

Directorate Overview Report - Children and Young People

Reporting Period: Quarter 2, 01 July 2017 – 30 September 2017

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. 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 Speech and Language (AMc)

Halton Borough Council and Halton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have taken the opportunity to jointly commission Children and Young People's Speech and Language Therapy Services so that they are delivered by a single organisation to all children and young people in Halton with communication needs. The Council and the CCG will share responsibility for all parts of the service and for children and young people's outcomes. Services will include delivery of high quality, evidence based provision and specialist assessment and intervention for children and young people with needs at all levels, provided in schools, nurseries and other education settings, in clinic and a range of community venues.

The organisation awarded the contract is ChatterBug Ltd, a social enterprise that also provides speech and language therapy services in other local authority areas. The new service started 1 September 2017. Staff from previously commissioned organisations have transferred to ChatterBug via the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations and so wherever possible children and young people will continue to receive services from the same speech therapist. The new service will operate from bases in both Runcorn and Widnes.

2.2 Categorisation Letter (AMc)

In September 2017 each Headteacher and Chair of Governors in Halton received a categorisation letter. The categorisation process uses a variety of information to decide upon the differentiated level of support and challenge, provided as a universal offer to schools, by our School Improvement Advisors. The purpose is to provide a rigorous, objective and transparent categorisation process which will help to inform school self-evaluation. The change to the process reflects the requirements within the Common Inspection Framework (August 2016) to take account of:

- *The overall consistency in performance, trends of improvement or decline, and differences between groups.*
 - *The accuracy of the schools assessment of pupils' progress and attainment.*
- (School Inspection Handbook, August 2016, p23, paragraph 78)

2.3 School Funding 2018-19 (AMc)

In July 2017 the government confirmed the introduction of the national funding formula (NFF) for schools. It also announced the new arrangements for funding high needs provision. There will be a two year transitional period with increased funding across the two years, before full implementation of the NFF in 2020-21.

The Secretary of State announced that there will be a 0.5% increase per pupil in primary and secondary schools and that a minimum per pupil funding level would be introduced at £3,300 for primary pupils in 2018-19 and £4,600 for secondary pupils. There is to be a further 0.5% per pupil increase for 2019-20 while the minimum per pupil funding level would be increased to £3,500 for primary pupils and £4,800 for secondary pupils.

The Minimum funding guarantee remains in place although local authorities have the flexibility of setting at between 0% and -1.5%. More funding will be allocated to schools on the basis of deprivation and low prior attainment but the lump sum allocated will be reduced.

The indicative school allocations were released by the Department for Education in early October 2017. These show the difference between the current allocation a school receives and that they would receive under transitional NFF or full NFF. This information showed that some of Halton's smaller primary schools and Halton's secondary schools would not be allocated sufficient funding to meet their increased costs. Representation was made to the Schools Minister, Nick Gibb MP, however he did not agree to make any changes.

3.0 Emerging Issues

3.1 Horizon scanning/National drivers

Capital for SEN (AMc)

In August 2017, the Department for Education announced Special Provision Capital Funding for local authorities to invest in the provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities aged 0-25 to improve the quality and range of provision available to the local authority. The funding is for a range of provision types where this benefits children and young people with education, health and care plans (EHCP) between 0-25 years old.

The total funding allocation across all local authorities is £215m and Halton's allocation of a three year period is £500,000 (three payments of £166,666 each year if approved). Officers are reviewing current provision and identifying areas of potential need. Once this review has been undertaken the local authority will be consulting with parents, carers, schools, colleges and other institutions which offer special educational provision. From this the local authority will determine how best to invest the capital funding over the three year period to maximise the benefit of provision. The local authority is then required to complete and submit a plan to the Department of Education and publish the plan on the Council's Local Offer page by 14 March 2018, with continued updates in March 2019, 2020 and 2021. The Council's Executive Board will consider any capital expenditure proposals in a report in Spring 2018.

