

23 June 2015

Areas of focus for 2015/16

Ward(s) All

Portfolios:

Councillor Hughes - Care and Safeguarding

Councillor Towe - Learning Skills and Apprenticeships.

Report:

The purpose of this item is to provide relevant background information for Members so that the Panels areas of focus can be agreed for 2015/16.

It is important for Members to consider the wide range of potential issues within their remit which they could consider during the year.

When agreeing items, it is important that consideration is given to the level of value the Panel could add taking into account the tools and performance measures available to support them in their work. A table detailing possible areas is provided as appendix 1 to this report.

Recommendations:


That Member's consider the range of issues within the remit of the Committee and agree to the Chair's suggested priority areas of focus for 2015/16 as outlined in the suggestions table that he has set out in appendix 1.

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Timetable and Suggested Areas of Focus

	23 June	8 September	13 October	24 November	5 January	23 February	19 April
Improving Education	1. Education Healthcheck 2.*Black Country University Technology College						
Safeguarding							
Petitions							
Call-ins							
Information (Exceptional)	3. Introduction from Chair 4. Review of Overview and Scrutiny in Walsall						

*Denotes Pre-decision scrutiny

Note from the Chair

The Chair wishes to ensure that this year's Committee pay much more attention to selective scrutiny of Education services than has been the case in the past. **Scrutiny** means holding the Executive to account for its actions /decisions/areas of responsibility. For detailed Scrutiny to work well, it will require Committee members (especially the Chair) to prepare well: to ask searching questions and to be sure they are satisfied with responses given to their questions. The Chair is suggesting that where in -depth scrutiny is on the agenda, that a room is available for members of the Committee to have a pre-meeting to plan "**a strategy of questioning**" (Prof. Leach suggestion in 3.14 of his Report) prior to the meeting.

Selected quotations from Prof. Leach's Report:

"Too cosy a relationship can develop between director, cabinet member and scrutiny chair, which can inhibit effective challenge"
(para. 2.5)

"The cabinet members who do attend often play relatively little part in the proceedings. Of particular concern is the tendency for the directors or their staff to respond to questions raised regarding cabinet decisions or proposals." (para. 2.7 and recommendation 8)

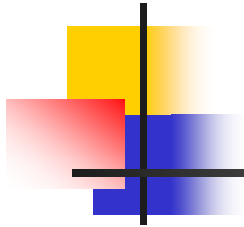
"For high profile issues, the "select committee" format should be used, with appropriate seating arrangements and pre-meeting preparation"
(para. 3.11 and recommendation 11)

Improving Education	Young People Engagement
<p>*Chair's recommended scrutiny priorities: anticipated to take up the first part of the meetings, approximately 50% of the time allocated for each meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Pupil Sweeps (Request by Panel) *Virtual School – Presentation by Virtual Head *Walsall School Improvement Strategy Action Plan: Priorities 1 to 3 *Walsall School Improvement Strategy Action Plan: Priorities 4 to 6 *Pupil Premium and its impact on Walsall schools *Key Stage 1, 2 Overview *Key Stages 3, 4 Overview *16-18 provision Overview <p>Statutory Assessment Process (Cllr. Wilson request)</p> <p>Committee approval sought for the Chairs recommended scrutiny priorities listed above.</p>	<p>Chair recommends that the Committee chooses no more than 2 of the items listed as any more might require extra meetings to be called in order to accommodate all the topics and to give the topics full consideration.</p> <p>UK Youth Parliament (Alan Michell request) Question Time Event</p> <p>Committee approval for Chair's suggestions above and priority of items to be indicated by the Committee.</p>
Safeguarding	
<p>Chair recommends that the Committee select a limited number of the suggestions below for scrutiny as opposed to those topics where Reports will not be expected to take up very much time and in the main are "for information" The greater the number of topics chosen, the greater the likelihood of extra meetings being required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Walsall Self Assessment of Services (Including Performance Data) Child Sexual Exploitation Update on Care Leavers Working Group Recommendations Monitoring of the role of the Corporate Parenting Board Independent Reviewing Officer – Annual Report Annual Complaints Report Effectiveness and implementation of MOSAIC Young Carers Fostering and Adoption Working Group – Final Report Children in Care Council Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service <p>Committee approval sought for the Chair's recommendations that a limited number of the above be chosen for scrutiny and Committee decision required as to which ones.</p>	

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Children's Services



Overview of Key Issues with a focus on
Education

Scrutiny Panel 23 June 2015

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Service Overview and Context

