

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee held on Tuesday, 18th September 2012 at 6.00 pm at Short Wood School, Limekiln Lane, Telford

PRESENT: Councillors M. Ion (Chair), S. Burrell, G. Green, J. Greenaway, A. Mackenzie, C. Turley and Co-optees A. Atkinson, R. Aveley, S. Harris, S. Rayner, M. Ward

Attending: K. Perry, Interim Assistant Director Children's Safeguarding; V. McKay, Group Manager Commissioning, Procurement & Brokerage (CYP); M. White, Service Delivery Manager Child Protection & Assessment; S. Jones, Scrutiny Officer.

The meeting opened with a tour of Short Wood school by Sue Harris, Head Teacher, and Reg Snell, Chair of the Board of Governors. They also briefed members on some of the challenges facing a Head Teacher and Governors in leading and managing a primary school, making the following points:

- Short Wood Primary and Wrekin View Primary schools were moving towards becoming a co-operative learning community which meant changing category from a community to a foundation school, and acquiring charitable status as a co-operative Trust. They were the first schools to move ahead as a co-operative learning community and other schools were now looking at the model.
- School results should not be taken at face value without looking at the story behind the figures. Cohorts can vary dramatically from one year to the next, and members need to be aware of the specific cohort reasons for results. There was high mobility within the school and 47% of the children were bi-lingual which presented challenges. 15 children with very limited or no English had joined the school last year, and this had had an impact on the results for that year. There was a diverse range of nationalities in the school, the largest being Mirpuri at 6%, and there were further challenges because of the different dialects within the language and the fact that some cultures did not have a reading culture which meant children started from a lower base line.
- A number of children with complex physical needs had joined the school so adaptations such as hoists and changing facilities had been made.
- Sue Harris emphasised the importance of break-out spaces for sessions with Learning Mentors, Inclusion Managers, volunteer readers or other learning support, and felt this was important for the design of BSF schools.

The Chairman thanked Sue Harris and Reg Snell for the tour and for hosting the meeting, and Mr. Snell extended an invitation to members to re-visit during school hours.

Before the official business of the meeting began, Cllr. Ion welcomed two new co-opteed members to the Committee. Steve Rayner had been nominated to represent the Anglican Diocese and Mr. Roger Aveley had been appointed as a Town & Parish Council representative.

CYPSC-1 MINUTES

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People

Scrutiny Committee held on 22nd May 2012 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

CYPSC-2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs. J. Loveridge, M. Smith; Co-optee S. Ali.

CYPSC-3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

CYPSC-4 CHILDREN IN CARE PLACEMENT STRATEGY

The Chairman began by suggesting three key questions that the Committee should address during the review of the children in care placement strategy over a series of meetings:

- Do current policies, procedures and practices keep children and young people in the Council's care safe?
- Does the Council's strategy and processes for care placements offer the best value for money?
- What responsibility, if any, does the Council have for children placed in care in the borough by other authorities?

Reports had been circulated with the agenda on the children in care commissioning strategy and sufficiency duty; quality assurance processes for residential care providers and foster care agencies; arrangements for monitoring the safety and progress of children placed out of borough and a summary of costs and performance indicators relating to children in care. Additional papers were tabled at the meeting to show the placement procedure, and the distribution of children placed outside the borough.

Officers presented key points from the reports and members asked questions to probe the information in more detail. The following additional information was provided in response to questions:

- The placement procedure and factors affecting placement decisions was described. The need to place is usually identified by the social work team after initial assessment, or as a result of a placement breakdown. Permission to accommodate must be granted by the relevant Service Delivery Manager, unless it is a placement breakdown. Social workers assess the needs of the child and sibling groups against a range of criteria to determine the type of placement and location needed. Factors assessed include presenting and historic behaviour, placement history, ethnicity, disability, bail conditions, siblings, age, SEN, transport, physical and mental health needs, contact with family, gender, and locations preferred or to avoid. Requests are referred to the Brokerage team who match the requirements with available provision from the database. If foster care is required, the internal foster care register is always checked first, and external placements (agency foster care or residential care) are only made if an internal foster placement that matches the needs of the child cannot be found, or if foster care is not suitable for the child. All external placements must be approved by the

Interim Assistant Director, Children's Safeguarding. Searches are done via the West Midlands database through our framework contracts initially, and best options are given to the social worker for decision. The placement is made via a contractual arrangement which take account of quality and cost and the placement and contract is monitored through planning meetings, CIC reviews and quality monitoring review and visits and contract review.

- External (agency) foster care is purchased in the vast majority of cases through a West Midlands framework contract set up in April 2011 following a tender process. Telford & Wrekin contracts with 42 independent agencies through the framework. Where a suitable placement is not sources through the framework contract, then spot placements are purchased via a West Midlands spot contract. Residential care is purchased either through a block contract (4 beds at Jigsaw) or through a West Midlands residential framework contract set up in May 2012. There are 144 providers in the framework. The framework contracts have driven down the cost of external placements and also improved the validation and quality assurance of providers. Providers are tiered by quality and cost on the database, and the top tier is searched first. The number of providers in each tier was not available at the meeting but could be provided, but members were assured that there was a considerable number in the top tier.
- Members asked about foster care capacity, and whether children are ever placed in residential care because of a lack of foster carers. The Assistant Director replied that because of the high costs of external residential care, placement decisions are always challenged to see how else provision could be found, and the internal foster carers were used as flexibly as possible. For example, the foster care bedroom-sharing policy could be varied and exemptions made for a few days without going to panel, to avoid the need to use external care. In these cases, careful matching is critical if the foster carer has their own children. Sometimes, it is not possible to find a foster care placement suitable to the needs of the child and the child has to be placed in residential care that closely matches their needs.
- Members asked how placements with residential providers are negotiated and were informed that an initial minimum period is usually agreed depending on the circumstances of the child. The initial contract is usually a month but can extend to a much longer placement. Once a child is settled, consideration has to be given to the impact of disruption in moving the child on.
- Members wanted to know about arrangements for authorising external placements in the absence of the Assistant Director Children's Safeguarding, and it was explained that if she is away, the Assistant Directors for Family & Communities or Social Care, or the Director of Children's Services, approve the placement. External placements cannot be made without approval at AD level or above and all staff are aware of the authorisation process.
- There were questions about the coverage of services out of hours or at peak referral times. The process is that child protection concerns are referred to the safeguarding duty team. Social workers make an initial response to establish whether there is any immediate risk of harm to the child, for example if a child has

been injured. A full assessment is carried out which includes looking at the needs of the child, the family situation, contact etc. Even if serious concerns are substantiated then the result is still more likely to be a child protection plan, rather than the child being taken into care. If a placement is needed, the social worker passes all the assessment information and any concerns to the Brokerage team via a referral form to source a suitable placement. The speed with which a child is taken into care depends on the situation - ideally it is a planned process, but there are emergencies when the child needs to be taken into care the same day which can be challenging. There are patterns in referrals with slightly more during holidays, at the end of the week or late in the day. Once a referral is made, the team carries on working until a placement is made. There is an out-of-hours service for late or weekend emergency referrals.