Children and Social Work Act 2017 (TC & AMc)

Consultation is now underway on the relevant sections of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. One consultation is on the expanded role of the Virtual School Head and additional

duties for schools for children previously in care. Another consultation is on the statutory principles for local authorities and partners to follow as Corporate Parents, and the extension of duties to care leavers up to the age of 25 (currently 21), which may have resource and financial implications to the local authority.

3.2 Halton Specific

Preventing Exclusion (AMc)

In 2015-16 there were 25 permanent exclusions of Halton pupils. In 2016-17 this figure rose to 53 permanent exclusions of Halton pupils.

2015-16		2016-17	
Key Stage	Reasons for Exclusion	Key Stage	Reasons for Exclusion
KS2 = 4	Weapon related = 1	KS2 = 5	Weapon related = 6
KS3 = 8	Drug related = 2	KS3 = 27	Drug related = 6
KS4 = 13	Assault = 7	KS4 = 22	Assault = 7
	Behaviour = 15		Behaviour = 34

These figures show that there is a concerning increase in the number of exclusions taking place in Halton, with verbal abuse and persistent behaviour being the predominant reasons. Proportionally we have much higher levels of permanent exclusions than many other boroughs.

The majority of these children and young people have Social and Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties as defined by the SEND Code of Practice (paras 6.32).

Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder or attachment disorder.

Halton have devised a new protocol for schools to use where pupils are identified with challenging behaviour. The protocol will:

- Support schools to carry out the “Assess, Plan, Do, Review” cycle of the SEND Code of Practice for children with SEMH. (Paras 6.45 – 6.54)
- Underpin the partnership work between schools and Halton local authority to ensure that there is good discipline in schools, as it is agreed that this is essential in ensuring that all pupils can benefit from the opportunities provided by education (Exclusions guidance September 2017 page 6)
- Support schools in the early identification of unmet needs of children and young people and remove barriers to engagement and learning (Exclusions guidance Point 19)
- Support schools to promote positive mental health by supporting them to use best practice as outlined in the advice document ‘Mental Health and behaviour in schools’.
- Ensure that schools have a robust, clear and evidence based approach to the identification of and response to SEN (SEN COP Parag 6.14).

- Ensure that everyone fulfils their responsibilities and is accountable in meeting the needs of children and young people with SEMH and in sustaining them in mainstream provision, if this is assessed as being appropriate by multi-agency professionals.
- Ensure that there is no drift in providing advice, support and, where robustly evidenced and assessed as appropriate, additional resources in meeting the needs of children and young people with SEMH.
- Ensure that resources across schools and the local authority are being used to create an inclusive ethos for all Halton pupils.
- Identify any critical urgent issues as they are emerging in order to utilise the combined resources of schools and the local authority to address these and remove barriers.

4.0 Progress against high priority equality actions

- 4.1 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>

5.0 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	16/17 Actual	17/18 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED01 01	Monitor the average length of time between a child returning home and their return interview for those missing from care/home (Commissioned Service)	72 hours	72 hours	96 hours		
PED01 02	Reduce the number of young people who repeatedly run away in Halton (SCS SH04)	156	115	83		
PED01 03	Monitor the number of young people going missing in the year	395	N/A	229		
PED01 04	Monitor the number of young people flagged as at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation (snapshot at the end of the quarter)	24	N/A	24		
PED01 05	Reduce the number of children subject of fixed term exclusions	244 instances 181 children	270	61 instances 48 children (July – Sept)		
PED01 06	Reduce the rate of permanent exclusions	0.046 %	0.035 %	0.033% 6 children		
PED01 07	Increase the number of children involved in early intervention (e.g. CAF) (All those who have had a CAF at any point in the year)	560	650	705		
PED01 08	Monitor the rate of referrals to Children's Social Care per 10,000 0-18 year olds	368	N/A	349		
PED01 09	Reduce the number of children and young people who enter the care system	97	70	40		

Supporting commentary:

PED01 01, 02 and 03: During the quarter there have been 113 individuals reported as missing, and this is a slight decrease on the number of individuals in quarter 1. With regard to repeat individuals there are 38 individuals responsible for 155 instances of missing.