- Service managed in 3 service areas by 3 Assistant Directors:
 - Children's social care and safeguarding (Tony Griffin)
 - Early Help, Workforce Development and Commissioning (Andrea Potts)
 - Access and Achievement (Lynda Poole)

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Service Overview and Context

- Service Structure Chart (see Appendix 1)
- Service areas of responsibility (see Appendix 2)
- Service Key Contacts (see Appendix 3)
- Total Number of Employees in Children's Services (excluding school based staff): 730
 - Total Number of Employees (Access and Achievement): 153
 - Total Number of Employees (Social Care): 348
 - Total Number of Employees (Early Help): 210
 - Total Budget (56 million of which nearly 63% is used for Children's Social Care and Safeguarding)

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Access & Achievement



Lynda Poole

Education and School Improvement

Recent History



- 3rd Party Contractor pre: 2013
- April 2013 Education returned to Walsall Borough Council
- June 2014 Local Authority School Improvement Service Inspection: Ofsted judgement is “ineffective” because too few Walsall schools judged good or better
- August post Ofsted action plan drawn up and agreed with Ofsted: 2014: 6 key priorities



Recent History

Continued...

- November 2014: Education Challenge Board set up to monitor progress
- Termly meetings held with Ofsted, Regional Commissioners, DfE and Academy Sponsors
- March 2015: DfE visit with David Laws to review progress
- June 2015: Review of progress 1 year after Inspection based on 6 key priorities



Post Ofsted Action Plan

■ 6 key priorities

- Priority 1 – Ensure there is a clear strategy to develop future leaders and intervene quickly where leadership, including governance is weak
- Priority 2 – Urgently improve plans to deliver the Local Authority's improvement strategy. This should include clear and measureable criteria that can be used to regularly and rigorously check progress
- Priority 3 – Ensure that the Local Authority has a clear and up to date picture of the performance of all schools in order to act quickly to secure improvement and stem decline
- Priority 4 – Strengthen the implementation of the Local Authority's categorisation of schools to ensure that the support and challenge provided are proportionate to need
- Priority 5 – Ensure that there are robust systems in place to check and improve the quality of the school improvement work Local Authority Officers
- Priority 6 – Implement plans to promote and facilitate effective school to school support and signpost high quality services that schools can commission or broker



Progress & Achievement

External Review (June 2015 judged):

- Strong evidence of significant improvements in systems, structures and procedures
- Senior Leadership robust in drive for improvement and progress in 6 key priorities
- Working relationships with schools and Academies have significantly improved
- Shared vision and accountability between schools and Local Authority for better outcomes
- Continuing positive trend in school Ofsted Inspection outcomes, especially in leadership
- Schools have been categorised into support bands. Support is appropriately targeted and focussed



Progress & Achievement continued...

- A greater number of pupils now attend a good or better school, 71.5% (nationally = 76%)
- The proportion of good and outstanding schools in the Borough has increased by 4.1% since June 2014. Consequently, the gap with national has reduced
- Education Challenge Board provides rigorous challenge on pace of improvement
- Local Authority's knowledge of schools is improving
- Local Authority has used statutory powers – three Interim Executive Boards
- Strong staff appointments made to help drive up improvements



Other Achievements/Progress

- No school gone into special measures in past year (except UTC)
- Improved Leadership and Challenge of Governance
- Rigour of Safeguarding procedures in schools
- Confidence in schools data and assessments
- Clusters established, Directory and School to School support being established
- Head Teacher/Governor Working Group



Other Achievements/Progress Continued...

- Early Years/Early Help/School Ready strengthening
- 14-19 Partnership Board established
- Traded Services model with schools
- Support for improving the education attainment of Looked After Children



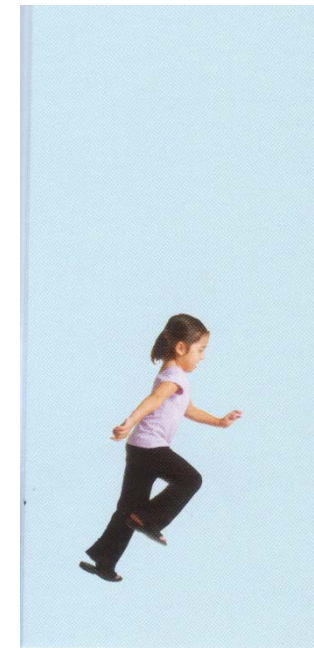
Challenges and Key Priorities

- Gaps in the attainment of pupils at each key stage for some vulnerable groups
- Continue to improve the performance of schools and academies so that the gaps with national close and Walsall pupils achieve better
- Narrowing the gap for pupils – particularly vulnerable groups
- Reaching and surpassing national targets
- Data – improve the use of data to challenge schools and achieve a 100% data return from all schools each term
- Recruit to a permanent staffing structure
- Quality assurance and improved evidence of school improvement work
- Recruitment and retention of quality leaders and teachers