- Officers gave some scenarios to demonstrate the specialised or highly complex care needs of some children or sibling groups. This showed that although referrals are matched with internal foster carers in the first instance (where the child is suitable for fostering), it is not always possible to source an internal placement and a wider search is necessary. It is especially challenging when sibling groups with different needs are involved, and efforts are made to keep siblings together unless there is a good reason for separation. Most placements remain stable, but breakdown can happen especially when a child exhibits previously unknown behaviour, such as sexually inappropriate behaviour, which may put the carers' own children at risk. Foster carers are required to give 28 days notice to terminate a placement, but this is difficult to apply if carers are concerned about their own children.
- Members wanted to know more about children placed out of the borough - where they are, the factors affecting placement location, how the quality of provision is checked and how the placements are monitored. Information was tabled which showed that as of 18th September 2012, 127 children were placed outside the Telford & Wrekin boundary, of which, 85.83% were within a 50 mile radius of their home address, 7.87% between 50-100 miles and 6.3% over 100 miles. Of the children outside Telford & Wrekin, there were 1-4 children placed in 17 other authority areas (32 in total), and five or more placed in Shropshire, Herefordshire, Staffordshire, Worcestershire and Thurrock, with the majority being in Shropshire. Overall, 61.7% of all looked after children were placed within the Shropshire county boundary. The types of out of borough placements included internal foster carers (where carers live outside the boundary or had moved and the children had moved with them), private foster care, residential homes, hostels, and a small number placed with friends/relatives, hospital, residential schools or a secure unit.
- The figures showed that most children are placed locally or where their education and family contact can be maintained - it is very important for the children to maintain on-going relationships. The policy is to place children as close to home as possible unless there is a safety issue and placement locations were always sought where the child's education would not be disrupted. Of the 65 children placed in the Shropshire authority area, most continued to go to school in Telford and Wrekin. Of the 85% within a 50 mile radius of home, some were still attending school in Telford and Wrekin. Travel or taxi costs for school were built into the cost of placements. Of the 6.3% placements over 100 miles radius, some were

deliberate for safety reasons, or were necessary because the children had very complex needs for which there is no local provision. There was a particular problem with finding Tier 4 (hospital provision) CAMHS provision.

- Members asked whether children be moved around the country. Children are only moved if a placement breaks down, if the provision is found not to be right or if circumstances change, for example when a child is ready to move from residential care to foster care. Moves need to be considered carefully because of the disruption to the child, siblings and education.
- Members asked questions about how residential homes were quality assured. The tender process for the West Midlands framework contract had been a big exercise and providers had been put through a comprehensive and rigorous quality assurance process which included financial/insurance validation, Ofsted reports and the Councils' own quality evaluation which had involved young people. All Ofsted reports are uploaded to the West Midlands database and providers must update the database with any new judgements. The latest judgements are checked by the brokerage team before a placement is made, and the social worker may visit a home prior to placement to check the unit is suitable for the child in terms of the other young people there. Providers must have an "Outstanding" or "Good" rating to be included within the framework contract. If a provider's rating is downgraded to "Unsatisfactory" or worse while a child is placed in the home, the Ofsted findings and the home's response to recommendations are considered to determine what course of action to take. If a home has failed an inspection, the home is visited to find out what happened and what actions have been put in place to address the issues, and progress against the action plan would continue to be monitored. Depending on the nature of the findings, the child would not be moved if this would create unnecessary disruption unless Ofsted had suspended the service or we considered the placement unsafe. No further placements would be made until standards had improved. In addition to statutory inspection reports, the West Midlands authorities share quality intelligence.
- Members wanted to know more about how the progress, experience and care setting of children outside the borough are monitored and whether there is a danger of "out of sight, out of mind". The statutory requirements for visiting children in care apply to all children regardless of location, and members were assured that these are carried out. The statutory minimum is to visit within one week of placement, then at 6 weekly intervals during the first year. Visits are likely to be more frequent in the early days of a placement or if needed by the child. There is clear guidance on the purpose of the visits and the social worker must write up a report for each statutory visit.
- In terms of monitoring the child's progress in school, the social worker is responsible for drawing up a care plan for each child and arranging regular care plan reviews. The review meetings are run by an independent reviewing officer and involve all parties involved in the care plan including the child (if they wish) and parents, and through the review process there are links to schools so the child's progress and any changes can be monitored.

- In terms of increasing local capacity, through the West Midlands commissioning framework, the Council was trying to develop the market by encouraging the Tier 1 (top quality/cost) residential providers to open facilities in the borough and one of the providers was looking at properties. The same approach was taken to foster care agencies.
- Officers were asked about accountability and whether there was one officer with an overview of all the children in care. Within the Child Protection & Assessment Service Delivery Area, there are 3 Team Managers managing social workers and each social worker has their own case load. The social workers have detailed knowledge of their caseload, the Team Managers have a good overview of the key issues for each child in the caseloads of the social workers in their team, and the responsible Service Delivery Manager has an overview of the children in care within their area as a whole. The most complex cases are discussed with the Interim Assistant Director.
- Members wanted to know whether there are any reciprocal arrangements with other local authorities where children are placed, for example, so a local social worker visits the child. This is where distance is more of an issue because of the practicalities of visits. There had been examples of arrangements with other authorities but this is a judgment call - a key issue for the safety and progress of the child is the strength of relationships with partners. Social workers in Telford & Wrekin have built strong teams around the child which they are looking to replicate around the country and this would be lost by using other authorities' social workers. Local placements are not necessarily safer for some children with particular behaviours and needs.

At the end of the discussion, the Chairman reminded members that the role of the Committee was not to look at the mechanics of the processes, but to ask whether the policies and processes that are in place kept children in care as safe as possible, particularly in the light of the Rochdale cases which had been in the media. The Chairman sought assurances from officers on the following points;

- That the statutory visits to all children in care happen regardless of location
- That there is as much continuity of social workers for each child as possible
- That the visits are documented
- That monitoring is robust and that the systems keep children and young people in the Council's care as safe as possible.

Officers assured members that the systems in place are adhered to, and that they keep children as safe as possible. It was not always possible to get things right first time and sometimes placements needed to be reassessed, but the monitoring that was in place meant that problems were picked up and could be resolved. For example it could be difficult to get CAMHS to recognise mental health problems and there had been commissioning issues with the service.