PED01 04: The numbers have remained stable, and multi-agency meetings ensure that there is effective and pro-active action to support those at risk of CSE.

PED01 05 and 06: Data for this quarter includes the summer holidays. During the last academic year there was a significant increase in exclusion activity. Please see the emerging issue section above for new protocol for schools and the local authority.

PED01 07: CAF data shows an increase in those involved in CAF during the year to date.

PED01 08: Whilst there was a reduction in referrals in quarter 2 from quarter 1, the rate remains stable for the end of year forecast.

PED01 09: This area is closely monitored and analysis undertaken on a regular basis. There is ongoing exploration of the reasons for children entering care and regular scrutiny in this area.

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED01a	Monitor and review the effectiveness of iCART (June 2017)	
PED01b	Establish and implement a multi-agency locality provision (March 2018)	
PED01c	Develop a system to identify, assess and support vulnerable adults (March 2018)	
PED01e	Develop performance information which ensures that early intervention is responsive to trends of those being referred to children's social care	

Supporting commentary:

PED01a: Weekly performance meetings with the principal managers, divisional managers and support from the performance team have ensured an ongoing improvement in the percentage of contacts and referrals for both Children's social care and early intervention being authorised within timescales.

PED01b & PED01e: Early Intervention managers participate in a monthly performance challenge meeting with Divisional Managers, Children's Social Care managers, and the Operational Director which monitors trends and performance.

PED01c: We are focussing on strengthening partnerships including attending a range of multi-agency forums and exploring colocation within partner sites. We attended an interview as part of an expression of interest process to request continued support from Making Every Adult Matter and involvement in a complex adults piece of research. Adults performance have agreed to support internal performance reporting.

Objective: Raise attainment and progress at Key Stage 2 (PED02)

Ref	Measure	16/17 Actual	17/18 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED02 01	Increase the percentage of children reaching the expected standard in reading at KS2	63.4%	N/A	69%		
PED02 02	Increase the percentage of children reaching the expected standard in writing at KS2	65.9%	N/A	72%		
PED02 03	Increase the percentage of children reaching the expected standard in maths at KS2	64.9%	N/A	70%		
PED02 04	Increase the percentage of children achieving the expected standard in Reading, Writing and Maths (SCS CYP02)	46.8%	N/A	56%		
PED02 05	Increase the average key stage 1 to 2 progress score for reading	-0.32	N/A	-0.05		
PED02 06	Increase the average key stage 1 to 2 progress score for writing	-1.47	N/A	-0.48		
PED02 07	Increase the average key stage 1 to 2 progress score for maths	-0.51	N/A	-0.41		
PED02 08	Increase the percentage of Children in Care achieving expected outcomes at KS2 (SCS CYP16)	Refer below				

Supporting commentary:

All attainment data provided is provisional unvalidated data only.

PED02 08: Analysis of individual children in care is available from the Virtual Head Teacher. Positive outcomes overall are reported.

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED02a	Based on data analysis, and feedback from the Cross Service Monitoring Group, undertake categorisation process for all schools by October 2017 and identify actions, including levels of support and intervention, required to improve inspection outcomes (March 2018).	
PED02b	Develop data tracking system (March 2018).	
PED02c	Conduct the annual analysis of school performance data for all primary schools during September to December 2017 (with further reviews undertaken at key points in the performance data release cycle).	
PED02d	Analyse, evaluate and report end of Key Stage 2 achievement outcomes (December 2017).	
PED02e	Identify areas of need and support for Children in Care and Free School Meals pupils (December 2017).	

PED02f	With schools, monitor the impact of Pupil Premium and its impact on raising achievement (March 2018).	
PED02g	Ensure appropriate deployment of school improvement challenge and support for identified schools and settings, including school to school support and wider system leadership (March 2018).	