YSS Service Divided into Four Areas

Context

- Youth Justice Service (YJ) – Walsall's Youth Justice Plan April 2014/2015. Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Youth Justice stock take – February 2015 positive outcomes
- Targeted Youth Support (TYS) was Youth Offending Team (YOT)
- Admissions Service – Pupil place planning
- School Property Development – School expansions, 2 Year placements





Youth Support Service

- YJ System is working well – evidence from stock take. Reduction in number of first-time entrants and young people in custody
- Strong emphasis on performance data and quality assurance and case file audits
- Decline in youth related anti-social behaviour
- Establishing links with Early Help

Recent Achievements

- Restructure completed in Targeted Youth Support
- Connexions contract reduced and successful relocation



Youth Support Service

Admissions Service - small service delivering service across schools and academies 94% of pupils placed in 1st Preference schools in 2014

- More appeals being heard and well managed process

School Property Developments - Key Primary school enlargements are:

- King Charles Primary School
- Fibbersley Primary School
- Christchurch Primary School



Youth Support Service

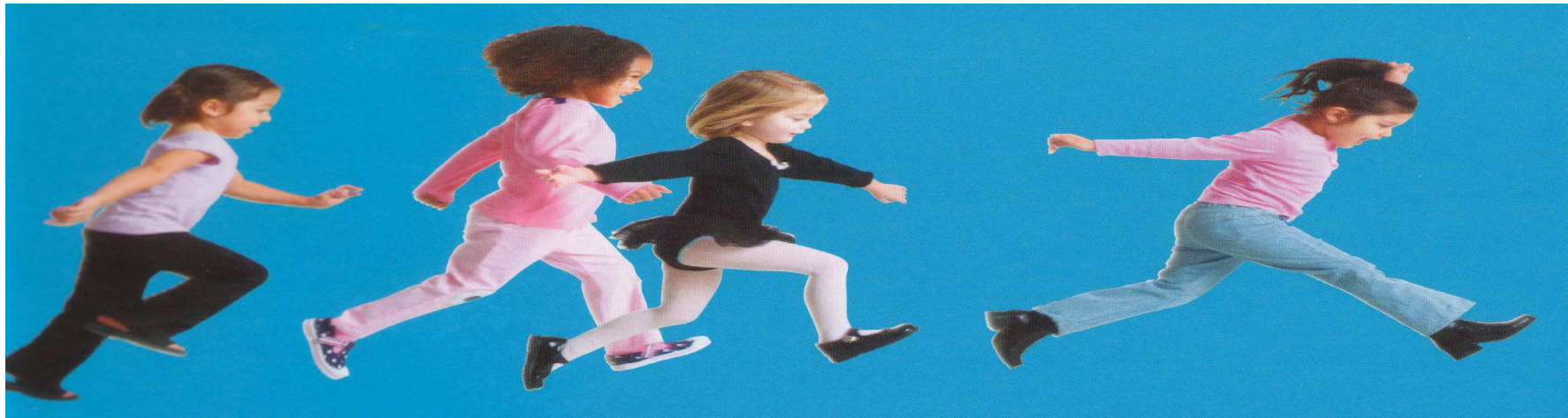
Challenges

- Changes to YS Service across West Midlands / Nationally
- Service Re-design and Restructure in TYS
- Admissions Team – Small team to service 121 schools / academies
- School Property Developments – 3 Schemes to be completed by September 2016

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Children's Social Care & safeguarding



Tony Griffin



Recent history

- June 2012: Ofsted judgement is “inadequate”.
- July 2013: Ofsted re-inspection judgement is “adequate”
- July 2014: Government improvement notice lifted.
- March 2015: DfE visit leads to letter from Edward Timpson who confirms the Council is making continued improvement and no need for further monitoring
- Summer 2015: Self-evaluation is “requires improvement”



Recent achievements 1

- Restructure completed in April 2015. New Practice Manager role to focus on service quality and outcomes
- Average caseloads have reduced to an average of 20 per social worker
- Introduction of 'Edge of Care' Team in April 2015
- Scrutiny assured about CSE