The Chairman thanked members for their positive responses to his recommendation circulated by e-mail that the Council should seek to hold regular - every year or every two years - briefings for all elected members on their responsibilities as corporate parents and that councillors' attendance or non-attendance at

these briefings are published on the Council's website on an annual basis. Having gained the support of the Committee, the Chairman would pursue the recommendation through the appropriate channels.

Due to the lateness of the hour, the Chairman deferred the discussion about value for money issues until the next meeting on 5th November, and invited members to put forward their questions in advance of the meeting.

CYPSC-5 EDUCATION PERFORMANCE UPDATE

A table showing the attainment of children in care at Key Stages 2 and 4 between 2007/08 to 2010/11 compared to Telford & Wrekin and national averages had been circulated with the agenda for the meeting. The Chairman explained that this had been circulated for information, and would come back to the next meeting with the full results for the borough for 2011/12.

CYPSC-6 WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the report of the Scrutiny Officer on the priorities for the work programme. The report set out the proposed priorities based on feedback from consultation and informal discussion with members. Members agreed the priorities set out in the report. The Chairman assured Cllr. Burrell that the Action Plan arising from the findings of the Ofsted inspection would be scrutinised by the Committee and informed Cllr. Greenaway that he intended to meet the Chairman of the Local Children's Safeguarding Board (LCSB) to discuss links with scrutiny. Steve Rayner said that the LCSB should be required to report at least annually to scrutiny.

RESOLVED

- **That the work programme set out in section 5.3-5.6 of the report be agreed**
- **That the decisions of the Scrutiny management Board on 4th July be noted.**

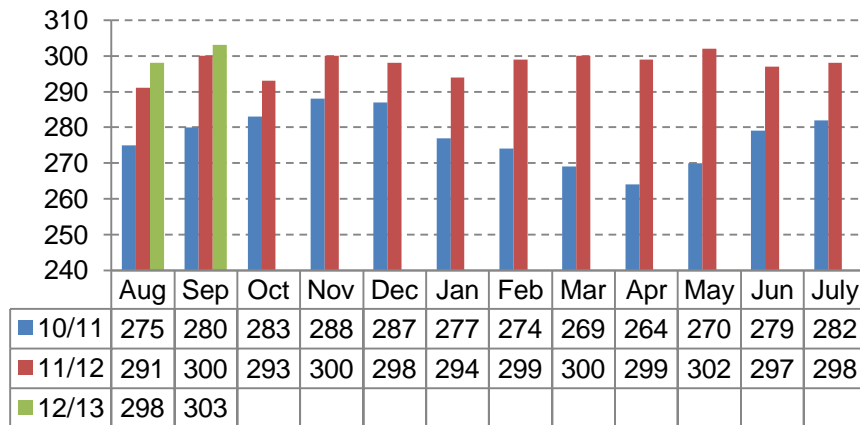
The meeting ended at 8.30 pm.

Chairman:

Date:

CHILDREN IN CARE – MONTHLY PERFORMANCE DASHBOARD 31/8/2012

Children In Care at Month End (September 2010 - September 2012)



From Oct 10 – Sep 11 the average number of children in care monthly was 280. From Oct 11 – Sep 12 the average number of children in care was 298. This is a 6.4% increase,

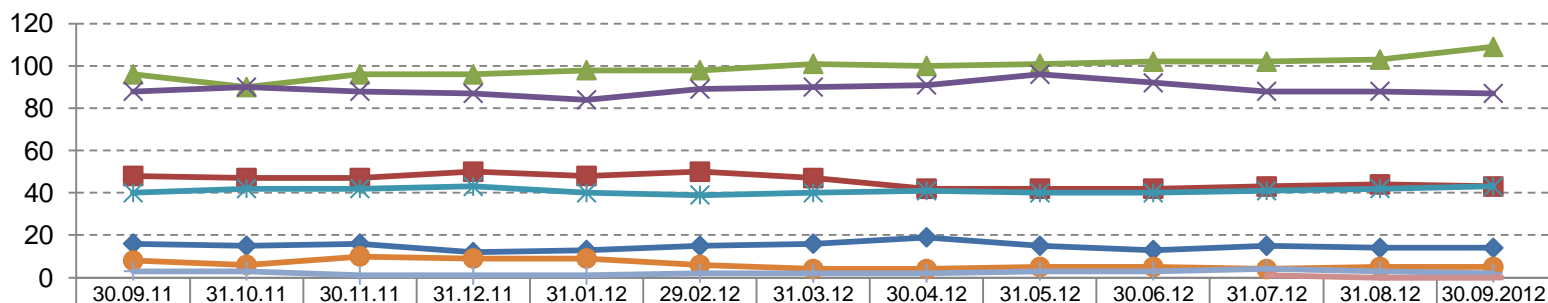
New Children In Care Episodes by Age Group and by percentage of CIC population (Based on a rolling year)

	01/10/09 – 30/09/10	% of new CIC	01/10/10 – 30/09/11	% of new CIC	01/10/11 – 30/09/12	% of new CIC
Under 1	36	32.7%	31	24.2%	30	23.3%
1-4 Years	19	17.3%	24	18.8%	34	26.4%
5-9 Years	12	10.9%	31	24.2%	23	17.8%
10-15 Years	39	35.5%	39	30.5%	39	30.2%
16+ Years	4	3.6%	3	2.3%	3	2.3%
	110		128		129	

In comparison to the same period last year, latest data shows a increase in the percentage of 1-4 year olds coming into care and a decrease in the percentage of 5-9 years olds coming into care. The proportion of other age groups remains consistent with last year.

