

	<p>OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</p> <p>DATE: 8 SEPTEMBER 2005</p>	<p>Agenda Item No.</p> <p>6</p>
<p>REPORT ON THE QUALITY AND PERFORMANCE OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES 2004/2005</p> <p>Ward(s) All</p>		
<p>Portfolios: Councillor E. Hughes</p> <p>Summary of report:</p> <p>This report summarises key achievements in respect to Quality and Performance in children's services during 2004/05 and identifies a number of key priorities for 2005/06. The main focus of the report is on the performance of Children's Services within Social Care & Supported Housing (SC & SH).</p>		
<p>Background papers:</p> <p>Children's Annual Performance Assessment</p>		
<p>Reason for scrutiny:</p> <p>The report is presented for Overview and Scrutiny Committee's information and consideration.</p>		

Signed:

Executive Director: **Carole Evans**

Date:

Resource and legal considerations:

The report highlights the considerable progress made with respect to delivering better value services to children. It highlights measures taken by children's services to ensure that the predicted overspend of £670,000 during 2004/05 was significantly reduced and a large proportion of the required savings delivered.

Citizen impact:

The clear improvement of performance in children's services benefits Walsall's children and their families. It provides evidence that our strategy of investing in family support is starting to deliver the desired outcomes. It stands us in good stead to deliver the outcomes of the Every Child Matters framework in cooperation with partner agencies.

Environmental impact:

No specific impact identified

Performance management:

The report's focus is on the management of quality and performance in children's services and highlights significant progress in these areas.

Equality Implications:

The improvements aim to enable all children to participate in the life of the community and to enjoy and achieve.

Consultation:

The information contained in this report has been presented to the children's performance board meeting.

Vision 2008:

The review highlights the progress within children's services towards contributing to the making Walsall an excellent authority by 2008.

In particular it contributes to the priorities in relation to

- ensuring people, including vulnerable children, are safe and secure
- making Walsall a healthy and caring place
- listening to what local people want

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1. Introduction

- 1.1** The 1st Children's Services Annual Performance Assessment was completed and forwarded to CSCI and Ofsted, as required, by the 31st May 2005.
- 1.2** It provides a comprehensive review of performance in 2004/05 and sets out performance targets for 2005/06. It identifies priorities for improving service delivery and outcomes for children and young people.
- 1.3** This report summarises our achievements in 2004/05 and identifies a number of key priorities for 2005/06. The main focus of the report will be the performance of Children's Services within Social Care & Supported Housing (SC & SH).

2. Areas of Achievement

- 2.1** The following section outlines both, major developments and performance against specific PAF indicators.

2.2 Major Developments.

- The appointment of a Commissioning Manager jointly funded by Social Care, Health and Education and completion of the Initiation document for the Walsall Children's Trust
- The achievement of significant savings to bring Children's Service expenditure in line with the budget, following a strategic review predicting a £670,000 overspend, through a focussed project management approach
- Reduction in the number of Looked After Children placed away from Walsall, through improved partnership working, by returning children to Walsall, and increasing local placements
- Reduction in the total number of Looked After Children from 483 at 31st March 04 to 461 at 31st March 05, reversing a long standing trend of increasing numbers. This was achieved partly through increased numbers of adoptions and partly through a decrease in numbers of children placed with parents on care orders.
- Increased access to family support services
- Improvement in the educational attainment of Looked After Children.
- All children at risk allocated a social worker who reviews their plans according to statutory timescales.
- High level of completed initial/core assessments within timescales.
- Increased numbers of staff appointed jointly with the tPCT and Education Walsall, reflecting commitment to joint working

- Overarching strategy for all children agreed in consultation with children.

2.3 Performance Against Specific Indicators

Our performance in 2004/05 against the PAF indicators has been approaching that of 3 star authorities (**see Appendix 1**), with significant improvements during the year. In total, 18 indicators have historically measured Children's Services performance within the Performance Assessment Framework (PAF). Authorities are given a rating or "banding" of between 1? (investigate urgently) and 5????? (very good). This year, we have improved our banding on 7 specific indicators and maintained a further 3 indicators at optimum performance level (5?????). No indicators have shown a reduction in bandings and no indicator is now rated 1?.

3 new indicators have been added to the PAF set this year, all of which have shown a positive initial performance outturn.

Specific indicators that have shown significantly improved performance during 2004/05 are:

- A2 (Educational qualifications of LAC) has an improved banding from 2?? to 4?????
- A4 (Employment and Education for Care Leavers), A1 (Stability of Placements) and C19 (Health of Looked After Children) have all maintained the highest level of performance at banding 5?????
- The children at risk indicators, A3 (Re-registrations of children on the Child Protection Register) and C20 (Reviews of children on the Child Protection Register) have an improved banding from 3??? to 5?????, and C21 (Duration on the Child Protection Register) maintains the highest level of performance at banding 4????.
- C23 (Adoptions of LAC) has an improved banding from 3??? to 5?????.

3. Priorities for 2005/06

- ### 3.1
- Walsall's priorities for 2005/06 are outlined in our APA Self Assessment and reflect our move towards joined-up and integrated services, in line with the Every Child Matters 'Outcomes Framework' and our Children's Trust developments.