Supporting commentary:

PED02a: Revised categorisation of schools has been undertaken. See Key Developments section above for detail.

PED02b: Comment to follow in Q3.

PED02c: High level performance data on schools performance has been shared with primary and secondary head teachers and the Education Strategic Partnership Board.

PED02d: Unvalidated KS2 outcomes were shared with Children and Young People's PPB in September 2017. A more detailed information analysis will be provided in January 2018.

PED02e: The Children in Care and Care Strategy has been drafted with each agency identifying key areas of development and support over and above their statutory duties. This is now being finalised ready for publication and sign off by the CIC Partnership Board and the Children's Trust. The strategy will run from 2017-19.

PED02f: School improvement officers, including associated School Improvement advisors have continued to support individual schools with strategies to diminish the difference in attainment and progress of vulnerable groups. A diminishing the difference network group provides further challenge and support to those schools who participate in this network.

PED02g: Schools and settings have been sent their categorisation letter in September. Please see the Key Developments section above.

Objective: Raise achievement in Early Years (PED03)

Ref	Measure	16/17 Actual	17/18 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED03 01	Increase the percentage of children achieving a good level of development in Early Years Foundation Stage (SCS CYP)	62%	62%	61%		
PED03 02	Increase the percentage of 2 year old funded children achieving a good level of development	47%	20%	49%		
PED03 03	Increase the take up of Early Years Entitlement for 3 and 4 year olds	93%	92%	98%		
PED03 04	Monitor the percentage of Early Years settings (pre-schools, day care, out of school clubs, childminders) with overall effectiveness of Good or Outstanding	97%	90%	97%		
PED03 05	Reduce the good level of development attainment gap for disadvantaged children and their parents at EYFS	24%	19%	Not available		

Supporting commentary:

All attainment data provided is provisional unvalidated data only.

PED03 03: There is a more encouraging picture for take up of Early Years Entitlement at this point.

Additional measure information around the take up of 2 year olds shows that target of 497 from DfE has been exceeded with 544 in Halton.

PED03 04: The proportion of providers with an outcome of Good or Outstanding continues to be above the national average and regional neighbours.

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED03a	Develop data tracking system across early years (March 2018).	
PED03b	Implement recommendations from the Early Years Review and OFSTED Early Years thematic report (March 2018).	
PED03c	Analyse the outcomes of children who have accessed funding two year old placements (January 2018).	
PED03d	Complete RAG categorisation process for all EYFS settings by October 2017, and identify actions, including levels of challenge, support and intervention required to improve quality of educational provision.	

Supporting commentary:

Ref	Measure	16/17 Actual	17/18 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED03a:	Work is currently being undertaken to identify the most appropriate tracking system for use across all early years providers and the local authority.					
PED03b:	The One Halton Child Development Steering group has produced an action plan which addresses the recommendations of both the Early Years review and the thematic Early Years Ofsted report. The new strategy and parents' guide has been completed and will be issued to all partners in November.					
PED03c:	This information will be available in January 2018.					
PED03d:	EYFS settings have been RAG rated and support and intervention identified.					

Objective: Improve the offer for children and young people with SEND (PED04)

Ref	Measure	16/17 Actual	17/18 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED04 01	Increase participation in the POET Survey (Parent/Guardians)	N/A	70	109		
PED04 02	Increase the percentage of Education Health Care Plans completed within 20 weeks	23%	80%	67%		
PED04 03	Increase the number of schools identified as Nurture Champions	12 schools	20%	21 schools		
PED04 04	Increase the percentage of Statements converted to Education Health Care Plans to meet published timescales	N/A	90%	77%		
PED04 05	Increase the number of people accessing the Local Offer (proxy measure of number of page views)	37,215	40,000	10,108		

Supporting commentary:

PED04 02 and 04: Halton are expected to complete all of the conversions by 31 March 2018 and are confident that this target will be achieved. Timescales for completion of assessments are improving.