	Cessations in 2011-2012 split by age and reason							Total Cessations Apr- Sep 2012
	Under 1	1-4 Years	5-9 Years	10-15 Years	16+ Years	Grand Total	% of total cessations	
E11 - Adopted – application unopposed	1	4	1			6	4.8%	6 (10.7%)
E12 - Adopted, consent dispensed with		19	1			20	16.1%	6 (10.7%)
E4 - Returned home to live with parents (no order)	5	15	12	27	2	61	49.2%	20 (35.7%)
E41 - Returned home - Residence order				1		1	0.8%	3 (5.4%)
E43 - Special guardianship order made to former foster carers		6				6	4.8%	2 (3.6%)
E44 - Special guardianship order made to carers other than former foster carers							0%	1 (1.8%)
E5 - Independent arrangement with formalised support					18	18	14.6%	10 (17.9%)
E6 - Independent arrangement (no formalised support)		1			2	3	2.4%	
E7 - Transferred to adult social services					2	2	1.6%	3 (5.4%)
E8 - CLA ceased for any other reason	1	1	2	1	1	6	4.8%	5 (8.9%)
E9 - Sentenced to custody				1		1	0.8%	
Grand Total	7	46	16	30	25	124		56

Children In Care / Supportive Accommodation at Month End by Placement Type (based on a rolling year)



Placement Type	30.09.11	31.10.11	30.11.11	31.12.11	31.01.12	29.02.12	31.03.12	30.04.12	31.05.12	30.06.12	31.07.12	31.08.12	30.09.12
Placed for Adoption	16	15	16	12	13	15	16	19	15	13	15	14	14
Q1 - Rel/Friend	48	47	47	50	48	50	47	42	42	42	43	44	43
Q2 - Local Auth Carer	96	90	96	96	98	98	101	100	101	102	102	103	109
Q2 - Agency Carer	88	90	88	87	84	89	90	91	96	92	88	88	87
Residential Placements	40	42	42	43	40	39	40	41	40	40	41	42	43
P1 - Placed with Parents	8	6	10	9	9	6	4	4	5	5	4	5	5
P2 - Supportive Lodgings	3	3	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	4	3	2
Z1 - Other Placement											1	0	0

Placement Type	Children in Care at 31.03.12	Weekly Unit Cost 2011/12	Children in Care at 31.07.12	Weekly Unit Cost 31.07.12	Children in Care at 31.08.12	Weekly Unit Cost 31.08.12	Children in Care at 30.09.12	Weekly Unit Cost 30.09.12
Placed for Adoption	16	N/A	15	N/A	14	N/A	14	N/A
Relative/Friend Carer	47	£225	43	£233	44	£229	43	£240
LA Carer	101	£279	102	£278	103	£280	109	£272
Agency Foster Carer	90	£798	88	£808	88	£807	87	£806
Residential Placements	40	£3,493	41	£3,054	42	£3,016	43	£3,002
Placed with Parents	4	N/A	4	N/A	5	N/A	5	N/A
Supportive Lodgings	2	N/A	4	N/A	3	N/A	2	N/A
Other Placement			1	N/A	0	N/A	0	N/A
TOTAL =	300	*£832	298	*£800	299	£804	303	£790

36% of children were placed in LA foster Care at end of September 2012 which is an increase from the same point last year (32.1%).

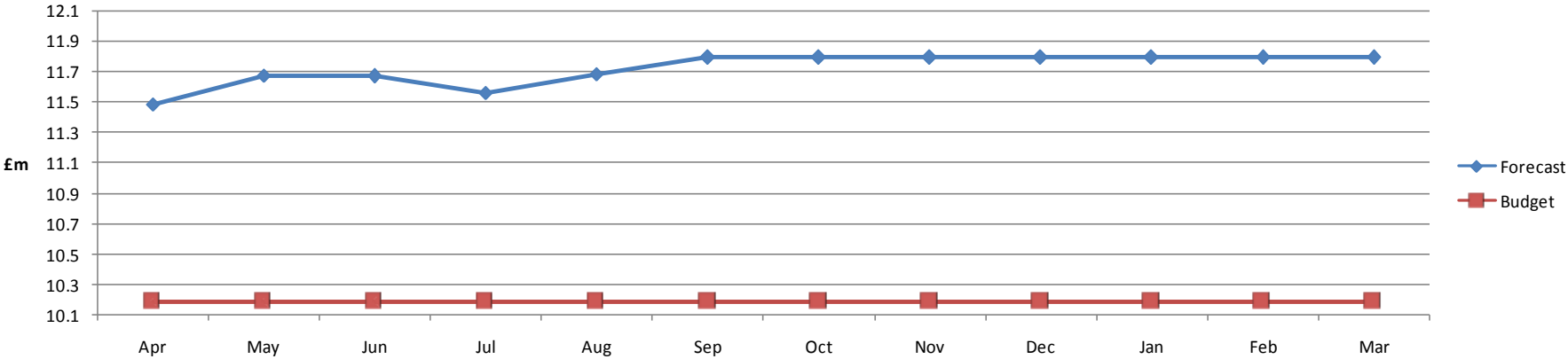
Overall 78.9% (239) of our looked after children are placed in foster care, including relative/ friend carers, this mirrors the same point last year (232 – 77.6%)

The percentage of children in residential homes as at the end of September 2012 (14.2%) is slightly higher than at the same point last year (40/299 – 13.4%)

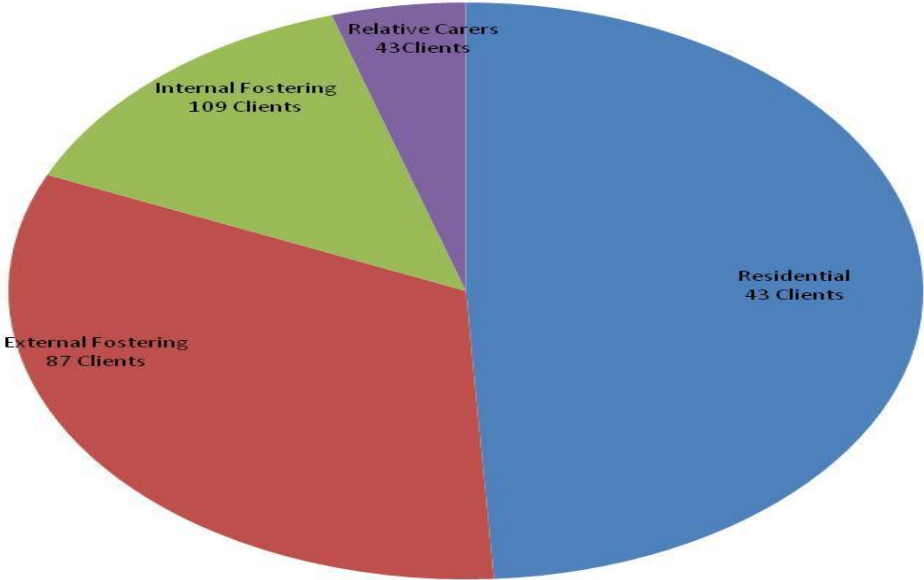
* **The Total weekly unit cost** is calculated by dividing the full year forecast for all placements by the total number of weeks forecast for all placements.