- Priority 1** Strengthening the multi-agency CAMHS Service (Outcomes: being healthy, making a positive contribution)
- Priority 2** Developing Children's Centres and the Extended Schools Programme (Outcomes: Enjoying & achieving, being healthy)
- Priority 3** Establishing School Focused Teams (outcomes: Enjoying & achieving, staying safe, making a positive contribution)
- Priority 4** Evaluating and Refining the Child Concern Model (Outcome: Staying safe)
- Priority 5** Reducing Teenage Pregnancy (Outcomes: Enjoying & achieving, making a positive contribution, achieving economic well being)
- Priority 6** Reducing the Numbers of Looked After Children Placed Away from Walsall (Outcomes: Staying safe, enjoying & achieving)
- Priority 7** Restructuring the Youth Service to Better Meet the Needs of Young People (Outcomes: Making a positive contribution, enjoying & achieving)
- Priority 8** Raising Educational Standards and Tackling the Attainment Gap (Outcomes: Enjoying & achieving, achieving economic well being)

3.2 Our aim is to build on current strengths and concentrate our efforts to improve indicators in areas, where we are not yet matching the performance of comparable 3 star authorities. This is reflected in our target for 2005/06 in the areas of indicators C22 (Young Looked After Children in foster placements or placed for adoption) and D35 (Long term stability of Looked After Children), where we will aim to improve our banding by one. Indicator B8 will improve in accordance with our policy of bringing Looked After Children back into Walsall, but it not judged to be realistic to expect an improvement in our banding for 2005/06 (**see Appendix 2**).

4. Conclusion

4.1 Considerable progress in performance has been achieved during 2004/05 in Children's Services. This is first and foremost due to the ongoing efforts and commitment of our staff and many within our partner agencies. Our targets for 2005/06 reflect our commitment to consolidate and build on our progress with a focus on improving outcomes for children and in line with the Council's ambition to become an excellent authority by 2008.

Appendix 1

PAF INDICATOR SET 2005-2006

		2003 / 2004	2003 / 2004	2004 / 2005	2004 / 2005	2004 / 2005	2005 / 2006	2005 / 2006	2005 / 2006
		Out-turn	Banding	Target	Out-turn	Banding	Plan	Banding	Trend
A1	Stability of placements of children looked after (BVPI 49)	10.5	5	11.0	13.3	5	11.5	5	→
A2	Educational qualifications of children looked after [joint working] (BVPI 50)	43.7	2	52.0	62.5	4	50.0	4	→
A3	Re-registrations on the Child Protection Register	6.2	3	10.0	11.5	5	10.0	5	→
A4	Employment, education & training for care leavers [joint working]* (BVPI 161)	76.0	5	80.0	75.0	5	80.0	5	→
B7	Children looked after in foster placements or placed for adoption	82.3	4	85.0	83.8	4	83.0	4	→
B8	New def - Cost of services for children looked after (BVPI 51)	790.0	2	813.0	792.0	2	797.0	2	→
C18	Final warnings/reprimands and convictions of children looked after	2.2	3	2.2	2.3	3	2.2	3	→
C19	New def - Health of children looked after	84.2	5	85.0	86.0	5	87.0	5	→
C20	Reviews of child protection cases (BVPI 162)	96.5	3	100.0	100.0	5	100.0	5	→
C21	Duration on the child protection register	2.7	4	3.0	5.1	4	4.0	4	→
C22	Young children looked after in foster placements or placed for adoption	95.6	4	97.0	97.3	4	98.0	5	↑
C23	Adoptions of children looked after (BVPI 163)	6.2	3	8.0	8.8	5	9.0	5	→
C24	Children looked after absent from school [joint working]	11.8	3	10.5	9.1	4	9.9	4	→
D35	Long term stability of children looked after	32.0	1	40.0	40.8	2	50.0	3	↑
E44	New def - Relative spend on family support	39.0	4	39.0	42.0	4	42.0	4	→
E45	Ethnicity of children in need	0.95	2	1.0	1.03	3	1.3	3	→
C63	Participation in reviews	-		-	85.0	4	95.0	5	↑
C64	Timing of Core Assessments	-		-	71.0	4	75.0	4	-
D65	Children aged 10+ who said they were very/extremely satisfied with SC&SH	-		-	43.0	-	na	na	-
D66	Children aged 10+ who said they were offered choice about care and support	-		-	54.8	-	na	na	-
E67	Children with disabilities	-		-	4.6	3	6.5	4	↑
Note 05/06 plan									

Appendix 2

PAF Indicator	*** norm 2003/04	Walsall 2004/05
A1	●●●●●●	●●●●●●
A2	●●●●●	●●●●●
A3	●●●●●	●●●●●●
A4	●●●●●●	●●●●●●
B7	●●●●●	●●●●●
B8	●●●●	●●
C18	●●●●	●●●●
C19	●●●●●	●●●●●●
C20	●●●●●	●●●●●
C21	●●●●●	●●●●●
C22	●●●●●●	●●●●●
C23	●●●●●	●●●●●●
C24	●●●●	●●●●●
D35	●●●●	●●●●
E44	●●●●	●●●●●
E45	●●●●	●●●●
C64	New in 04/05	●●●●●●

This table compares *** performance in 2003/04 with draft (unaudited) Walsall performance in 2004/05

Comparisons can only be indicative of likely shortfalls

Amber = 1 ? deficit in Walsall's performance

Yellow = Walsall's performance is exceeding that of "average" 3 star authority by 1 ?