PED04 03: Nurture groups have increased dramatically over the year. 21 schools attend the nurture network meetings. Satisfaction with the content and training is high. Three schools have received whole staff awareness and support this half term and are setting up for September. Training is planned in more schools in September.

PED04 05: See emerging issues for information around Local Offer page views.

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED04a	Develop and refine the annual analysis of progress data for children and young people with additional SEND funding through Enhanced Provision or Education Health Care Plans (March 2018).	
PED04b	Undertake a review of all SEND provision within the borough (March 2018).	
PED04c	Improve provision in Halton for young people with challenging behaviour and social, emotional and mental health challenges (March 2018).	
PED04d	Evaluate qualitative data through Personal Outcomes Evaluation Tool (POET) of family and individual views with the SEND reform process in Halton, to increase satisfaction with their experience (March 2018).	

Supporting commentary:

PED04a: In the recent Triage meetings with schools they are requested to submit their data on the progress of all those having additional funding from the High Needs budget. We will be exacting in our new procedures to challenge use of budget on progress evidence towards longer term outcomes.

PED04b: This is ongoing. There is an additional budget of £50,000 from DfE to spend on specialist resource over the next 3 years. Data research has been organised to look at the presenting and predicted needs of children in order to focus our development priorities.

PED04c: See Emerging Issues section above.

PED04d: Analysis of the POET Survey 2017 shows increased satisfaction with Halton's services and processes for both Children and young people and their families. In some cases the data shows Halton exceeding the national average. A full analysis of the survey will be reported to SEND Strategic Board in November.

Objective: Improve participation and skills for young people to drive Halton's future (PED05)



Ref	Measure	16/17 Actual	17/18 Target	Current	Direction of Travel	Quarterly Progress
PED05 01	Reduce the percentage of 16-17 year olds not in education, employment or training	4.4%	4.4%	Refer comment		
PED05 02	Reduce the percentage of 16-17 year olds whose activity is not known	0.8%	0.8%	Refer comment		
PED05 03	Increase the percentage of 19 year olds achieving a Level 2 qualification	84.3%	84.3%	Awaited		
PED05 04	Increase the percentage of 19 year olds	54.4%	54.4%	Awaited		

	achieving a Level 3 qualification					
PED05 05	Monitor the percentage of young people progressing to Higher Education (SCS CYP13)	28%	28%	Awaited		

Supporting commentary:

All targets have been revised in line with the publication of 2015/16 data (shown in the 2016/17 data column as published with a timelag) and the new DfE calculations.

PED05 01 and 02: Data not reported at this point due to the timing of the start of the academic year not aligning with the reporting quarters. From 1st September every young person Post 16 becomes NEET as their previous placement expires and until confirmation has been received of them starting a new academic year they remain NEET.

Ref:	Milestones	Quarterly Progress
PED05a	Develop the 14-19 Commissioning Statement to reflect Local Enterprise Partnership priorities (March 2018).	
PED05b	Develop a Post 16 monitoring framework to demonstrate how providers are supported and challenged in the borough (March 2018).	

Supporting commentary:

PED05a: The previous 14-19 Commissioning Statement document format has been revised to better meet the needs of the 14-19 team and Strategic Analysis and Work Priorities. The document has been ratified by Senior Leadership Team and shared with the Halton Association of Secondary Headteachers.

PED05b: Monitoring framework has been written in draft form so it can be linked to School Improvement Strategy when revised.