Placement Cost Analysis – Year 2012/2013

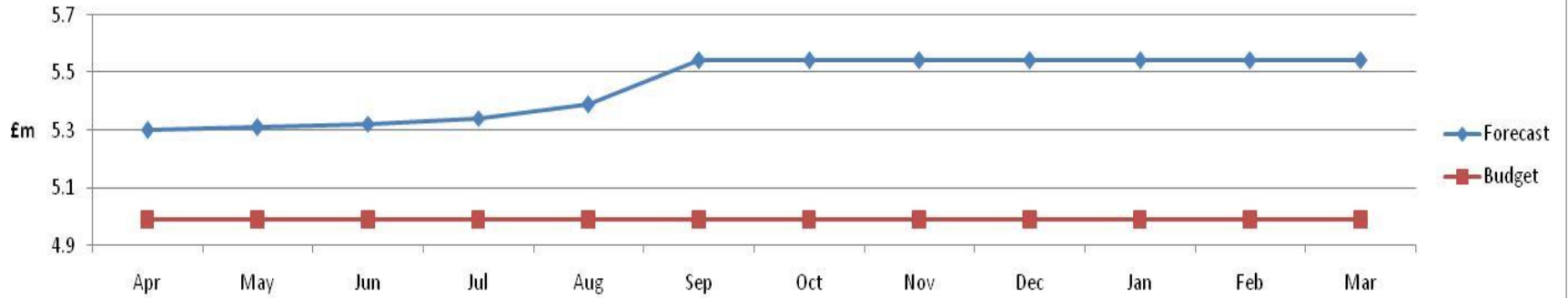
Total Placement Costs



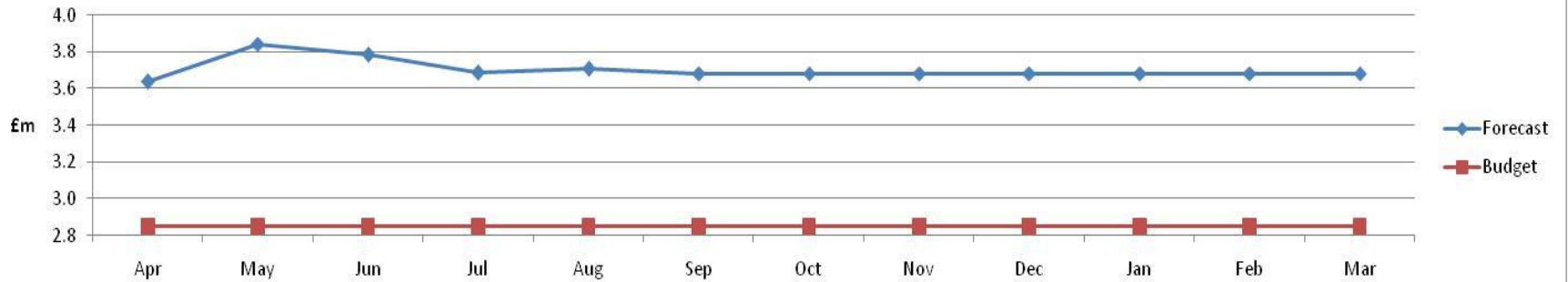
Total Cost of Placements 2012/13



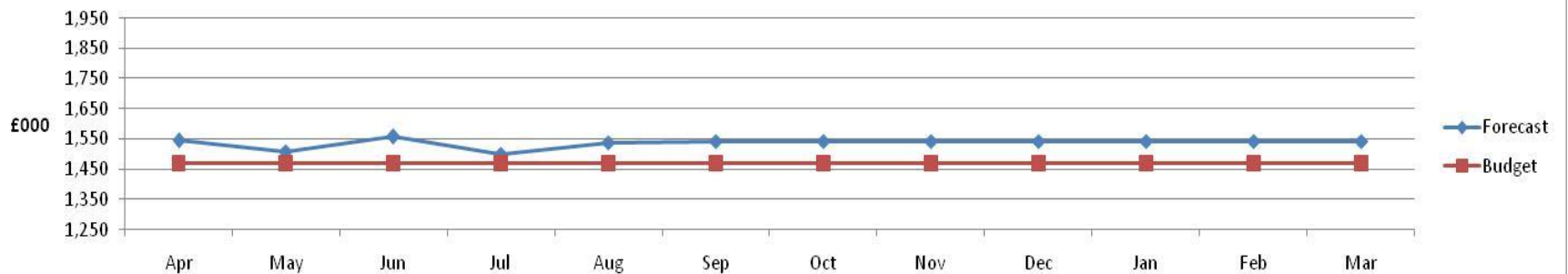
Residential



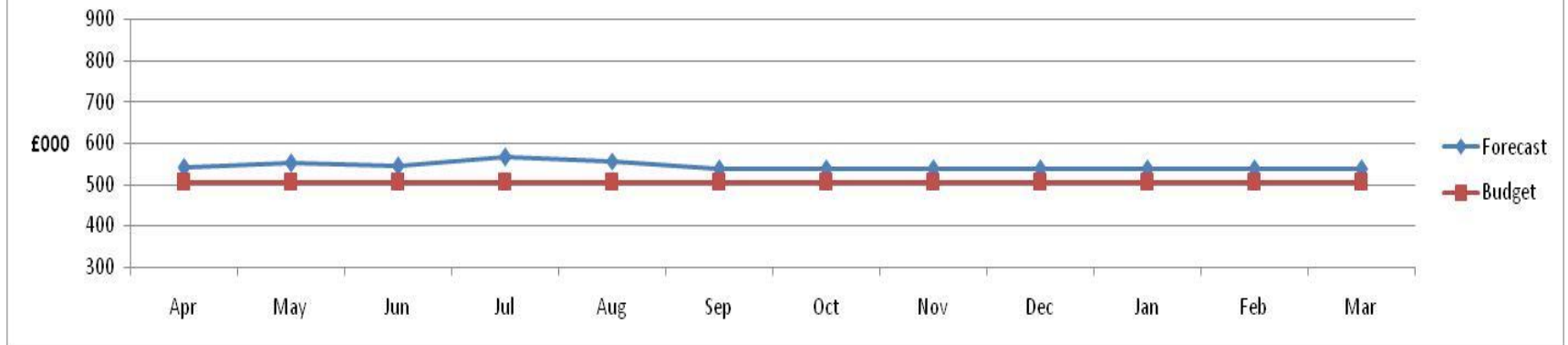
External Fostering



Internal Fostering



Relative Carers



Key examples of progress on delivery of action plan to reduce numbers of CIC and costs

Early Intervention

Analysis of issues being referred to the Helpdesk and case audits by children's Service Delivery Managers shaping implementation of Family Connect and access to other Family and Cohesion services. Early indications of the impact of Family Connect is showing diversion of less complex cases away from the safeguarding service

Commissioning and Procurement

*Regional residential placements Contracting Framework now in place (reduced costs of individual placements)
Renegotiation of care costs of Jigsaw complete. Two Quality Monitoring Officers have now been added to the team to check that contract terms are being met. Creative packages of care being developed for individual YPs as alternatives to care at reduced cost*

Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting

Workshops planned to develop new model of working for Child Protection conferences which focuses on the child's lived experience. Agreement within safeguarding of planned analysis of themes via permanence panel to speed up care planning to achieve some kind of permanent placement for children in care – including safe return home. Weekly challenge by AD regarding care plans for new CIC

Improvements in Internal Provision

Cabinet approved increased allowances for internal foster carers equivalent to competitors. New approach to responding to enquiries enables assessments to start sooner. Weekly stall in town centres is producing promising enquiries

Performance Area	Target	July 2012	Rolling Year Data	Status and Comments	2011/2012	Good performance direction
% of LAC aged 10-16 in foster placement or placed for adoption	80%	77% (87/113)	N/A	The percentage of children placed in a foster placement or for adoption is slightly lower than at year end.	78% (89/114)	Higher = Better
The percentage of sessions missed due to overall absences for children who have been looked after for at least twelve months at 31 March	No Target Set	Not yet available	N/A	Information taken from adoption scorecard. Latest data available is March 2011, where T&W were ranked 17 th (Best performance ranked as number one)	3%	Lower = Better
Number of looked after children adopted during the year as a percentage of the number of children looked after 6 months plus as month end	12%	5.9% (15/255)	Number adopted 01/10/10 – 30/09/11 34 01/10/11 – 30/09/12 30	At the same point last year 17 children had been adopted between 01/04/2012 and 30/09/2012. (This includes 3 Special Guardianship Orders). As at 30/09/2012 14 children are placed for adoption.	12.8% (32/250)	Higher = Better
Adoptions within best interest timescales	100%	100% (12/12)	N/A	Please note that the 15 in the previous indicator (number of adoptions includes three special guardianship orders which is the criteria for that indicator)	96.1% (25/26)	Higher = Better
New foster care households approved in the year)	14 New households 18 new places	Net Mainstream Approvals -1 Households -1 Placements	N/A	Since 01/04/2012 there have been 4 mainstream, households (7 places) approved and 5 households de-registered (8 places). There are currently 15 Form F assessments being completed and a number of other promising enquiries. The number of deregistrations is unpredictable so we may not meet the target. A more rigorous approach is in place throughout the assessment process to ensure that the carers approved are able to meet the needs of children coming into our care. All the households that have been approved this year have taken placements.	Net Approvals 12 Households 11 Places	Higher = Better
% of children with 3 placements plus in the year (this includes repeat episodes of care)	8%	3.3% (10/303)	01/10/10 – 30/09/11 9% (26/290) 01/10/11 – 30/09/12 9.6% (29/303)	As at the end of September 2012, 10/303 (3.3%) children had three placements plus This is slightly higher than the same point last year when only 7/300 (2.3%) of children in care had had 3 placements plus.	8.3% (25/300)	Lower = Better
CIC for 2.5 years with same placement for 2 years	79%	81.4% (83/102)	N/A	As at the same point in the previous year (September 2011) 76% of children who had been looked after for 2.5 years were in placement for two years.	79.2% (84/106)	Higher = Better

Ethnicity of Children In Care

	No of BME	Population	%
Children in Care from a BME background as at 30/09/2012	43	303	14.2%
Foster Carers from a BME background as at 30/09/2012	9 (7 households)	222	4.1%
% of BME children placed with Foster Carers from a BME background	5	43	11.6%
% of children in T&W from a BME Group taken from 2010 School Census	2721	21926	12.4%

At the end of September 2012, 43 children in care were from a Black or minority ethnic (BME) background.

9 children were placed with relative/friend carers, 24 children are placed with foster carers, of these 5 are placed with black or minority ethnic carers.

1 Child is placed for adoption, 1 is placed with parents and 9 are placed in homes and hostels.

14.2% of the CIC population are from a BME background and 4.1 % of fostering households are from a BME background.

Disabled Children that are looked after, with placement breakdown

Type of Placement	Mar-10	Mar-11	Mar-12	Sep-12
LA Foster Carer	51.72%	53.57%	37.14%	43.6%
Agency Foster Carer	3.45%	7.14%	17.14%	12.8%
Homes & Hostels	31.03%	28.57%	37.14%	35.9%
Relative/Friend	13.79%	10.71%	8.57%	7.7%

As at the end of September 2012, there were 39 children with a disability who were looked after. 64.1% (25) were placed in foster care in total (including relative carers).

6 children are aged 1-4 Years, of those 1 had been in placement for less than a year (has had three placements since coming into care nearly two years ago). 2 have been in placement for 1 -3 years, and 3 have been in placement for 3 years plus. For this group overall, stability has been positive. These children are all currently placed in foster care.

5 were aged 5-9 years. All of these children are either placed in foster care or with a relative friend carer. The majority have had 2 placements since coming into care – 2 have been in placement for under 1 year, 2 in placement for 1-3 years and 1 has been in placement for 5 years plus.

There are 19 children who are aged between 10-15, of those 10 are placed in foster care. The remainder are in homes or hostels. Of the children placed in foster care, 9 out of 10 have been in placement for between 3 and 8 years. Of the 10-15 year olds placed in homes or hostels, 4 had been in placement for less than a year (have been in care for less than a year so therefore 3 out of 4 had only had one placement since coming into care), 5 have been in placement between 1 and 3 years.

There are 9 children aged 16+. Of those 4 are currently placed in foster care and have been for between 2 and 11 years. The remainder are placed in homes and hostels, and have been in placement for one year or more.

Ofsted Safeguarding and Children in Care Inspection Plan –update on progress for CYP Scrutiny 05/11/12

The Ofsted Report was published on 10/08/12. Ofsted recommendations were of 3 kinds (council only, health and LSCB, joint council and health) to be addressed immediately, within 3 months, or within 6 months. This report describes progress for those actions to be delivered immediately (ie by 10/08/12) or within 3 months (by 10/11/12). In addition to the progress described below a new post of Service Delivery Manager Children Services Improvement is being recruited to. This post will report directly to the DCFS and will support senior managers in driving forward improvement in council children's services with an initial focus on children's social care.

Recommendations for immediate action:Safeguarding

Recommendation 1: Ensure that the outcomes of child protection enquiries are recorded promptly

Progress: Weekly meetings are held between relevant Service Delivery Manager and individual team managers (Child Protection team, Assessment and Case Management teams, Disabled Children teams) to review the completion of current S47 investigations focusing on accurate recording and evidence that the child has been seen by a qualified social worker and are safe.

