

## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL

Venue: Town Hall, Moorgate  
Street, Rotherham. S60  
2TH

Date: Friday, 15 October 2010

Time: 9.30 a.m.

### A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
3. Apologies for Absence.
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Questions from the press and public
6. Matters Referred from the Youth Cabinet
7. Communications  
To agree dates of future meetings –  
Friday 19 November 2010  
Friday 10 December 2010  
Friday 21 January 2011 (instead of 7 January)  
Friday 18 February 2011 (instead of 4 February)  
Friday 18 March 2011 (instead of 4 March)  
April 2011 (Schools' Easter Holiday is 11 to 25 April)
8. Corporate Parenting Group  
To appoint an Elected Member and substitute to the Council's recently established Corporate Parenting Group

9. Presentation from Cabinet Member - Safeguarding and developing Learning Opportunities for Children

#### **FOR DECISION**

10. Scrutiny Review - School Closure due to Extreme Weather (report attached) (Pages 1 - 20)

#### **FOR DISCUSSION**

11. 14 to 19 Partnership, Governance and Planning (report attached) (Pages 21 - 25)

#### **CORPORATE PARENTING**

12. Commissioning of Placements for Looked After Children (report attached) (Pages 26 - 29)

13. Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children (report attached) (Pages 30 - 69)

#### **FOR MONITORING**

14. The Welcome Offer to Vulnerable Children and Young People (report attached) (Pages 70 - 83)

15. Children and Young People's Services - Notice to Improve - Progress and Exceptions (report attached) (Pages 84 - 88)

#### **MINUTES**

16. Minutes of a meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel held on 3rd September, 2010 (copy attached) (Pages 89 - 95)

17. Minutes of a meeting of the Children and Young People's Trust Board held on 8th September, 2010 (copy attached) (Pages 96 - 102)

18. Minutes of meetings of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Safeguarding and Developing Learning Opportunities for Children (copies attached) (Pages 103 - 121)

Attached are minutes of the meetings held on (i) 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2010 and (ii) 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2010 (two meetings)

19. Minutes of meetings of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 10th September, 2010 and 24th September, 2010 (copies attached) (Pages 122 - 133)

20. Exclusion of the Press and Public

The following item is likely to be considered in the absence of the press and public as being exempt under Paragraph 2 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 as amended (information likely to reveal the identity of an individual)

21. Children and Young People's Services - Annual Comment and Complaint Report 2009/2010 (report attached) (Pages 134 - 149)

**Date of Next Meeting:-  
Friday, 19 November 2010**

**Membership:-**

Chairman – Councillor G. A. Russell

Vice-Chairman – Councillor License

Councillors:- Ali, Buckley, Dodson, Donaldson, Falvey, Fenoughty, Kaye, Rushforth, Sharp and Sims

**Co-optees:-**

Mrs. J. Blanch-Nicholson, Mr. M. Burn, Ms. T. Guest, Father A. Hayne, Mr. T. Marvin,  
Mrs. K. Muscroft, Mrs. L. Pitchley, Dr. S. Warren and Parish Councillor N. Tranmer

## ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel</b>
2.	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Friday 15 October 2010</b>
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>School closure due to extreme weather</b>
4.	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Chief Executive's All wards</b>

**5. Summary**

The report sets out the findings and recommendations of the scrutiny review into 'School closure due to extreme weather', undertaken by the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel. The report is attached as Appendix 1.

**6. Recommendations**

- a. That PSOC endorse the report's findings and recommendations.
- b. That PSOC forward the report to Cabinet for its consideration.
- c. That Cabinet's response to the recommendations be fed back to the Scrutiny Panel within two months of its submission.

## **7. Proposals and Details**

**7.1** Last winter was confirmed as the coldest since 1978-79. The heavy snowfall on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2010 and prolonged period of freezing temperature caused considerable disruption to a number of services, including schools, public transport and businesses. The following day almost 90% of Rotherham schools were closed.

**7.2** Questions were raised about the procedures for closure of schools during periods of adverse weather or in other emergencies. The Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel was asked to undertake a short review to see if lessons can be learnt to ensure that future disruption is minimised.

The review, chaired by Cllr Ann Russell, looked at:

- current policy and legal responsibilities
- operational arrangements – what is in place locally and how does this compare with practice elsewhere?
- can other support be provided?
- how we communicate closure to parents

**7.3** The review began its evidence gathering in February 2010. Interviews were organised with the Cabinet Members and relevant officers. In addition, the review group received written submissions and spoke to a number of Headteachers and Senior Staff from Primary and Secondary Schools.

**7.4** The recommendations from the review are detailed in Section 6 of the review and include:

- The Local Authority should reissue the guidance to schools with an emphasis on the presumption that schools should remain open unless faced by extraordinary circumstances;
- The Local Authority should collate strategies or actions that have or would assist in maintaining a “school open” status. This good practice should be shared with colleagues across cluster groups and wider school communities and used to inform their business continuity planning to cover extreme weather.
- Children and Young People's Services with Human Resources, should explore with schools the feasibility of teachers and support staff being re-directed to their nearest school to help deal with staffing shortages, to keep schools closures to a minimum;
- Priority salting routes are reviewed to accommodate schools wherever possible;
- The RMBC ‘school closure’ web page is redesigned with the capacity to instantly ‘capture’ information for each school and linked to other relevant pages on the RMBC website.

**8. Finance**

A number of the review recommendations may have financial implications if adopted. This would require further exploration by the Strategic Leadership Team and Schools on the cost, risks and benefits of their implementation.

**9. Risks and Uncertainties**

In circumstances of extreme weather conditions, the decision to close a school is delegated to its Headteacher in consultation with their chair of governors. Given the likelihood of extreme weather events occurring more frequently in future years, the Local Authority and schools should work together develop comprehensive plans to mitigate against potential disruption.

**10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

See main body of report

Although this review focuses on the closure of schools during periods of adverse weather, other pressures on schools (as demonstrated by the 2007 flooding and the recent threats of flu-pandemic) may require emergency decisions about how to keep the school open.

**11. Background Papers and Consultation**

The report has been circulated to all agencies/individuals that participated in the review for their comments and to check for factual accuracy.

**Contact Name:**

Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, 01709 (8)22765  
[caroline.webb@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.webb@rotherham.gov.uk)

## **School closures in extreme weather**

### Review of Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel

**CONTENTS**

**Executive Summary.....3**

**1 Original Concerns – why Members wanted to look at this Issue.....4**

**2 Terms of Reference.....4**

**3 background.....5**

**4 how is the decision to close taken? .....7**

**5 issues emerging from interviews .....8**

    5.1 What steps were taken to keep schools open (or keep closure to minimum)?  
        8

    5.2 What were the barriers that prevented schools from remaining open? .....9

    5.3 How we communicate closure to parents? ..... 11

    5.4 Other measures that could be put in place to minimise disruption ..... 13

**6 recommendations .....14**

**7 Thanks .....16**

**8 Information Sources/References .....16**



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Last winter (2009-10) was confirmed as the coldest since 1978-79. The heavy snowfall on Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2010 and prolonged period of freezing temperature caused considerable disruption to a number of services, including schools, public transport and businesses. The following day almost 90% of Rotherham schools were closed.

Questions were raised about the procedures for closure of schools during periods of adverse weather or in other emergencies. The Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel was asked to undertake a short review to see if lessons can be learnt to ensure that future disruption is minimised.

The review began its evidence gathering in February 2010. Interviews were organised with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services and Cabinet Member for Streetpride Services<sup>1</sup> and relevant officers. In addition, the review group received written submissions and spoke to a number of Headteachers and Senior Staff from Primary and Secondary Schools.