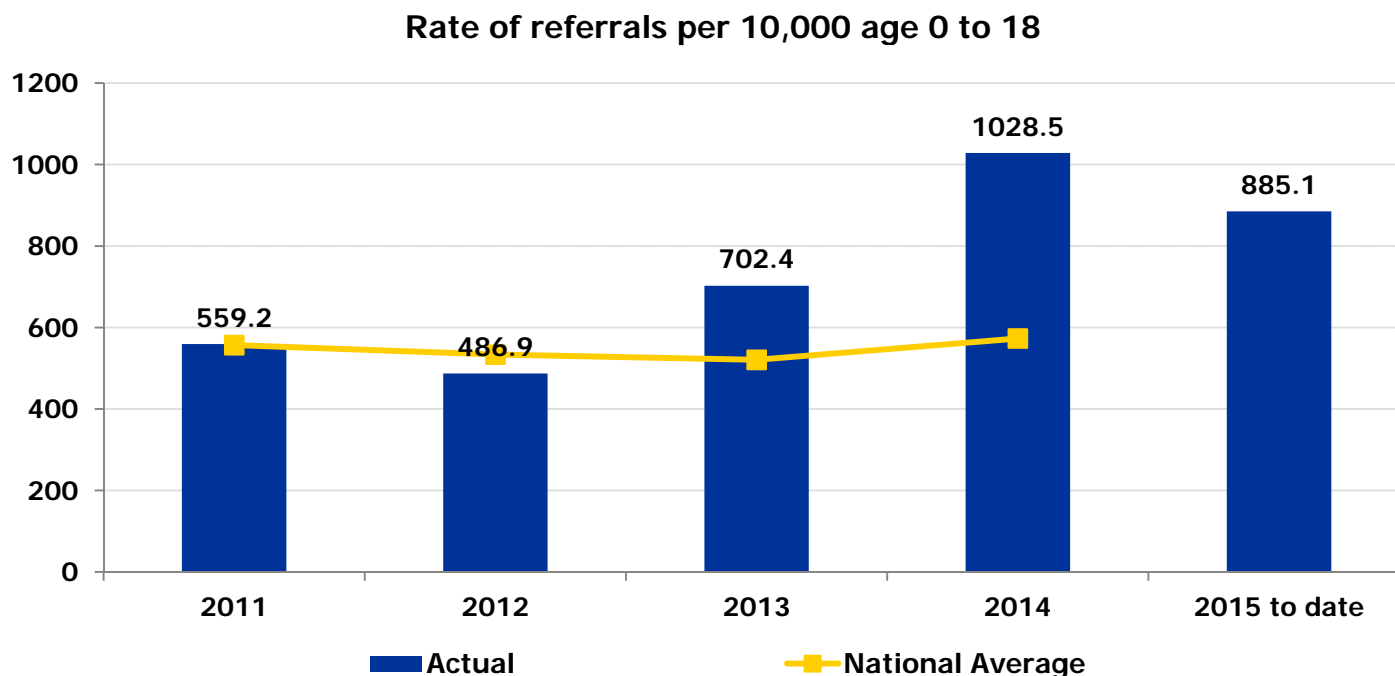
Recent achievements 2

- Phase 1 of new information management system (Mosaic) live in Fostering and Adoption from May 2015
- Improved engagement with schools/ headteachers about Early Help and Social Care
- Refocused and strengthened strategic partnerships (Children and Young People's Partnership and Corporate Parenting Board)

Performance headlines:

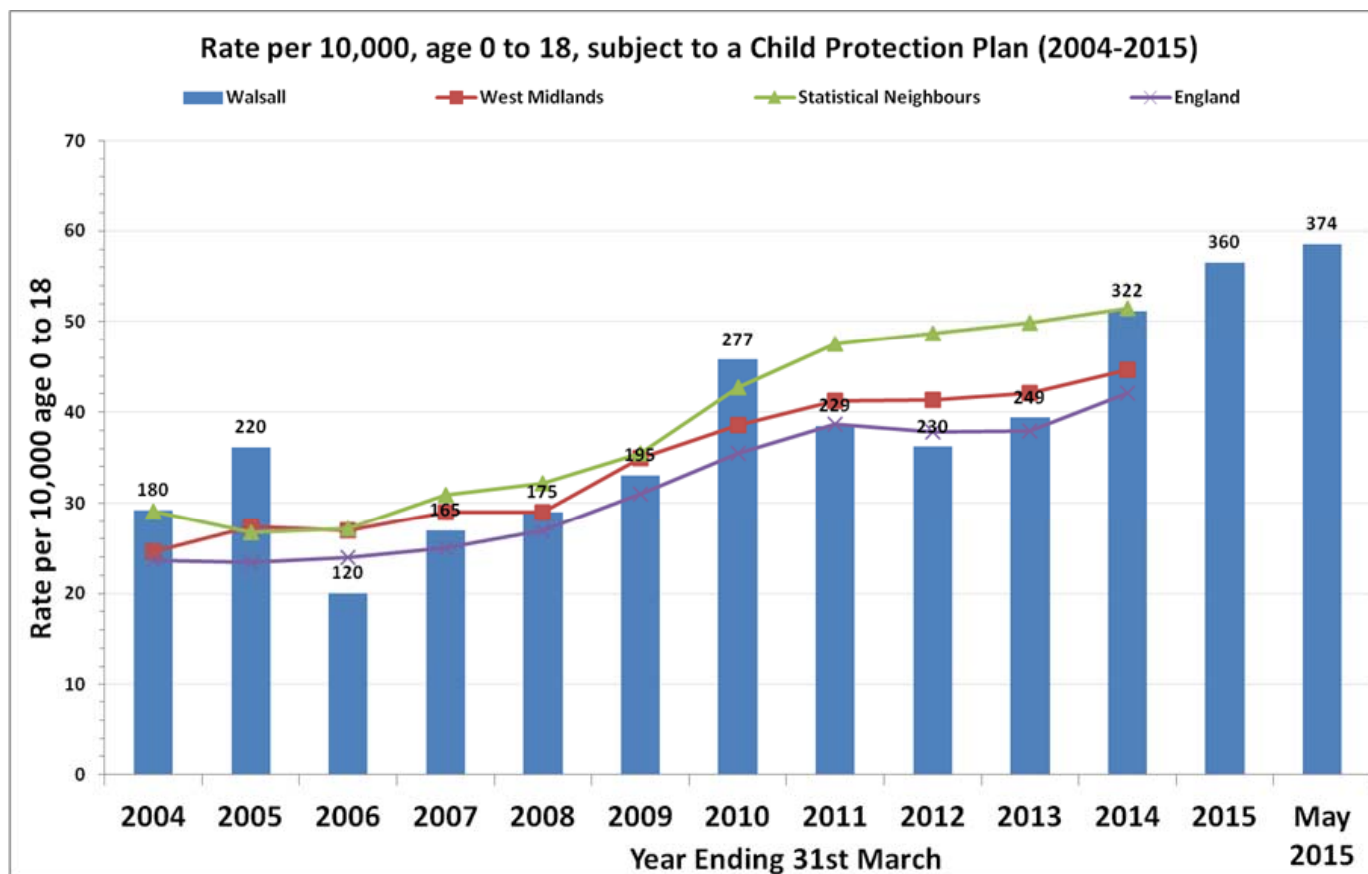
1. Initial Response Service

IRS received 6,541 referrals in 2013/14 (the second highest nationally). The number is now reducing and those requiring attention are receiving a single assessment