Impact: Children are known to be safe. Timeliness of recording has improved (see attached)

Recommendation 2: End the unsafe practice of holding cases as contacts and referrals for prolonged periods while information gathering

Recommendation 3: Ensure the prompt identification of referrals at Family Connect and Safeguarding Advisor Team

Progress: The Safeguarding Family Connect Safeguarding Advisors Team has been redesigned to ensure that it is only qualified social workers that process contacts and referrals and that information is taken and decisions are made in a timely manner. This includes increasing SSW capacity to 1FTE which will also provide more support to the team managers. Reciprocal cover arrangements between the team managers of the Child Protection Team and the Safeguarding Advisors team have been reviewed to spread the load amongst more team managers.

Impact: Swifter decisions are being made about how to respond to concerns about children's welfare (see attached)

Recommendations for immediate action: Children in Care

Recommendation: Ensure that all parents receive regular communication and are involved in reviews as appropriate.

Progress: Social Work report for child in care reviews has been developed. An Audit is being undertaken to ensure appropriate parental involvement in reviews and establish and establish a benchmark for the ways parents are consulted / involved with Child in Care Reviews. The SW conference on 8th November includes a workshop on Parental involvement

Impact: too early to tell

Recommendations for action within 3 Months: Safeguarding

Recommendation: Accelerate plans to provide edge of care service out of hours

Progress: Meetings are progressing with the Emergency Duty Team to identify out of hours support for parents and young people.

Recommendation: clarify the legal position of charging for services provided following assessment under the Children Act 1989

The charges were introduced following a suggestion from a group which represents parents. The charges subsidise high cost activities, in order to maintain equipment and provide a level of sustainability. The charges only apply to children/young people who have been assessed under the Children Act 1989 if access to the activity is over and above the assessed need, for those children where it is an assessed need the charge is waived. Parents were asked to pay in advance for blocks in error, this has now been rectified.

Recommendation: Provide partner agencies with a clear definition of the roles and responsibilities of the community social work team

Progress: There have been discussions with key managers and staff about potential options and exploration of models used elsewhere. Formal paper to be presented for consultation by the end of October

Recommendation: Facilitate the consistent delivery of planned interventions by minimising changes of social worker (*this is repeated in CIC recommendations to facilitate positive and productive relationships between children and social workers*)

Progress: An internal review of recruitment arrangements has been completed within the council. Modelling of reduction in use of agency staff over the next 12 months has been used to set targets. Analysis of changes of social workers (number and reasons) is being repeated. Progress will be monitored monthly from November. The SW conference on 8th November includes a workshop on "The child's journey" which will feed into the strategic project plan to remodel children's social work services.

Impact: Fewer social work vacancies

Recommendations for action within 3 Months: Children in Care

Recommendation: Review the capacity and functioning of the IRO team to ensure robust challenge where needed and the prompt circulation of a good quality review records

Progress: A review of the Safeguarding Advisory Service has commenced. There are a number of considerations including how the Service has embraced the Care Planning Regulations 2010 and the IRO Handbook. In addition the current activity of the unit will be considered including its Quality Assurance role. This will also be an opportunity to reflect on both Local and National data in terms of children included on Child Protection Plans

and Children in Care and the impact upon the Service in terms of fulfilling its core functions. Report to be available by 10th November.

Recommendation: Ensure that all looked after children have a qualified social worker and that minimum statutory visiting requirements are complied with

This recommendation mainly refers to the Children In Care team. An analysis is being completed of respective tasks completed by the SWs and unqualified staff, and options for redesigning the team are being drawn up. It will not be possible to achieve the recommendation by the middle of November given the extent of the changes required and the need to link them to whole system change across the Safeguarding Service. Careful planning will also be required to minimise a short term adverse impact on children through disrupting relationships with their existing caseworkers.

Recommendation: Facilitate the timely completion of life story work

Progress: Recognition of the need to clarify and agree who is responsible for life story book work, and link discussions into those about the emotional wellbeing of CIC

Recommendation: Ensure that cultural and equality and diversity issues are assessed and recorded during assessments. NHS Telford and Wrekin Council must ensure that this includes health assessments

Progress; The SW conference on 8th November includes a workshop on diversity. Meeting diverse needs is built into quality assurance audit tools. Paper to be delivered to children's social care managers early December on performance improvement for SWs

Recommendation: End the reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation to meet the accommodation needs of care leavers

Progress: Up to date lists of care leavers being obtained for monitoring.

Conclusion

Good progress is being made in addressing the Ofsted recommendations and there is some evidence of a positive impact on children.

Karen Perry
Assistant Director Children's Safeguarding

Key Stage 2 Performance 2011-12

- Key Stage 2 results for 2012 show a very pleasing picture, adding to the upward trend from 2011 in attainment, with some notable improvements across English and Mathematics.
- Assessment of pupils' writing skills at KS2 changed this year, making the results not directly comparable with previous scores. Writing scores were solely based on teacher assessment.
- Validated data will not be available until December 2012, when pupil numbers will be corrected and re-marks included.

English and Mathematics Combined

Level 4+

- Rise of 4% points from 2011 to 78% (national average in 2011 was 74%; national average in 2012 was 79%). Telford & Wrekin's performance has improved by 10% points from 2008 when it stood 5% below the national average at 68%.

Level 5

- Rise of 4% points from 2011 to 24% (national average in 2011 was 21%; national average in 2012 was 27%). Telford & Wrekin's performance has improved by 8% points from 2008 when it stood 4% points below the national average at 16%.

English

Level 4+

- Rise of a substantial 5% points from 2011 to 86% (national average in 2011 was 82%; national average in 2012 was 85%); over the last 5 years Telford & Wrekin's performance has improved by 9% points.
- Reading has improved by 2% points since 2011 to 86% (national average in 2011 was 84%; national average in 2012 was 86%).
- Writing has improved notably since 2011 up 9% points to 82% (national average in 2011 was 75%; national average in 2012 was 81%); Telford & Wrekin's performance has improved by some 20% points since 2008.

Level 5

- Rise of 6% points from 2011 to 35% (national average in 2011 was 29%; national average in 2012 was 37%); Telford & Wrekin's performance has improved by 9% points over the last 5 years.
- Reading has improved by 2% points since 2011 to 47% (national average in 2011 was 42%; national average in 2012 was 48%).
- Writing has improved substantially since 2011 up 10% points to 28% (national average in 2011 was 20%; national average in 2012 was 28%).

Mathematics*

Level 4+

- Rise of 2% points from 2011 to 82% (national average in 2011 was 80%; national average in 2012 was 84%); Telford & Wrekin's performance has improved by 7% points since 2008.

Level 5

- Rise of 4% points from 2011 to 36% (national average in 2011 was 35%; national average in 2012 was 39%); Telford & Wrekin's performance has improved since 2008 by 11% points.