6.0 Financial Summary

6.1 EDUCATION, INCLUSION AND PROVISION

Revenue Budget as at 30th September 2017

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance to Date (Overspend) £'000
<i>Expenditure</i>				
Employees	5,970	2,923	2,936	(13)
Premises	112	31	31	0
Supplies & Services	2,624	1,056	1,003	53
Transport	5	1	0	1
Schools Transport	926	233	371	(138)
Commissioned Services	2,678	890	890	0
Agency Related Expenditure	1,595	752	745	7
Independent School Fees	2,463	1,036	1,036	0
Inter Authority Special Needs	175	1	1	0
Pupil Premium Grant	83	43	43	0
Nursery Education Payments	5,129	3,120	3,120	0
Special Education Needs	91	45	45	0
Contingency				
Capital Finance	150	118	118	0
Total Expenditure	22,001	10,249	10,339	(90)
<i>Income</i>				
Fees & Charges	-301	-295	-291	(4)
Government Grants	-639	-582	-582	0
Reimbursements & Other Income	-933	-411	-411	0
Schools SLA Income	-181	-168	-166	(2)
Transfer to/from Reserves	-587	-487	-487	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-13,052	0	0	0
Inter Authority Income	-578	15	15	0
Rent	-104	0	0	0
Total Income	-16,375	-1,928	-1,922	(6)
Net Operational Expenditure	5,626	8,321	8,417	(96)
<i>Recharges</i>				
Central Support Services Costs	1,770	836	836	0
HBC Support Costs Income	-79	-39	-39	0
Premises Support Costs	226	113	113	0
Transport Support Costs	209	79	79	0
Net Total Recharges	2,126	989	989	0
Net Department Expenditure	7,752	9,310	9,406	(96)

Comments on the above figures

Supplies and services are currently projected to be under budget. However, this could change within the year as various aspects of these budgets are used for needs led services within the divisions.

Schools Transport is still showing quite a large over spend. This has been the case for the past couple of years, and the figures are based on current projections. The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide Special Educational Needs pupils with transport and there is currently a large demand for this. All efforts are being made to try and identify where efficiencies in the service could be made. The projection for Schools Transport will continue to be monitored and will be updated throughout the year.

Agency Related Expenditure is still showing a projected under spend and again this is subject to change. As mentioned in the Supplies and Services section this is needs led expenditure and this could increase if any more schools require additional support from the LA.

Budget Holders are making every effort to ensure that expenditure is tightly controlled and kept to the minimum. Based on current demand it is forecast the department will have a year-end overspend against available budget in the region of £200k.

Capital Projects as at 30th September 2017

Capital Expenditure	2017/18 Capital Allocation £'000	Allocation to Date £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Total Allocation Remaining £'000
Asset Management Data	5	1	1	4
Capital Repairs	815	322	322	493
Asbestos Management	38	8	8	30
Schools Access Initiative	55	0	0	55
Basic Needs Projects	396	0	0	396
School Modernisation Projects	68	47	47	21
Lunts Heath	200	91	91	109
Universal Infant School Meals	2	2	2	0
Early Education for 2yr Olds	8	8	8	0
Hale Primary	3	2	2	1
Fairfield Primary School	655	670	670	-15
Weston Point Primary	128	100	100	28
Kitchen Gas Safety	50	0	0	50
Small Capital Works	106	15	15	91
The Bridge School vocational centre	360	0	0	360
Total Capital Expenditure	2,889	1,266	1,266	1,623

Comments on the above figures.

Asset Management (CADS) works, kitchen gas safety works and small capital works will continue in response or in line with any emergency Health and Safety issues. Asbestos programme surveys are being updated and remedial work carried out where necessary.

Some Capital Repairs works were completed during the Easter and Summer holidays. Remaining works are planned to be completed before financial year end.

Unallocated Basic Need funding will be allocated throughout the year as required. Any balance will be deferred to 2018-19.

Work has commenced on Lunts Heath classroom extension and this is expected to be completed by the end of October 2017.

School modernisation project works have been completed. The final invoice is expected soon.

Hale Primary classroom extension, Early education for 2 year olds and Universal School Meals projects are complete.

Fairfield Primary construction work to the infants and junior schools and MUGA pitch are now complete. Works have commenced to enhance the grass playing field. Overspend on this project is expected to be funded from underspends on other projects within the Education Capital programme.

Weston Point classroom extension works commenced May 2017 and will be completed by the end of October 2017.

A feasibility study has been carried out at The Bridge School vocational centre. Work is expected to commence prior to the financial year end.