The review makes thirteen recommendations (detailed in Section 6 of the report) which focus on the following areas:

- The Local Authority should reissue the guidance to schools with an emphasis on the presumption that schools should remain open unless faced by extraordinary circumstances;
- The Local Authority should confirm with governing bodies their approach to delivering the statutory 190 days of learning and in the case of closure, how they are able to make up some or all of the time lost;
- The Local Authority should collate strategies or actions that have or would assist in maintaining a "school open" status. This good practice should be shared with colleagues across cluster groups and wider school communities and used to inform their business continuity planning to cover extreme weather.
- Children and Young People's Services with Human Resources, should explore with schools the feasibility of teachers and support staff being re-directed to their nearest school to help deal with staffing shortages, to keep schools closures to a minimum;
- Priority salting routes are reviewed to accommodate schools wherever possible;
- The RMBC 'school closure' web page is redesigned with the capacity to instantly 'capture' information for each school and linked to other relevant pages on the RMBC website.

---

<sup>1</sup> Since the review was commissioned, the positions of Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services and Cabinet Member for Streetpride have been reconfigured. Overall responsibility for the services and functions outlined in this report would lie with the portfolios of 'Safeguarding and Developing Learning' for school based issues and support and 'Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods' for Streetpride services.

## 1 ORIGINAL CONCERNS – WHY MEMBERS WANTED TO LOOK AT THIS ISSUE

The winter of 2009-10 has been confirmed as the coldest since 1978-79<sup>2</sup>. The low temperatures combined with heavy snowfall in the week preceding Christmas. More snowfall occurred in the first week of January 2010, coinciding with the re-opening of schools on Tuesday January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

The heavy snowfall on the Tuesday caused considerable disruption to a number of services, including public transport and businesses. In Rotherham, the majority of schools announced they were closing before the start of the school day or closed earlier than usual. The next day just over 11% of schools remained open. By Friday due to huge efforts to clear school sites and salt the highway network, the situation was reversed with only 14 out of the 126 schools in Rotherham remaining closed.

Although the primary concern was the potential disruption to education, particularly as a number of 'A' level and GCSE examinations were scheduled to begin shortly after the start of the term, the closure of schools meant that a number of parents were unable to go to work, placing a further burden on an already fragile economy. Although we did not gauge public opinion directly as part of the evidence gathering process, we were aware that there was a perception that some schools remained closed whilst businesses and other parts of the public sector were expected to return to 'normal service'. We do not make a judgement on whether schools remained closed beyond what could be reasonably expected, as that is a discussion that should take place with governing bodies, headteachers and parents and carers.

Questions were raised about the procedures for closure of schools during periods of adverse weather or in other emergencies. Cllr Shaun Wright, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services asked the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel to undertake a short review into these factors and to see if lessons can be learnt to ensure that future disruption is minimised.

## 2 TERMS OF REFERENCE

The following members were part of the review:

- Cllr Ann Russell (chair)
- Cllr Barry Kaye
- Mick Hall, Co-optee, Parent Governor Representative
- Tony Marvin, Co-optee, Parent Governor Representative
- Michael Burn, Co-optee, Sheffield Diocese

---

<sup>2</sup> Met Office: Coldest UK winter for over 30 years  
<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/corporate/pressoffice/2010/pr20100301.html>

The purpose of the review was to examine the circumstances around the recent closure of Rotherham schools due to extreme weather with a view to making recommendations on how disruption and closures can be kept to a minimum in the future.

The review examined:

- current policy and legal responsibilities
- operational arrangements – what is in place locally and how does this compare with practice elsewhere?
- can other support be provided?
- how we communicate closure to parents

Although this review focuses on the closure of schools during periods of adverse weather (snow in this instance), we are acutely aware of other pressures on schools as demonstrated by the 2007 flooding and the recent threats of flu-pandemic that may require emergency decisions about how to keep the school open.

The review began its evidence gathering in February 2010. Interviews were organised with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People's Services and Cabinet Member for Streetpride Services and relevant officers. In addition, the review group spoke to a number of Headteachers and Senior Staff from Primary and Secondary Schools.

An email was sent to all Headteachers, Chair of Governors and teaching and non-teaching unions seeking their views. Web-based searches and telephone interviews with other authorities were also undertaken.

The review group would like to thank all those who contributed to the review for their openness and co-operation.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

On Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January, heavy snow began to fall coinciding with the morning rush hour. The Met Office website forecast that heavy snow would fall over the next day, with further snow expected later in the week. This followed lower than average temperatures over the Christmas and New Year period.

Buses and trains were disrupted, with First Buses withdrawing services in the morning. A limited service was introduced later in the day. Despite the sheer volume of the snow fall, extensive salting was undertaken throughout the day on all major roads and bus routes. The initial advice from police was for only essential journeys to be made.

- 3.1.1 A number of headteachers agreed to close their school as the likely extent of the disruption became clearer early in the day. The ability of teachers and support staff to get to school was a significant factor in many closures. This meant that

there was a risk that safe supervision of pupils would not have been maintained if the school had opened<sup>3</sup>. For those in more rural parts of the borough, the availability of public transport and school buses was also a concern, particularly as a number of pupils relied on these for safe transit from home to school. There were fears that this would be compounded if the snow continued, with an added risk of pupils and staff becoming stranded. This was a particular concern for secondary and special schools with wider catchment areas.

The following is a table showing the number of schools that were closed on each day:

	<b>School closures</b>	<b>Schools open</b>
<b>Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> January</b>	94 (75.8%) <i>(9 of these schools closed at lunchtime)</i>	30 (24.2%)
<b>Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> January</b>	110 (88.7%)	14 (11.3%)
<b>Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> January</b>	26 (20.9%) <i>(5 schools reduced the school day for health and safety reasons. 2 schools opened to limited year groups)</i>	98 (79.1%)
<b>Friday 8<sup>th</sup> January</b>	14 (11.3%) <i>5 schools reduced the school day for health and safety reasons. 5 schools opened to limited year groups)</i>	110 (88.7%)

3.1.2 The Department for Education (DfE), quoted in the interim Quarmby report *The Resilience of England's Transport Systems in Winter*, stated that national figures for school closures were not held centrally but on the worst days of winter disruption during the week commencing 4th January 2010, it estimated around 10,000 schools had closed (out of a total of 22,000). In line with the comments from schools in Rotherham, most schools appeared to have closed due a combination of reasons, including 'unsafe premises', 'access problems' and 'transport problems'. (Department for Transport, 2010 p 42).

3.1.3 It was reported to the review that salting of the priority network was undertaken on a regular basis throughout the winter of 2009/10. This includes all principal and B class roads, as well as bus routes, access roads to hospitals, fire stations and known 'trouble spots'. Indeed at its peak, salting crews made five runs throughout the day and night to ensure routes were open and safe.

---

<sup>3</sup> There are a number of statutory obligations in relation to staffing levels in schools: Primary schools are expected to have no more than 30 pupils in a class. This is a statutory requirement up to and including Year 2. For the Foundation Phase, the ratio is 1 adult (teacher or teaching assistants) to 8 pupils for Nursery and Reception classes, and 1 adult to 13 pupils for classes in Years 1 and 2. In addition, schools would need to ensure that they had sufficient employees to manage the necessary number of children safely, under health and safety legislation, including sufficient first aiders on site.

The Cabinet Member for Streetpride reiterated that adequate measures were put in place to maintain salt supplies over the winter, although clearly the prolonged cold snap had put stocks under pressure. However, the Government imposed the 'Salt Cell' in early January, meant that supplies were managed centrally, and salt was diverted to replenish the stocks of councils where it had fallen dangerously low. Councils were also instructed to reduce the amount of salt used on each run. Under these circumstances, Streetpride did its utmost to ensure that the primary routes were open, and although it aimed to take secondary action on more minor routes, inevitably the pressure on the service meant that some side roads were not salted, including some access routes to schools.

#### **4 HOW IS THE DECISION TO CLOSE TAKEN?**

4.1.1 The DfE provide guidance on keeping schools open during extreme weather, which reiterates the need for contingency planning and in the case of winter weather, maintaining salt stocks. Whilst the Local Authority can make the decision to close community and voluntary controlled schools in exceptional circumstances (for example if there are widespread road closure or power failures), the DfE advises that the decision to close a school in an emergency such as severe weather is delegated to the headteacher.