* Figure includes 40 pupils from one school in the LA denominator who have not received Mathematics results.

	5+A*-C grades	5+ A*-C inc. English & mathematics GCSEs	5+A*-G grades	5+ A*-G inc. English & mathematics GCSEs	Any passes
Bolton	86.3	59.7	95.5	94.3	99.7
Derby	83.1	56.1	96.0	94.3	99.0
Doncaster	88.1	54.5	95.8	93.7	99.5
Dudley	82.3	54.5	96.5	93.2	99.7
Lancashire	84.4	59.5	95.6	94.7	99.3
Medway	88.5	60.2	96.4	93.4	99.3
N.E. Lincolnshire	85.4	60.8	93.6	92.7	99.1
Peterborough	83.0	48.9	94.0	92.2	99.6
Rotherham	82.9	59.3	95.7	94.7	99.2
Telford & Wrekin	86.3	60.7	95.9	95.4	99
Thurrock	87.8	58.3	96.6	95.2	99.5
ENGLAND (State-funded sector) 1	82.7	58.4	95.6	94.2	99.3
England¹	81.1	58.6	93.6	91.9	99.4
West Midlands	85.0	58.3	95.8	94.2	99.3

Percentage of pupils at the end of Key Stage 4 achieving at GCSE and equivalents:

	5+ A*-C grades inc. English & Mathematics GCSEs						
	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Telford and Wrekin	39.6	40.8	44.6	47.7	55.9	57.9	60.7
ENGLAND (State-funded sector)¹	44.1	45.9	48.4	50.9	55.3	58.4	58.4
England^{1,4}	45.6	46.3	47.6	49.8	53.5	59.0	58.6

Percentage of pupils in state-funded mainstream¹ schools making expected progress² in English and mathematics between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4

	English				Maths			
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2009	2010	2011	2012
Telford and Wrekin	59.6	67.6	67.6	66.8	55.9	62.7	64.0	70.2
ENGLAND (State-funded mainstream sector)³	66.4	71.0	73.1	68.9	59.3	63.4	65.9	69.6

All Pupils (11 schools)	Pupils Total	A	D	N	B	2	3	4	5	6	L4+	%L3+	%L4+	%L5+	%L6	Average Points	Average Level
ENGLISH	9	0	0	0	1	0	2	5	1	0	6	88.9	66.7	11.1	0.0	25.0	3.7
READING	11	0	0	0	2	0	2	6	1	0	7	81.8	63.6	9.1	0.0	24.3	3.5
WRITING	9	0	0	0	0	0	3	4	1	0	5	88.9	55.6	11.1	0.0	22.7	3.3
MATHS	11	0	0	0	2	0	1	5	2	0	7	72.7	63.6	18.2	0.0	22.9	3.4
SCIENCE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
OVERALL APS																23.9*	

Boys	Pupils Total	A	D	N	B	2	3	4	5	6	L4+	%L3+	%L4+	%L5+	%L6	Average Points	Average Level
ENGLISH	6	0	0	0	1	0	1	4	0	0	4	83.3	66.7	0.0	0.0	24.0	3.5
READING	8	0	0	0	2	0	1	5	0	0	5	75.0	62.5	0.0	0.0	23.3	3.4
WRITING	6	0	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	0	3	83.3	50.0	0.0	0.0	20.5	3.0
MATHS	8	0	0	0	2	0	0	4	1	0	5	62.5	62.5	12.5	0.0	21.4	3.1
SCIENCE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
OVERALL APS																22.5*	

Girls	Pupils Total	A	D	N	B	2	3	4	5	6	L4+	%L3+	%L4+	%L5+	%L6	Average Points	Average Level
ENGLISH	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	100.0	66.7	33.3	0.0	27.0	4.0
READING	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	100.0	66.7	33.3	0.0	27.0	4.0
WRITING	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	100.0	66.7	33.3	0.0	27.0	4.0
MATHS	3	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	2	100.0	66.7	33.3	0.0	27.0	4.0
SCIENCE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
OVERALL APS																27.0*	

* Overall APS is based upon English and Maths only

Looked After Children Key Stage 4

Case Number(CLA ALL)	Gender	Number of GCSES gained A-G	Number of GCSE gained A-C	5+ GCSES including E & M?
182211	Female	3	0	N
160190	Male	9	9	Y
144601	Female	2	0	N
64488-CH	Female	0	0	N
304665	Female	11	8	Y
313967	Female	13	11	Y
117374	Female	Year 10	Year 10	Year 10
63413-CH	Male	9	9	Y
161680	Female	12	12	Y
192440	Female	0	0	N
58285-CH	Female	8	8	Y
306445	Male	2	2	N
144130	Female	0	0	N
309997	Female	9	5	N
167820	Female	0	0	N
148308	Male	3	0	N
148306	Female	9	8	Y
300859	Female	11	11	Y
300389	Male	0	0	N
193156	Female	11	9	Y
67288-CH	Male	10	5	N
133626	Male	2	0	N
168195	Male	9	3	N
314016	Female	0	0	N
169944	Male	7	2	N
164020	Male	5	1	N
142823	Female	13	12	Y
153489	Female	0	0	N
				35.7%

Children & Young People Scrutiny Committee – 2012-14 work programme

Date of Meeting	Issue for Scrutiny	Type of Meeting	How	Who	Outcome
9 th August 2012	Ofsted inspection	Informal briefing	Verbal briefing	Cllr. Paul Watling Laura Johnston Karen Perry	Members briefed
18 th Sept 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues for a primary school • Children in Care Placement Strategy and children in care education attainment 	Committee meeting (Members of Budget & Finance also to attend)	Tour of Short Wood Primary and briefing from Head Teacher Reports	Karen Perry Clive Jones Maria White Viv McKay	Information gathering focussing on safety issues.
5 th Nov 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Placement Strategy – value for money issues • Ofsted report and actions to address issues • Education results KS2/KS4 for the borough and children in care 	Committee meeting	Reports and briefings	Laura Johnston Karen Perry Jim Collins	
8 th Jan 2013	TBC from items agreed for work programme				
12 th March 2013	TBC from items agreed for work programme				
2012-13	Provision of primary school places		In-depth review		
2013-14	Impact of Early Intervention programmes		In-depth review		
2013-14	Services targeted at young people (Youth Offer, Youth Offending Service)		In-depth review		
On-going	CIC performance monitoring		Standing items at committee meetings		
On-going	Education attainment		Standing item at committee meetings		

On-going	Updates on progress on implementation of Ofsted Action Plan		Standing item at committee meetings		
Minimum annual meeting	Meetings with children in care				