6.2 CHILDREN AND FAMILIES DEPARTMENT

Revenue Budget as at 30 September 2017

	Annual Budget £'000	Budget To Date £'000	Actual To Date £'000	Variance to Date (Overspend) £'000
<i>Expenditure</i>				
Employees	8,850	4,136	4,121	15
Premises	264	112	107	5
Supplies and Services	930	424	460	(36)
Transport	6	3	43	(40)
Direct Payments/Individual Budgets	228	133	274	(141)
Commissioned Services	277	108	94	14
Out of Borough Residential Placements	3,706	1,500	2,978	(1,478)
Out of Borough Adoption	80	57	57	0
Out of Borough Fostering	612	145	1,034	(889)
In House Adoption	215	87	154	(67)
Special Guardianship	1,092	572	718	(146)
In House Foster Carer Payments	1,829	802	802	0
Care Leavers	164	86	74	12
Family Support	53	31	33	(2)
Emergency Duty Team	89	0	0	0
Contracted Services	4	2	2	0
Capital Finance	6	0	0	0
Early Years	97	28	109	(81)
Total Expenditure	18,502	8,226	11,060	(2,834)
<i>Income</i>				
Adoption Placements	-45	-11	0	(11)
Fees and Charges	-15	-6	-5	(1)
Sales Income	-26	-26	-26	0
Rents	-97	-24	-24	0
Dedicated Schools Grant	-47	-24	-24	0
Reimbursements & Other Grant Income	-345	-237	-235	(2)
Government Grants	-67	-67	-67	0
Transfer from Reserves	-93	-93	-93	0
Total Income	-735	-488	-474	(14)
Net Operational Expenditure	17,767	7,738	10,586	(2,848)
Recharges				
Premises Support	374	191	191	0
Transport Support	47	21	21	0
Central Support Service Costs	2,215	1,092	1,092	0
Net Total Recharges	2,636	1,304	1,304	0
Net Department Expenditure	20,403	9,042	11,890	(2,848)

Comments on the above figures

The net departmental expenditure is £2.85m above budget profile at the end of the second quarter of the financial year, most of which directly relates to social care services.

Expenditure relating to employee costs is £15,000 below budget profile at the end of the second quarter. This is due to some vacancies not being backfilled whilst the recruitment process takes place and the use of agency staff reducing significantly compared to the first half of the last financial year. This has resulted in a reduction in agency costs from £258,480 in the first half of 2016/17 to £88,282 in the first half of this financial year.

Supplies and Services expenditure is above expected budget to date. Every effort is made to keep controllable costs to a minimum and managers carefully monitor this expenditure, making sure that only essential goods and services are purchased. Included within supplies and services are court costs of £79,886, which are £43k over budget at the end of the second quarter. These costs are difficult to control as they are dependent upon the outcome of court cases and they will continue to be a budget pressure.

Transport related expenditure is also above anticipated budget at the end of the second quarter. This is due to increased demand around the service. Contracts will need to be carefully monitored and reviewed on a regular basis to make sure that they are for essential journeys only.

Expenditure relating to Direct Payments/Individual Budgets is over budget profile. This is due to demand continuing to grow in this area and the children coming into the service with additional levels of complex needs is increasing. Halton Clinical Commissioning Group (HCCG) is robustly carrying out continuing healthcare assessments, which has resulted in the number of joint funded packages of care reducing. All packages of care need to continue to be reviewed to see if any costs can be reduced, but still ensuring all needs are still being met. This continues to be a pressure area throughout the financial year.

Out of Borough Residential placement costs are significantly above budget to date and will continue to be a budget pressure for the remainder of the year. The anticipated outturn forecast for 2017/18 is estimated to be £2,852,000 over budget. In quarter two an additional eight children entered the service at a cost of £741,263 to the end of the financial year, one child's costs increased by £81,479 to the end of the financial year and one child moved to a foster placement reducing costs by £102,475. One child also left the service reducing annual costs by £176,144. There continues to be a large amount of work undertaken to reduce, where appropriate, the cost of placements, particularly around the young people who are aged 16+ and moving into semi-independent accommodation. These figures are a snapshot of the service at this point in time and there is a risk that additional pressures from new service users will increase overspend levels during the remainder of the financial year.