*"...headteachers, who will know local weather and ground conditions, and the likely impact of the weather on the numbers of staff and pupils who will be able to get into school."<sup>4</sup>*

4.1.2 The DfE advice is followed in Rotherham, with the final decision to close a school resting with the Headteacher, in consultation with their Chair of Governors. The School is legally responsible for the management of the premises, including the grounds. The budget for this is delegated to them under the funding arrangements for schools. Schools are responsible for clearing the site and making the decision about closing the school if there are safety issues.

This power is delegated under Local Management of Schools. Headteachers are advised to follow the Council's "Guidance on exceptional school closure" and make their judgement based on an assessment of risk.

*The guiding principles in such circumstances should be the safety and welfare of pupils and the minimum disruption to the normal education service. Inconvenience, discomfort or travel delay, do not necessarily constitute good reason for an early closure.*

If the decision to close is reached, schools are asked to:

- contact local radio stations to disseminate information to parents
- inform Facilities Management and Children and Young People's Services, who will in turn contact catering, cleaning etc
- contact parents with reasons for closure and anticipated date of re-opening

---

<sup>4</sup> Teachernet: Planning for, and responding to, severe weather

- maintain a core of staff during normal working hours to deal with enquiries (if practicable and safe)

4.1.3 Schools are asked to be mindful of health and safety factors when considering options for closure, balancing the risks arising from less supervision, late return journeys, minor slips and bumps, etc. against disruption to pupils' learning.

Other relevant considerations from the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) include:

- 2(1): Duty on Employer to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety & welfare at work of all employees.
- 2(2)d: Ensure so far as is reasonably practicable any place of work under the Employers control, maintains safe access to & egress from without risks to employees.
- 2(2)e: Provide & maintain a working environment for employees that is so far as is reasonably practicable, safe & without risks to health & adequate with regards to welfare facilities.
- 3: Duty on employers to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable their activities do not endanger anyone & to provide information in certain circumstances to the public about potential hazards.
- 4: Duty on those in control of premises used as a place of work, to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that they do not endanger those within them.

4.1.4 In the email responses and interviews, headteachers and senior staff thought the guidance issued to schools was sufficient. They also noted that officers based in the School Organisation and Development were helpful and available during the disruption.

## 5 ISSUES EMERGING FROM INTERVIEWS

As part of its evidence gathering process, questions were asked to establish whether the current arrangements for school closures due to extreme weather are 'fit for purpose':

- what steps were taken to keep schools open (or keep closure to minimum)?
- what were the barriers that prevented schools from remaining open?
- how we communicate closure to parents?
- if there are other measures that could be put in place to minimise disruption

### 5.1 What steps were taken to keep schools open (or keep closure to minimum)?

There is an expectation that schools will do their utmost to open and that closure is only taken as a last resort.

*"Any decision to close the school is not taken lightly. It's not about Health and Safety gone mad. A decision is made on the basis of the evidence about whether it is safe or not to open the site."* Interview with Headteacher and Senior Staff

5.1.1 One of the major concerns of the review was that 'every day counts' and potential

disruption to children's education should be minimised. All schools were asked for their views on what steps were taken to keep their schools open. We received 13 responses out of a potential 126. We are unable to draw any conclusions whether there are any common factors that prevented schools from opening. However, it may be useful to collate such information in order to support future business continuity planning.

- 5.1.2 With this in mind, the review group agreed it would also be helpful to report strategies or actions taken that have or would assist in maintaining a "school open" status, for example, hiring external contractors to clear playgrounds or access routes within school sites. This good practice should be shared with colleagues across their cluster groups and wider school communities.
- 5.1.3 Schools must open for 380 half-day sessions (190 days) in each school year, beginning with the first term to start after July. This is consistent with the up to 195 days a year required by a teacher's statutory conditions of service: the additional up to five days are non-teaching work days<sup>5</sup>. On the presumption that 'every day counts', it may be valuable to explore with Governing Bodies if 'lost days' can be recovered by extending school terms.
- 5.1.4 We received assurances that schools opened to specific year groups to accommodate students who had scheduled tests or examinations. No examinations were disrupted.
- 5.1.5 Many schools cited staff shortages as a determining factor in their decision to close, as the minimum supervision levels could not be assured. However, some schools mitigated against this problem by opening later to avoid the rush hour and ensure that staff and pupils could arrive safely. Another school ensured that each member of staff had been asked to plan for their inward and outward journeys in inclement weather in advance. The school in question remained open to all year groups throughout this period and the expectation on pupils was for full attendance. The review did not examine the issues related to whether individual staff should get paid for days missed. That is a decision for individual governing bodies to take. However they should be satisfied that every effort has been made for staff to attend school.
- 5.1.6 Schools are responsible for ordering and maintaining salt supplies. It is clear that whilst many schools had not anticipated the prolonged cold snap and their salt supplies were depleted, some schools were able to maintain their stocks or secure new supplies. Again, it would be helpful to share these strategies across clusters.

## **5.2 What were the barriers that prevented schools from remaining open?**

- 5.2.1 The review held an informal 'round table' discussion with a small number of senior staff and headteachers, from both primary and secondary schools.

Some common issues emerged from the discussion:

---

<sup>5</sup> Teachernet: Length of school day/year  
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz//lengthofschoolday>

- health and safety issues if the school site, surrounding roads and pavements are icy
- the availability of salt for playgrounds and paths
- availability of caretakers or staff to clear ice and snow from the school site
- conflicting messages from the media on essential travel and weather forecast variations
- the ability of teachers and site staff to get to the school
- the availability of public transport and school buses (particularly on January 5, 6 and 13)
- access to catering and other support services

These particular problems were echoed in response to a wider request for information from schools. Other issues highlighted included

- problems or failure with school heating systems
- sudden unexpected weather and the difficulties of clearing the site.
- the cost of hiring equipment (snowploughs etc) was high and had not been budgeted for
- ensuring that pupils can get home safely

5.2.2 There were 5 special schools affected by the snow and ice. These sites have borough-wide catchments. Some had specific site issues such as long drives which were difficult to clear. One school was accessed by an unadopted road which was not salted by the authority. A major issue was the safe transportation of children. A high proportion of children access school transport and there were issues and difficulties 'both ends' of the journey. Anecdotally we were told that schools buses often found it difficult to navigate unsalted side roads. There were also additional issues about how children and young people (some with complex mobility issues) were safely escorted from their homes to the buses, particularly across icy pavements.

5.2.3 Several head teachers suggested that there were specific issues with the location and geography of their schools that impacted on their ability to remain open. It was reported anecdotally that for those schools located on hills or on junctions with busy roads, headteachers had grave concerns for the safety of pupils arriving at schools, as children and carers were walking on the roads as pavements were not salted. In addition, a number of Rotherham schools are located on housing estates, with access to them by side roads rather than a main route. Given that these roads were not deemed to be a priority for salting, vehicular access may have been problematic although the schools were in walking distance of main routes and may have been accessible on foot with care.

5.2.4 As reported, a number of schools raised concerns that access to schools situated on non-priority routes proved hazardous and contributed to their decision to close or open partially. Whilst it is acknowledged that the Local Authority is working with finite resources to support salting activity on priority routes, school closures disrupt more than children's education. Parents and carers were required to take time off work to look after children or seek alternative child care. Because of staff shortages, businesses were disrupted, placing an additional burden on an already fragile local economy. The Local Government Association (LGA) suggests



*“Councils will need to work closely with local partners (schools, health and social care services, transport operators and local businesses) to agree priorities for winter maintenance.”<sup>6</sup> (LGA, 2010 p11)*

The review asks whether there are council services, such as salting and ploughing routes, that could be adapted to accommodate schools wherever possible.

- 5.2.5 There was some public perception that schools were taking the decision to close because of fear of low attendance negatively impacting on Ofsted targets. Whether there is any foundation to this is unclear, but we would support the LGA calls that in the case of extreme events, Ofsted and other regulatory targets should be suspended to enable the most appropriate response to be taken locally.