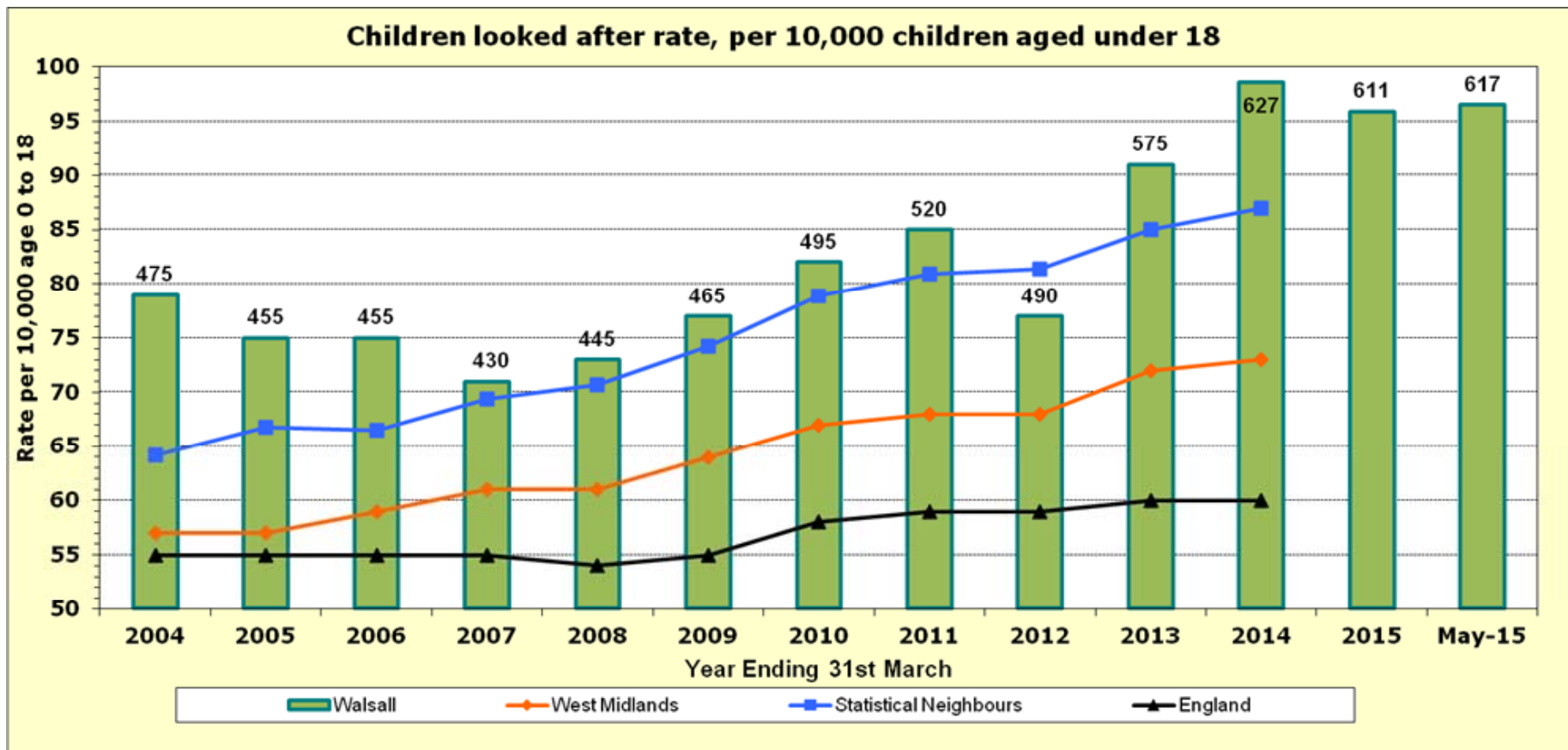
2. Child Protection

- Number of children with a child protection plan suggests our threshold is correct



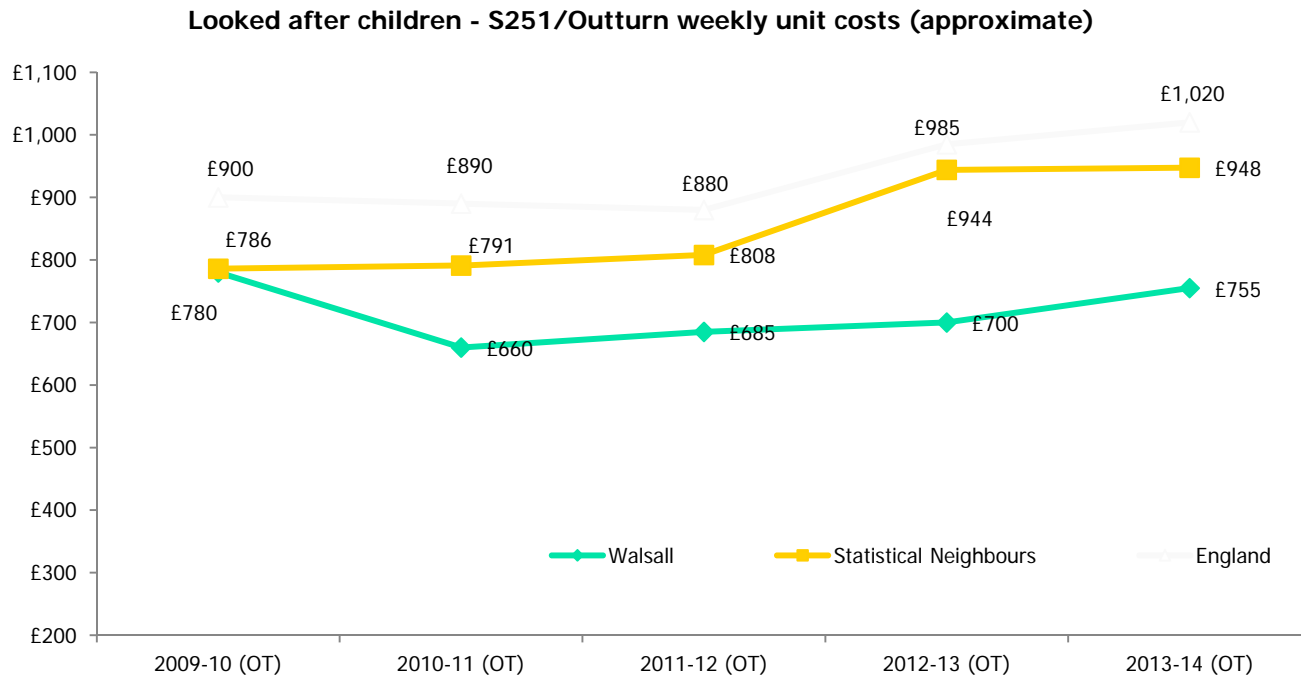
3. Looked After Children (1)

- Number has stabilised ...