Costs relating to Out of Borough Fostering placements are also significantly over budget to date and they will continue to place pressure on the budget. The anticipated outturn forecast for 2017/18 is estimated to be £1,785,000 over budget. This has increased from £1,620,000 at the end of quarter one. This increase directly relates to the number of children who have come into the service from the beginning of July to the end of September. Nine additional children have entered the service in quarter two at a cost of £249,467 and three placements ended in the same period reducing costs by £84,722. This resulted in an increase in the costs to the end of the financial year of £164,745. Included in these costs are one group of three siblings whose costs are £88,299 to the end of the financial year and one group of four siblings whose costs are £92,930 to the end of the financial year. Of the packages that have ended one child returned home and two moved into residential placements which are at a much higher weekly cost. Every effort is made to utilise in house foster carers but due to the lack of available foster carers in the borough that is not always possible, therefore out of borough placements need to be sought at a higher weekly cost.

Expenditure relating to In House Adoption is above budget to date. This mainly relates to residence orders and adoption allowances. Residence orders are similar to special guardianship orders, but the carer does not have parental responsibility. At present there are twenty eight children subject to a residence order, at a total cost of £1,966.98 per week. There are fourteen families with a total of twenty five children receiving an adoption allowance at a total cost of £2,254.49 per week. As with special guardianship orders these are made by the family court and not the council, so it is difficult to estimate how many more of them will be agreed throughout the financial year.

Income relating to adoption placements is underachieving against budget. It is difficult to know if/when an out of borough adoption placement will be agreed, so as a result it will be difficult to predict if this income will be achieved.

Special Guardianship Orders expenditure is also over budget profile and will continue to be a budget pressure this financial year. At present there are one hundred and twenty two children subject to a special guardianship order at total cost of £27,255.29 per week. A special guardian has parental responsibility until a




child reaches 18 years of age and as these orders are again made by the family court and not the council so it is difficult to estimate how many more of them will be agreed throughout the financial year.

The Early Years net divisional expenditure is £81,000 over budget at the end of the second quarter. Expenditure relating to employee costs at the two day care centres, Warrington Road Integrated Centre and Ditton Early Years Centre is £10,500 over budget profile as a result of expenditure on agency staff. Halton Borough Council's day care centres offer full cover for 0-5 year olds between 8am to 6pm. However employees are contracted to a 37 hour week, whereas in the private sector it is 40 hours allowing them to cover this 10 hour day without the need for overtime or agency staff. Income to date is below target by £72,000; Warrington Road Integrated Centre £44,000 and Ditton Early Years Centre £25,000 are the main areas of concern and this level of underachievement is expected to continue throughout 2017/18. If full occupancy levels could be achieved, this would lead to an increase in variable costs, particularly employee costs due to statutory minimum staffing ratios required and therefore this would not be enough to produce a balanced budget. Fees had not increased since 2013/14 until a review was carried out and a £1.00 per day increase was implemented at the beginning of the new academic year which started in September. However, if the fees were to increase again to a level at which the day care centres became self-sustaining, they could find it difficult to compete with places offered in the private sector and occupancy levels could fall. Therefore this option would also not be enough to provide a balanced budget. This area needs to be carefully monitored throughout the remainder of the financial year and will continue to be a pressure area in 2017/18 and beyond.

The expected outturn position for the department to 31 March 2018 is anticipated to be circa £5.7m, based on the current levels of children receiving services.




7.0 Appendix I

7.1 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.

7.2 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.

7.3 Key for responsible officers:

AMc Ann McIntyre, Operational Director, Education, Inclusion and Provision Service

TC Tracey Coffey, Operational Director, Children and Families Service