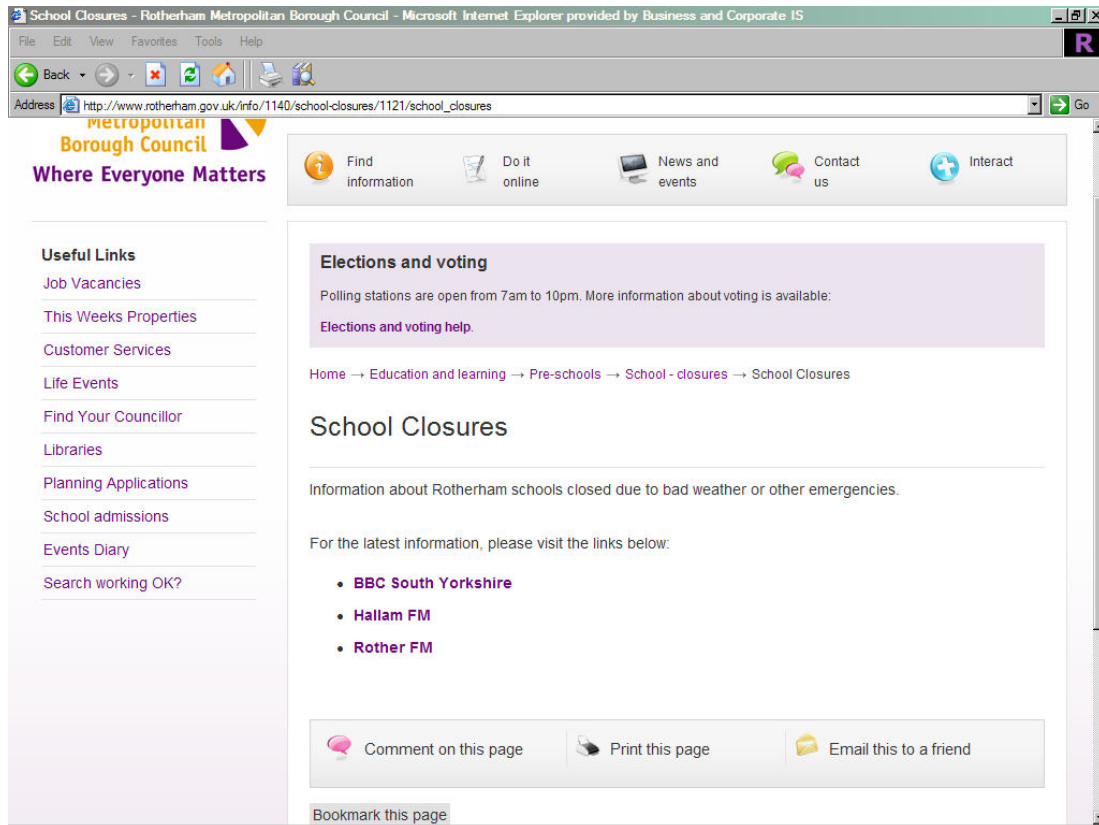
### **5.3 How we communicate closure to parents?**

- 5.3.1 The guidance to schools states that parents should be periodically reminded that there may be occasions when emergencies make it necessary for pupils to be sent home prematurely or the school to close and that in these circumstances parents should have advised their children of the care arrangements. Monkwood Primary School has issued a helpful leaflet outlining the procedure for emergency closure which was issued at the start of the cold snap.
- 5.3.2 If a school decides to close, parents should be notified as soon as possible. It is suggested that a decision to close should be made no later than 07:00am so that there is an opportunity for parents to check whether a school is open before they leave the house. An earlier decision the evening before would in many cases be more appropriate as this would help the collection of information about closures, and speed up the process of alerting the BBC and others. Local radio stations are told by individual schools if they are to close and the list of closures announced at regular intervals through the days (particularly mornings). Although this has been in many respects a tried and tested method, coverage for the stations is not uniform across the borough and in a small number of instances, incorrect information was given out. Some schools have a text system notifying parents of closure. This system was seen as being the most direct and simple way of informing parents, although of course, it is reliant on parents ensuring that their contact details are up-to-date. We were informed that not all schools had this service, citing that they did not have money available in their budgets to fund this. However, it would be worth exploring through the partnership with RBT, if such a service could be introduced to schools.
- 5.3.3 In addition to the text and radio notification, schools also contact the local authority to let them know of closure. This is to notify facilities management (cleaners) and catering to cancel services. Although the closures are posted on the Council’s website, difficulties with staff getting into work on both the Tuesday and Wednesday, meant that the website was not updated regularly. Assurances were given that access to remote technology meant that this could be updated more frequently in the future.

---

<sup>6</sup> Weathering the Storm II: improving UK resilience to severe winter weather” Local Government Association

- 5.3.4 The review group were also concerned about the quality of information posted on the RMBC website<sup>7</sup> (figure 1). Whilst directing parents to the radio stations is one route to update parents, it is important to ensure that information is posted on RMBC's website at an early stage, and information is disseminated through new technologies as appropriate (Twitter, Facebook etc).



- 5.3.5 Northamptonshire County Council (NCC)<sup>8</sup> (figure 2) has developed a system with schools to ensure that they are able respond promptly to issues as they arise, such as having access to schools IT passwords so that information could be posted if school had difficulties accessing their websites. Radio stations used NCC's texting service to inform schools by 6.30am of weather conditions, current and forecasted, as well as the conditions of the roads and transport information.

A similar system is operated by Hertfordshire County Council to provide schools with the facility to text information which will be published instantly on a public-facing web page<sup>9</sup>, with a facility to post messages and notification of when the website was last updated. They anticipate that the system will be quicker and more efficient than current arrangements and should reduce the stress on school websites, HCC's website and their Customer Service Centre.

<sup>7</sup> It should be noted that this is the default page and in the event of an emergency, would be populated a list of schools closed

<sup>8</sup> Northamptonshire County Council: True Grit Conference: Dealing with the Winter Impact 2009/10

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.hertsdirect.org/infobase/docs/worddocs/winterfinalreport.doc>

The list below identifies state schools in Hertfordshire and their current open or closed status. To help you find information about a specific school you can:

- Use the search box to search for your school by entering all or part of its name then click 'Go' or
- Select the first letter of your school on the alphabet bar below to take you to schools starting with that letter or
- Scroll down the list to find your school's information

If your school has no status or message information or has not updated its information, we suggest that you look at the school's website for other information that may be available.

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T V W Y      Search -

**A**

Name		Status	Message	Last Updated
Abbey C of E VA Primary 427	St Albans	-	-	-
Return to top				
Abbots Langley Primary 776	Abbots Langley	-	-	-
Return to top				
Abel Smith Primary 249	Hertford	-	-	-
Return to top				

## 5.4 Other measures that could be put in place to minimise disruption

There does not appear to have been any in-depth analysis of the factors involved in closures to identify potential trends or repeat difficulties. The review group was of the view by examining potential risks and problems across clusters, schools could take mitigating action to address these in the future.

- 5.4.1 Schools are expected to complete emergency plans, which are subject to routine auditing by the Health and Safety Team. It is not entirely clear to what extent these address business continuity in extreme weather situations. Given the likelihood of extreme weather events occurring more frequently in future years, schools should be supported to develop more comprehensive plans to mitigate against potential disruption.

This could include:

- How minimum staffing (including teaching and non-teaching staff) can be maintained
- How salt supplies are to be maintained,
- List of external contractors and/or volunteers to undertake site clearance
- How students will be supported to take scheduled examinations in the event of extreme weather

The review asks whether further work is required to provide assurance that schools have clear and accessible plans for severe weather conditions, and that these are stored off site as well as within the school premises.

- 5.4.2 In respect of taking steps to ensure minimum staffing is available, the review asked whether anything can be done to enable 'staff sharing' or pooling of premises in extraordinary circumstances. Sheffield City Council is consulting with the public on whether teachers, and other Council staff can be relocated, to help where they are needed in their local areas<sup>10</sup>. Newport Council has issued guidance if a teacher or member of support staff cannot reach their own school, they should report to another school in the area (if he/she can get there safely).

