

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

DATE: 8th September 2025

REPORTING OFFICER: Executive Director of Children's Services

PORTFOLIO: Children, Young People and Families

SUBJECT: Children and Young People (CYP) Q1 2025-26
Monitoring Report

WARD(S) Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide a summary and overview of the progress against Halton Children's Services and to raise any questions or points of clarification, in respect of performance management for Quarter 1 – 1st April to 30th June 2025 and Quarter 4 - 1st January 2025 – 31st March 2025
- 1.2 Key priorities for development or improvement in 2023/24 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
- 1.3 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 third 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.

3.2 Key Achievements

- Family Hub engagement remains strong, supporting early intervention.
- Permanent exclusions reduced by 18% year-on-year.
- EHCP annual reviews improved to 58.7%, above national average.
- £1.2M+ cost avoidance achieved in high-cost residential placements.
- 99% of Early Years settings rated Good or Outstanding.

3.3 Areas Requiring Continued Focus

- Children in Care (CIC) numbers increased slightly; discharge planning underway.
- Out-of-borough placements remain high (87.5% of residential placements).
- Elective Home Education (EHE) numbers rising, often linked to mental health.
- SEND placement costs and independent provision continue to exceed budget.
- Audit results show variability in practice quality across teams.

3.4 Strategic Priorities in Action

- Expansion of Family Hub data sharing to improve early access.
- Multi-agency training for MAPs and Thrive practitioners.
- SEND commissioning reviews and ICT integration underway.
- Social Work Academy trained 189 staff in Q1.
- Care Leaver hubs and forums growing in engagement.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no policy implications associated with this report.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children & Young People in Halton

Have a strong and robust framework for identifying and responding across all agencies is key to supporting children and young people, and partners are clear about their responsibilities and role in working together.

6.2 Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton

Having a strong and robust framework to ensure that children, young people and families are supported in their learning and future employment and skills development.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

Children and young people whose health needs and level of development is potentially compromised are identified early and multi-agency support is in place to support them.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Children and young people whose health needs and level of development is potentially compromised are identified early and multi- agency support is in place to support them.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

7.1 Not applicable.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

8.1 Not applicable.

9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Not applicable.

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

10.1 None within the meaning of the Act