3. Looked After Children (2)

- Our average cost for placements is lower than our comparators





Financial context

- Support and commitment to the needs of vulnerable children ...
- ... though we must control overspends
- Savings targets in respect of short breaks for disabled children, home to school transport and contact arrangements for looked after children



Challenges

- High rate of contact, referral and re-referral
- Numbers of Looked After Children
- Insufficient Walsall Foster Carers and High Costs
- Reduction in preventative services
- Deprivation levels likely to increase (owing to austerity, benefit changes etc)
- Need for partner agencies to take more of the risk and responsibility
- Recruiting permanent social work staff (average 30%). In IRS, 60% are agency workers



Continued Improvement

- Corporate focus on reducing LAC and securing better outcomes
- Full implementation of Mosaic by Sept 2015
- Complete the development of the MASH
- Understand better reasons for re-referral and take action ...
- ... while continuing to improve partners' understanding of thresholds
- Continue recent positive recruitment, to reduce dependency on agency staff

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Early Help , Commissioning & Workforce Development



Andrea Potts



Look back.... some achievements

- Making Early Help everyone's business
- Improving pathways to Early Help services
- Improving oversight of quality and provision
- Strengthened understanding of demand
- Developed a Newly Qualified social work programme
- 66% of eligible 2 Years accessing Early Learning Places (nearly 75% by September 2015)
- Children Centre Re-design will be fully implemented by September (including co-location with Health visitors) to achieve required budget savings
- 229 commissioned contracts across Children's Services
- The lives of 795 families have improved through the 'Troubled Families programme in the last 3 years



Look forward... areas for improvement

- Measuring & evaluating the impact of Early Help
- Whole family responses to parental substance misuse, mental ill health and domestic abuse
- Continued strengthening of relationships, service integration and delivery across the partnership
- Building skills, capacity, capability and management oversight across the partnership