The Local Government Association (LGA) noted in its report 'that schools closures meant parents were unable to go to work which impacted heavily on businesses. In response to this it suggests:

*that contingency arrangements could be made between schools in a local area so that when travel is disrupted, teachers could be re-directed to their nearest school to help deal with staffing shortages, helping to keep schools open."*

- 5.4.3 The Cabinet Member for Streetpride stated that they were looking at ways to utilise small-plant machinery more efficiently, for example, the possibility of 'quad bikes' used for ground maintenance being adapted for snow clearance. A number of respondents suggested that they would be supportive of such measures particularly if schools could share snow-clearing machines etc. either in clusters or geographical areas to make it more cost-efficient.

Several councils asks for volunteers to help clear school sites. Guidance on how this could be done safely was posted on websites<sup>11</sup>. We are aware of some schools in Rotherham taking similar action although we are not certain if this was widespread practice across the borough.

## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The Local Authority should reissue the guidance to schools with an emphasis on the presumption that schools should remain open unless faced by extraordinary circumstances;
2. The Local Authority should confirm with governing bodies their approach to delivering the statutory 190 days of learning and in the case of closure, how they are able to make up some or all of the time lost;
3. The Local Authority should collate strategies or actions that have or would assist in maintaining a "school open" status. This good practice should be shared with colleagues across cluster groups and wider school communities;
4. The Local Authority should confirm the process for monitoring and reporting on school closures, including any specific circumstances to identify if there are common trends or factors<sup>12</sup>. This data should be used to inform salting

---

<sup>10</sup> Sheffield City Council: Have your say in the great snow debate

<sup>11</sup> Cornwall County Council: Using Volunteers to Clear Snow from School Grounds  
<http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=23506>

<sup>12</sup> For example length of closure, staffing issues, low stocks of salt, health and safety concerns (on

routes, continuity planning across clusters and communication issues.

5. Each school should be encourage to develop their business continuity plans to cover extreme weather. This should include :
    - how minimum staffing levels will be maintained,
    - how sufficient stocks of salt are maintained; linking with clusters as appropriate,
    - contact details of local building contractors and grounds maintenance companies who are able to clear snow,
    - consideration of later openings as opposed to closure (as practiced by some schools) to allow caretakers more time to make the site safe and allow staff travelling to work more travelling time,
    - measures to ensure that scheduled examinations or tests are able to take place,
    - how closure will be communicated to parents,
    - how communication systems are to be maintained, particularly linking to RMBC website;
  6. Children and Young People's Services with Human Resources, should explore with schools the feasibility of teachers and support staff being re-directed to their nearest school to help deal with staffing shortages, to keep schools closures to a minimum;
  7. The Local Authority explores with RBT whether cost effective text notification systems (or other social networking alternatives) are available for those schools without current access to these facilities;
  8. The RMBC 'school closure' web page is redesigned with the capacity to instantly 'capture' information for each school (including date of closure, reasons for closure, expected date of re-opening and contact details). This page should have 'quick-links' to other relevant pages (policy, gritting routes etc and the decisions made during severe weather);
  9. Guidance to parents is reissued by schools on a timely basis, incorporating details of the updated RMBC website;
  10. Priority salting routes are reviewed by RMBC and other relevant agencies to accommodate schools wherever possible;
  11. The feasibility (with due regard to health and safety, relevant checks etc) of recruiting a pool of volunteers to assist with site clearance, either on a school, cluster or Area Assembly level be explored;
  12. Streetpride explores the feasibility of schools hiring small-plant machinery to clear sites in extreme weather.
- 

and off site) or other geographical issues (site location, road layout, access issues)

13. The Cabinet Member and Director of Children and Young People's Services writes to the Minister of Education supporting the LGA call that in the case of extreme events, Ofsted and other regulatory targets should be suspended to enable the most appropriate response to be taken locally.

## 7 THANKS

- Cllr Shaun Wright - Cabinet Member Children and Young People's Services
- Cllr Richard Russell – Cabinet Member Streetpride
- Graham Sinclair - Programme Director BSF, CYPS
- David Burton - Director of Streetpride, EDS
- Dean Fenton - Risk Management, CYPS
- David Hill - Manager, School Organisation Planning and Development, CYPS
- Steve Pearson - Communications Manager, CYPS
- Rob Haines, Deputy Head Teacher, Rawmarsh Community Sports College
- Liz Gee, Headteacher Monkwood Primary School
- Paula Harmer, Headteacher, Thorpe Hesley Junior School
- Margaret Catling, Support Services Manager Aston Comprehensive School
- Peter Barnett - Scrutiny Co-ordinator, Performance & Scrutiny Team, Chief Executive's Directorate, Coventry City Council,

## 8 INFORMATION SOURCES/REFERENCES

- Met Office: *Coldest UK winter for over 30 years*  
<http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/corporate/pressoffice/2010/pr20100301.html>
- Teachernet (2010) : *Length of school day/year*  
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/management/atoz/l/lengthofschoolday>
- Teachernet: (2010) : *Planning for, and responding to, severe weather*  
<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/educationoverview/severeweather/?cid=Snow&pla=8JAN10&type=email>
- Department for Education (DfE), (2010) Quarmby report *The Resilience of England's Transport Systems in Winter*,  
<http://transportwinterresilience.independent.gov.uk/docs/interim-report/wrr-interim-report-2010-07-26.pdf>
- Local Government Group (2010) "*Weathering the Storm II: improving UK resilience to severe winter weather*"  
<http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/publications/publication-display.do?id=12437549>

- Northamptonshire County Council: *True Grit Conference: Dealing with the Winter Impact* 2009/10  
<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/EN/COUNCILSERVICES/TRANSPORT/T RUEGRIT/Documents/PDF%20Documents/True%20Grit%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>
- Hertfordshire County Council Winter Maintenance Programme (2009) *An investigation into the effectiveness of the current arrangements*  
<http://www.hertsdirect.org/infobase/docs/worddocs/winterfinalreport.doc>
- Sheffield City Council: Have your say in the great snow debate
- Cornwall County Council: *Using Volunteers to Clear Snow from School Grounds* <http://www.cornwall.gov.uk/default.aspx?page=23506>

For further information about this report please contact:

Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser

Chief Executive's Directorate,  
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council  
The Eric Manns Building,  
45 Moorgate Street, Rotherham, S60 2RB

[caroline.webb@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.webb@rotherham.gov.uk)

tel: (01709) 822765

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
--

1	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel</b>
2	<b>Date:</b>	Friday 15 October 2010
3	<b>Title:</b>	<b>14-19 Partnership, Governance and Planning</b>
4	<b>Directorate:</b>	Children and Young People’s Services

## 5 Summary

On 20 July 2010, the Secretary of State for Education announced that some of the functions transferred to local authorities (LA) under the Apprenticeship, Skills and Learning Act (ASL) (December 2009) would be reassigned to other agencies from 1 August 2010. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council’s (RMBC).will need to consider the implications of this announcement on 14-19 governance, planning and funding arrangements.

Ministers have affirmed their commitment to the strategic role of LAs in shaping 16-19 provision, identifying gaps, establishing new provision and developing the market. LAs will continue to have a duty to ensure that enough suitable education and training is provided to meet the reasonable needs of young people in their area for those:

- who are over compulsory school age but under 19
- who are aged 19 or over but under 25 and are subject to learning difficulty or disability assessment.

At the same time, however, the government is committed to freeing school and colleges in areas such as the curriculum design and inviting applications from schools to become Academies. Furthermore, the policy will introduce lagged funding, and simplify the funding arrangements. Funding of open Academies, Sixth Form Colleges (SFC), General Further Education Colleges (FEC) and commercial and charitable providers (but not School Sixth Forms (SSF)) will be handled through central agencies.

When taken together with the government’s relocation of funding responsibilities, the granting of additional freedoms to maintained schools and colleges, the encouragement for the creation of Academies, free schools and university technical colleges free of LA control, this provides LAs with a high level strategic role in developing the direction of provision, but reduces their leverage with providers and the opportunity to shape provision to meet perceived learner needs.

