly as possible, so those who haven't been progressed can be identified and contacted to offer support (Háf Bell) (October 2020)	
<u>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</u> All data from schools, colleges and training providers were received in a timely manner. The current Tier 3 status within the borough limits our ability to track young people who have not progressed into an education or training institution. Letters have been sent to the homes of approximately 300 young people to ask them to contact us to provide information about their participation activity.		
PED06d	Work with Post 16 education and training providers in the borough to support the development of provision that does have clear progression opportunities (Háf Bell) (March 2021)	
<u>Supporting Commentary: Háf Bell</u> COVID-19 has meant the focus has been on developing an offer that can work online.		

7.0 Financial Summary

To follow




8.0 Appendix I

8.1 Symbols are used in the following manner:

Progress		Milestone	Measure
Green		Indicates that the milestone is on course to be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that the annual target is on course to be achieved.
Amber		Indicates that it is uncertain, or too early to say at this stage whether the milestone will be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that it is uncertain or too early to say at this stage whether the annual target is on course to be achieved.
Red		Indicates that it is unlikely or certain that the objective will not be achieved within the appropriate timeframe.	Indicates that the target will not be achieved unless there is an intervention or remedial action taken.

8.2 Direction of Travel indicator

Where possible measures will also identify a direction of travel using the following convention:

Green		Indicates that performance is better compared to the same period last year.
Amber		Indicates that performance is the same as compared to the same period last year.
Red		Indicates that performance is worse compared to the same period last year.
N/A		Indicates that the measure cannot be compared to the same period last year.

8.3 Key for responsible officers:

AMc Ann McIntyre, Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision Service
TC Tracey Coffey, Operational Director, Children and Families Service