Next steps

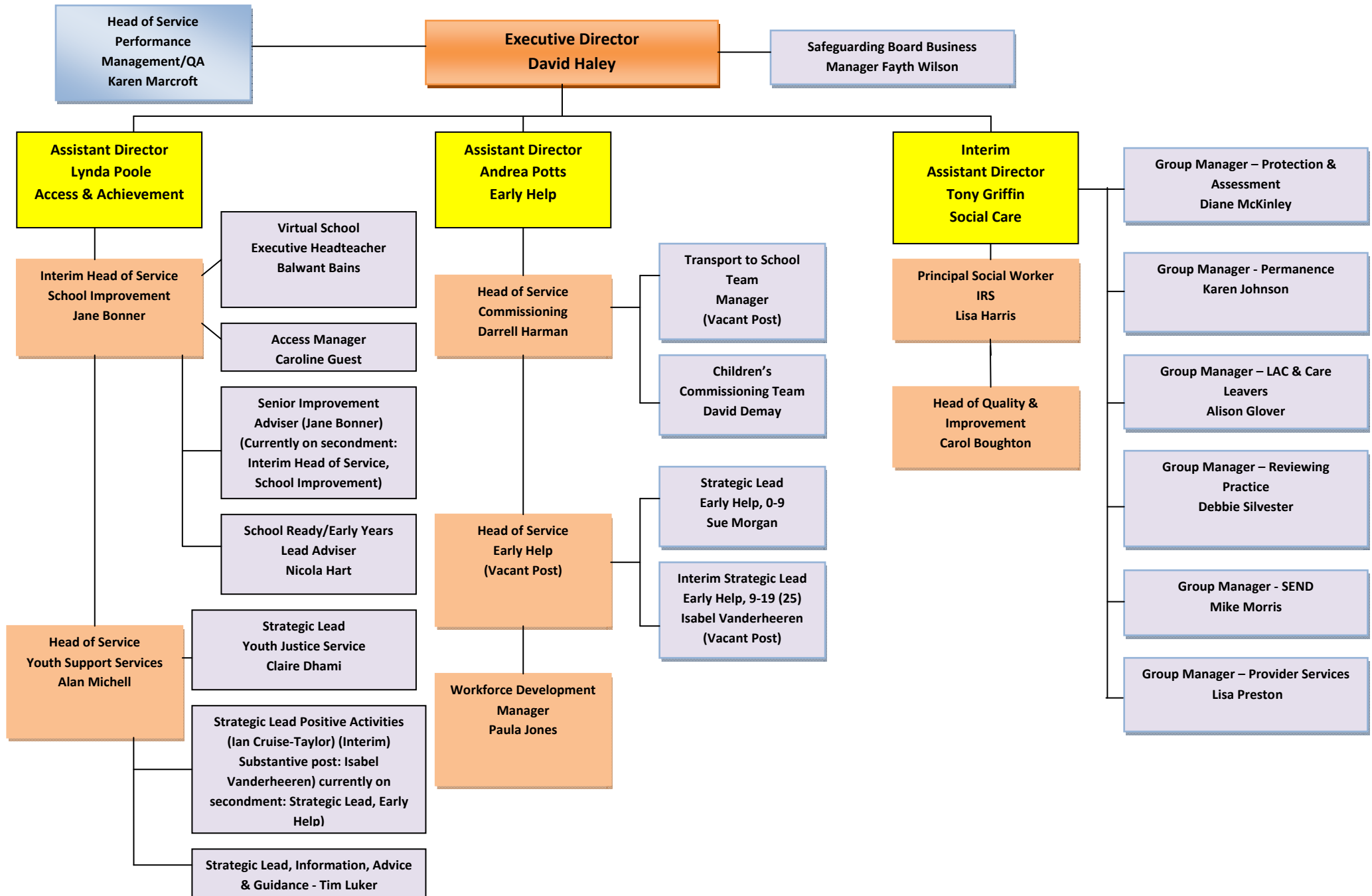
- Integrate service delivery for 0-5's across health visitors, children's centres and early years
- Build voluntary sector capacity
- Consider how services become more locality based
- Redesign services to focus on families and communities priorities
- Update Workforce development strategy
- Deliver 2 Year Old Early Learning Places
- Identified 144 families for further support through 'Troubled Families' funding (phase 2)

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WALSALL CHILDREN'S SERVICES STRUCTURE – JUNE 2015



**David Haley – Executive Director – Children and Young People
(PA – Gwin Khatkar 01922 652035)**

<u>Quality Assurance of Safeguarding arrangements</u>	<u>Corporate Parenting</u>	<u>Vulnerable Children, Safeguarding & Family Support</u>	<u>Early Help Commissioning and Workforce Development</u>	<u>Youth Support Service and School Admissions</u>	<u>Education</u>
Support to and development of Walsall Safeguarding Children Board	Provision of resources including Family Placements, and Residential Services	Initial Response service to children in need and those in need of protection	Early Intervention and Preventative Services	Primary and Secondary Admissions and School Organisation	Quality, standards and performance of Schools and Academies, nursery/ infant, primary, secondary, special (0-19+)
Assurance of Child Protection arrangements	Adoption recruitment and placement	Services to children with Disabilities and their families	Integrated Workforce Development	Targeted Youth Work	School/Academy improvements and outcomes including Ofsted inspections
Assurance of care planning for looked after children including Independent Reviewing Officer and advocacy services	Looked after children casework	Commissioning of Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services	Strategic Lead for Children's Centres Troubled Families, Intensive Family Support, Edge of Care Team	Youth Justice Service and Targeted Youth Support	14-19 schools/business links and partnerships
	Transition and Leaving care	Family Support and Safeguarding services	Parenting Support services	Engagement of young people and active involvement	Governors and school governance
	Commissioning Independent placements Contact &			Careers Information, Advice and	Traded services to schools
					Safeguarding in schools
					Elective Home Education
					Access/Behaviour and Attendance

	Family Assessment services		<p>Support to Walsall Children's and Young People's Partnership</p> <p>Commissioning support for social care, SEND and Early Help</p> <p>Contract Management and Governance</p> <p>Commissioning Intelligence and analysis</p> <p>Assisted Transport and Taxis</p> <p>Children's Services Administrative Business Support</p>	<p>Guidance for skills and careers (IAG)</p> <p>Parent Partnership Service for children with SEN</p> <p>Lead for teenage pregnancy reduction and support to young carers</p> <p>Education Business Partnership</p>	<p>Virtual School (Looked After Children)</p> <p>Review and monitor delivery of service plan</p> <p>Lead on strategic and service planning and service improvement</p>
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