## 6 Recommendations

That Elected Members to agree RMBC’s strategic role in shaping and delivering a coherent 14-19 learning offer in Rotherham by:

- a) Sustaining the effective and long-standing 14-19 partnership (i.e. the 14-19 Resource and Strategy Group (RSG)) in Rotherham to enable a strategic and collective approach to the changes announced by the Education Secretary; and a rapid response to the Education Act expected in November; and



- b) Agreeing that the 14-19 RSG is held to account for developing and delivering a new 14-19 (25) Learning Plan based upon the following priorities:
- Promote Post 16 participation, retention and progression.
  - Raise Post 16 achievement including closing the attainment gap at level 2 and 3 at 19.
  - Promote a high quality curriculum offer and support and guidance for learners.
  - Provide strong strategic leadership and operational efficiencies.

## 7 Proposals and Details

### Where Are We Now?

The announcement by the Education Secretary on 20 July 2010 will result in:

- The Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) directly funding 16-19 provision in SFCs, FECs, private and charitable providers; and learners in Academies.
- The YPLA allocating funding on a lagged basis – this means that the YPLA will set the 2011/12 core allocation budgets for SSFs, SFCs and FECs based upon data of 2010/11 learner numbers.
- LAs no longer required to form Regional Planning Groups and Sub-Regional Groups.
- The YPLA continuing to provide funds to LAs to passport to maintained SSFs and to resource Young (14-16) Apprenticeships and Education Business Partnerships.
- The Skills Funding Agency (SkFA) continuing to fund Apprenticeships.
- LAs continuing to secure provision for young people with LDD.
- Provision for young offenders in custody aged 10-18 from 1 September 2010 has become the responsibilities of LAs.

RMBC, therefore, will not be responsible for planning and funding (c£37m) post-16 education and training providers (other than SSFs without Academy status). It is unclear on whether LA's will be required to continue to have a 14-19 (25) Learning Plan, or a 14-19 Partnership, or to produce an annual local 16-19 Commissioning Statement. However, RMBC will continue to have a clear duty and power of assumption to ensure that sufficient, suitable education and training is provided to meet the reasonable needs of young people in the Borough who are over compulsory school age but under 19; and who are aged 19 or over but under 25 and are subject to a LDD assessment.

As a result, the Cabinet Member for Safeguarding and Developing Learning Opportunities for Children agreed on 22 September 2010 to:

- Inform Cabinet that the 14-19 (25) Learning Plan will not now be a 'key decision' for Elected Member's consideration;
- Inform the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee that any production of a 16-19 Commissioning Statement will not require Scrutiny, as it will now not include how RMBC will allocate c£37m for 16-19 learning provision; and
- Endorse a re-draft of the 14-19 (25) Learning Plan to take account of the announcement by the Secretary of State for Education on 20 July 2010 and the new Education Act expected in November.

### Future Role

RMBC's 14-19 Team in discussion with the Cabinet Member for Safeguarding and Developing Learning Opportunities for Children and the YPLA, SkFA and other partners believe that the following six functions will be required to ensure that RMBC meets the priorities set out in 6b above.

## a) Local Needs Analysis

- Using both qualitative and quantitative LA data and that of the YPLAs to ensure a clear understanding of participation, retention and achievement in the Borough by preparing an accurate picture of learner, different sectors, different wards, different groups, etc.

## b) Leading Local Strategic 14-19 Partnership and Stakeholder Management to Shape 16-19 Provision

- The LA using the above analysis to draw up with its partners a local statement of where needs are being met and where they are not. This has two functions:
  - i. It informs schools, colleges and providers in drawing up their own post-16 provision plans; and
  - ii. It forms the base for identifying gaps and proposing costed bids to access any external funding to meet gaps.
- Managing the 16-19 Market and Meeting Gaps – the LA working with schools, colleges and providers to prepare a case for the portion of any unallocated funding; in particular demonstrating whether the new provision is meeting need (i.e. growth or displacement).

## d) Improving Service to Learners

- By joining up 11-16 and 16-19 (e.g. a significant issue in 16-19 remains the lack of continuity of service to learners with LDD (up to 25 under the ASCL Act) between Statements for 11-16 and the S139a for 16-25.
- Exploring the option of LAs working together to develop shared service solutions to issues such as an increased local offer to reduce out of Borough placements.
- By ascertaining the views of children, young people and their families and carers to inform provision and services.

## e) Responding to Government Policy and Targets

- Currently the LA is held responsible for the following national indicators on achievement of Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications at age 19, reducing the inequality gap in attainment levels at age 19 and increasing 16-19 participation in learning and thereby reducing NEET.
- Translating Government initiatives into the Rotherham context, as policy in applied learning or vocational education does not stand still (e.g. recently there has been the move from e2e to Foundation Learning with the LA providing briefing to providers; and a key issue now is the ending of programme led apprenticeships and the possible introduction of entry level apprenticeships).

## f) Building Capacity and Levering in Financial Support

- The LA will need to continue to be successful in attracting external funding into education, such as European Social Fund (ESF).
- Supporting schools, colleges and providers in making bids to increase their provision to ensure they follow the procedures in the statutory guidance and the LA remains the decision-maker with appeal to an independent adjudicator.
- Brokering where it is more cost effective for provision to be purchased by one organisation than each sourcing the provision.

- The LA, with agreement of stakeholders and partners, will need to continue making capital bids.

## 8 Finance

Finance for 14-16 and 16-19 provision is currently being reviewed by the Coalition Government and more should be known following the Comprehensive Spending Review

- The c£37m of Learner Responsive funding per annum, ring-fenced for the 16-19 (25) education and training provision in the Borough, will no longer be routed through the LA, but instead be commissioned and administered through the YPLA.
- ESF 14-19 NEETs Response Fund monies is c£3.5m contracted by the SkFA to RMBC from August 2008 to December 2011 to reduce NEET.
- Area Wide Grant, which includes delivering Connexions
- Designated Schools Grant – will be affected as the Government routes funding directly through schools and as schools become Academies and Free Schools.

## 9 Risks and Uncertainties

Details of main risks affecting project	Likelihood of risk/threat	Consequence of risk/threat	Steps to be undertaken to minimise and mitigate risk
Resources and Structure	High	Until the Education Bill is published it is difficult to predict the precise impact, but it is clear that the Coalition Government is intent on freeing up schools and education providers from LA control.	Rotherham sustains its 14-19 Partnership and develops an agreed 14-19 Plan to shape 16-19 provision in the Borough.
Servicing Functions	High	Clearly this change, outside of schools with sixth forms, cuts out the need for RMBC to fund and to hold financial assurance functions for 16-19 and removes the need for RMBC to manage funding agreements with 16-19 providers.	The present National Commissioning Framework is to be withdrawn and the intention is to have a new version in place by September, which details the business cycle, process and responsibilities for 16-19 for the academic year 2011/12. Until that document and the Schools White Paper are produced, it is not possible now to state the overall requirement to service this function, other than to say it should be reduced.

## 10 Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The LA has a number of Local Area Agreement Targets and National Performance Indicators, which are set out in the 14-19 (25) Learning Plan on participation, achievement/attainment and narrowing the inequality gap in achievement/attainment – it is unclear at this stage the targets and indicators that will continue for 14-19 learning. A re-draft of the Plan will be developed in the context of the new Education Act and take into full consideration any variations in targets and indicators.

11 **Background Papers and Consultation**

- Paper to the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Safeguarding and Developing Learning Opportunities for Children on 22 September 2010.
- 14-19 (25) Learning Plan.
- 14-19 Resource and Strategy Group's Terms of Reference.

**Contact Name:** Karen Borthwick  
Assistant Head of School Effectiveness Service  
01709336821  
karen.borthwick@rotherham.gov.uk

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
--

1	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel</b>
2	<b>Date:</b>	Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> October, 2010
3	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Commissioning of Placements for Looked After Children</b>
4	<b>Directorate:</b>	Children and Young People’s Services

### 5. **Summary**

CYPS has a requirement to purchase external residential and fostering provision from the independent sector to accommodate children and young people who cannot be accommodated within our own resources. This is as a result of the needs of those children and young people being too complex to be met by our own foster carers or residential units, because there is a safeguarding issue of placing them within Rotherham or simply due to a lack of capacity within our own provision.

These external placements are more expensive than in-house provision and this demand led budget has always overspent against allocation each financial year.

This paper sets out the actions being taken to manage that situation.

### 6. **Recommendations**

**That Scrutiny notes the mitigations put in place to manage the demand on resources.**

## 7. **Proposals and Details**

### **Existing Process**

The current process for planned placements is that when a social worker believes a resource is required for a young person then they seek the agreement of their line management and then present the case to the Resource Panel which meets on a weekly basis. The panel examines all possible options and if it is agreed that an Out of Authority placement is the only option available then Director approval is sought and the Commissioning Team notified of the need to source a placement externally. In the case of an emergency placement then the same process is followed with the case being brought to Resource Panel retrospectively.

The Commissioning Team then contact possible providers from an approved list of either residential units or Independent Fostering Associations (IFAs) with details of the placement needed and provide the social worker with options available from which they choose the most appropriate placement for that young person.

### **Actions Being Taken**

#### **Regional**

Rotherham is already part of a Yorkshire and Humber Regional Contracting Group which takes responsibility for accrediting both residential and IFA providers in line with the national fostering and residential contracts thereby saving the need for each Authority to individually accredit each provider. This group is also responsible for setting annual price increases for approved providers and reporting any serious issues with providers across their network.

In September a meeting was called, facilitated by the Department of Education's Commissioning Support Programme attended by representatives of all the Yorkshire and Humberside Local Authorities to agree a way forward in terms of agreeing joint working arrangements regarding placements. It is being led by Leeds and will now look to secure a small commitment of funding from each Authority to carry out legal and contracting work in order to put in place a framework agreement across the region for suppliers which will specify the price for each type of placement that Authorities are willing to pay. Rotherham will be playing an active role in supporting this process.

#### **Sub-Regional**

As well as the regional initiatives above a meeting has been called by Rotherham of representatives from Sheffield, Doncaster and Barnsley Local Authorities to explore ways in which financial pressures can be shared in relation to placements. The first meeting of this group will take place on 14<sup>th</sup> October and, whilst not looking to duplicate the work of the regional initiative, there are options which can be explored more locally. Some of these will include the sufficiency agenda which from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2011 requires each Authority to place any child, where possible, within 20 miles of their home.

### **Local**

In line with the revised Children and Young People's Plan a greater emphasis is being placed upon Prevention and Early Intervention strategies in an attempt to prevent those children and young people on the edge of care becoming Looked After Children. In order to achieve this much of the work needs to be done with families and young people prior to the point at which their case would be referred to the Resource Panel. However, the role and remit of the Resource Panel has been reviewed with the membership extended to include those with greatest knowledge of potential alternatives to support a child and their family to prevent the need for that young person being taken into care or to return them at the earliest possible opportunity. The new panel will be operational from 20<sup>th</sup> October.

Increased efforts are being made by staff within social care to progress the care plans of those placed Out of Authority to enable them to be adopted, return to their family or become independent. This work has resulted in 31 young people leaving placements between April and the end of August. It should be noted during this period it has also been necessary to accommodate an additional 27 young people in placements. Children in IFA placements who have a 'should be placed for adoption' decision will be prioritised for linking wherever possible. The Fostering Team are about run a recruitment campaign that focuses on younger children in order to prevent them being placed outside the Borough. The Team is also actively recruiting for carers willing to take children on a long term basis.

Within Rotherham a number of steps have been taken to drive down costs incurred against placement budgets.

Previously when need for a placement was known in advance a reservation fee was made to the provider to secure the desired place prior to the young person's arrival. This practice has now ceased, unless ordered to by a court. Whilst this places additional pressure on the Commissioning Team to secure a place at shorter notice it has removed one element of cost.

Prices quoted by suppliers when sourcing placements are now routinely challenged by the Commissioning Team on each occasion prior to the young person being placed in order to secure discounts. This process has secured savings of £47,739 since June this year.

Meetings with all approved suppliers of both residential and fostering placements are scheduled in order to secure discounts for Rotherham. These discounts will be on the basis of either the number of young people placed with an agency, the level of financial commitment with that agency and the length of time which the young people placed with that agency need to be accommodated.

The initial two meetings have already agreed discounts equating to £24,000 of savings.

**8. Finance**

Rotherham currently has 26 young people placed in independent residential provision and 106 young people placed with IFAs, at an average cost of £3,303 and £875 per week respectively. The budget for this financial year is £3,030,748 for independent fostering placements and £2,457,373 for residential placements. Current projected spend figures for the year are £4,463,416 and £3,836,120 respectively giving a combined projected overspend of £2,786,300.

For financial year 2009/10 the year end position was an overspend against budget of £3,560,031.

The total budget for in house fostering placements for this financial year is £1,960,000. The budget as at the end of August based on current activity and increase in in-house provision, is projected to be overspent by £80,000 giving an overall projected spend of £2,040,174. The average cost of an in-house placement will need to be established in order for a proper comparison to be made with IFA placements. As part of the commissioning strategy a decision will be made as to the type and number of provision that could be provided in house and what specialist provision should be sought from the independent sector.

**9. Risks and Uncertainties**

Due to the fact that these are demand led budgets it is impossible to accurately predict how many young people will require placements in the future which in turn makes it difficult to accurately project future expenditure levels. However, work is ongoing to develop a robust strategy to ensure that lower level interventions become the norm and that children only become looked after as a last resort.

**10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

This work impacts particularly on two of the 'Four Big Things' within the recently revised Children and Young People's Plan namely Keeping Children and Young People Safe and Prevention and Early Intervention with one of the key areas of focus being Looked After Children and our commitment to them that they can live in a safe place where they are protected from harm.

NI62 Stability of placements of looked after children: number of placements is the key performance indicator for this area of work.

**11 Background Papers and Consultation**

N/A

**Contact Name:** Adrian Hobson, Business Development and Commissioning Manager  
Telephone: 822566  
E-mail: [adrian.hobson@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:adrian.hobson@rotherham.gov.uk)



**ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS**

1.	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel</b>
2.	<b>Date:</b>	Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> October, 2010
3.	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children</b>
4.	<b>Directorate:</b>	Children and Young People’s Services

**5. Summary**

**The Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children took place between 19th -30th July, 2010.**

**6. Recommendations**

**That the Scrutiny Panel receives this report and notes the key recommendations to be implemented.**

7. **Proposals and Details**

The Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children took place between 19th - 30th July, 2010

The Inspection was very positive and this has resulted in an overall rating of Adequate with some elements rated as Good. The key recommendations for Safeguarding are:

**For Immediate:**

- Ensure that all recording, including assessments, recording of meetings and within case files, incorporates up-to-date and key information and identifies risk and protective factors.
- Improve the effectiveness of strategy discussions and child protection plans and the active review of these by core groups and child protection reviews, and the quality of recording, including details on what action is to be taken.

**For Next Three Months:**

- NHS Rotherham and Rotherham Foundation NHST should ensure that within A&E services there is access to suitably trained and qualified children's nursing staff when children and young people are seen in the department.
- NHS Rotherham should ensure that A&E staff at Rotherham Foundation NHS Trust have access to and use the electronic System 1, to ensure that children and young people can be easily identified if they are already known to social care services.
- Improve the quality of social care supervision so that staff receive the right level of challenge, development and support.
- Ensure that the workforce training and development plan clearly identifies how it will meet the development needs of all staff.
- Update the protocol for children missing from home, care and education to reflect the new national guidance.

The key recommendations for Looked After Children are:

**For Immediate:**

- Strengthen the role of the virtual head by ensuring that the work of the School Improvement and Effectiveness team is more focused on supporting and challenging schools to improve the attainment of looked after children.
- Develop the independent visiting service to ensure that all eligible children are able to have access to an independent visitor.

**For Next Three Months:**

- Strengthen the capacity of the independent reviewing officer service to ensure that all children and young people are effectively supported in making a contribution to their care plans and that care plans are robustly challenged.

An Action Plan is being produced and will be monitored closely to ensure full completion in timescale and that full compliance is achieved. All actions are already in train as these were picked up in our self-assessment prior to inspection.

**8. Finance**

There are no financial implications to the report but the Safeguarding and Looked After Children budgets are already under pressure.

**9. Risks and Uncertainties**

There is a real possibility of an unannounced Contact, Referral and Assessment Inspection before December. We must ensure that we are in the best possible position and implementation of the recommendations will mitigate the risks associated with this.

**10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

The results feed into the Annual Children's rating which is due to be announced in November.

**11. Background Papers and Consultation**

The report has not been shared due to being under strict embargo.

**Contact Name:** Gani Martins, Director Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting  
Children and Young People's Services  
Telephone: 01709 8223905  
Email: gani.martins@rotherham.gov.uk

**Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children's Services  
Implementation of Recommendations for Areas for Improvement**

Areas for Improvement	Task/Action	Responsible Officer	Date for Completion	Current Position/ Progress as at September 2010
<b>Safeguarding</b>				
<p>1. Ensure that all recording, including assessments, recording of meetings and written case files, incorporates up-to-date and key information and identifies risk and protective factors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All Social Workers, including Social Workers in Family Placement Teams to check correct and update their case files.</li> <li>• Case recording to be up-to-date on SWIFT.</li> <li>• Initial and Core Assessments to be signed off by a Team Manager ensuring that there is a clear risk assessment, analysis and plan.</li> <li>• Up-to-date chronologies to be placed on children's files.</li> <li>• Team Managers to check and confirm to Service Managers that the task is completed.</li> <li>• Systematic audit of all case files.</li> <li>• Quality assurance of Initial and Core Assessments.</li> </ul>	<p>Director, Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting CIN Service Managers</p>	<p>Immediate/ 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CYPS Systems Development Officer attending Team Managers' Meeting on 23rd September, 2010, regarding SWIFT issues - <b>Completed 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 2010.</b></li> <li>• Memo sent to staff instructing that all should ensure that all these tasks/actions were carried out immediately – <b>Completed.</b></li> <li>• Ongoing audits of case files.</li> <li>• 3 Briefing sessions held in September with all staff to reiterate the recommendations from the inspection – <b>Completed 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>,</b></li> </ul>

Areas for Improvement	Task/Action	Responsible Officer	Date for Completion	Current Position/ Progress as at September 2010
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality assurance of case recording.</li> </ul>			<p>27<sup>th</sup> September, 2010.</p>
<p>2. Improve the effectiveness of strategy discussions and child protection plans and the active review of these by core groups and child protection reviews, and the quality of recordings, including details on what action is to be taken.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure outcome of strategy discussions put on SWIFT.</li> <li>Audit the quality of strategy discussion reports.</li> <li>Audit child protection plans.</li> <li>Audit Core Group minutes to ensure they address the child protection plan and progress is being made.</li> <li>All Strategy discussions/ meetings to be recorded and associated to child's file.</li> <li>Refresh training on Quality Child Protection Plans.</li> <li>QA minutes of Strategy Discussions (locality)/ Meetings.</li> <li>Identify specific Conference Chair for each locality to assist in quality development</li> </ul>	<p>Director, Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting  Service Manager, Safeguarding</p>	<p>Immediate/ 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfer the Chairing of Core Groups to locality managers (WT compliant) under new locality arrangements. From 1<sup>st</sup> October, 2010.</li> <li>Recruitment to full strength Chairing Service commenced.</li> <li>New attendance information being captured.</li> <li>A dedicated Safeguarding Manager has been appointed to Chair all strategy meetings in cases of organised abuse, child exploitation and allegations against carers.</li> </ul>

Areas for Improvement	Task/Action	Responsible Officer	Date for Completion	Current Position/ Progress as at September 2010
	and consultation including locality based audits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conference Chair to join locality management meetings.</li> </ul>			
3. Improve the quality of Social Care Supervision so that staff receive the right level of challenge, development and support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arrange briefing/training for Team Managers on quality supervision, include examples of good practice.</li> <li>Random audit of supervision records by Service Managers and Director, Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting.</li> </ul>	Director, Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting Workforce Strategy, Planning and Development Manager	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12 month trial of Advanced Practitioner post currently being explored.</li> <li>Management development programme beginning in September 2010 for a selection of Team Managers.</li> </ul>
4. Ensure that the Workforce Training and Development Plan clearly identifies how it will meet the development needs of all staff.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review content of Training and Development Plan.</li> <li>Increase number of Social Work qualified staff in the Training and Development Team.</li> </ul>	Director, Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting Workforce Strategy, Planning and Development Manager	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transfer of staff to Workforce Development Team took place in August 2010.</li> <li>Vacant post with the team to be advertised in September 2010.</li> </ul>
5. Update the protocol for Children Missing from Home, Care and Education to reflect the new national guidance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and update protocol for Children Missing from Home, Care and Education.</li> <li>Protocol to be endorsed by</li> </ul>	Director, Community Services Manager, Residential Services	31 <sup>st</sup> October 2010	Protocol to be discussed at Exploitation Sub-Group week commencing 14th September. Reviewed and revised

Areas for Improvement	Task/Action	Responsible Officer	Date for Completion	Current Position/ Progress as at September 2010
	Rotherham Safeguarding Children's Board.			document to be completed by 30th September and submitted to P&P Sub-Group of LCSB.
<b>NHS</b>				
<p>1. NHS Rotherham and Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust (NHSFT) should ensure that within A&amp;E services there is access to suitably trained and qualified children's nursing staff when children and young people are seen in the department.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the training for A&amp;E staff in relation to caring for sick children - joint work between A&amp;E and Child Health.</li> <li>• Rapid access to Children's trained nurses and Play Specialist/Nursery Nurse available through the Child Health senior nurse bleep system.</li> <li>• Reinforce the role of the senior paediatric bleep holder and their responsibilities to A&amp;E.</li> <li>• Utilise upcoming vacancies within A&amp;E to attempt to recruit dual trained adult/children's nurse (accepting the challenge of being able to successfully recruit to such a post).</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Children and Young People's Services, Health/Associated Director, Children's Services, RCHS Associate Director, Strategic Planning</p>	<p>30<sup>th</sup> November 2010</p>	<p>September - Agreed Task/Action.</p>

Areas for Improvement	Task/Action	Responsible Officer	Date for Completion	Current Position/ Progress as at September 2010
<p>2. NHS Rotherham should ensure that A&amp;E staff at Rotherham Foundation NHS Trust have access to and use the electronic System 1, to ensure that children and young people can be easily identified if they are already known to social care services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of names to be decided by RFT management and sent to all on this email by a 'reply all'.</li> <li>• Staff without smartcards then need to contact Sue Wake to arrange for a basic smartcard to be issued by RFT.</li> <li>• List of PC's to be used to be sent to David Brown for software install and Smartcard reader install to be done by RFT.</li> <li>• List of Staff to be trained to be forwarded to Wendy Herman and bookings arranged between staff involved and training team at NHSR.</li> <li>• List of staff to Paul Chapman for sponsorship for access on behalf of RCHS, RA02 access forms to be produced and processed by reg authority team at NHSR.</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Children and Young People's Services, Health/Associated Director, Children's Services, RCHS Associate Director, Strategic Planning</p>	<p>30<sup>th</sup> November 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• List of staff identified for access to and training in use of SystemOne.</li> <li>• Identified staff have been notified re requirement on how to obtain smartcards.</li> <li>• Identified PCs needed.</li> <li>• Identified Location and PC IDs.</li> <li>• Dates for training of staff are being identified.</li> </ul>



Areas for Improvement	Task/Action	Responsible Officer	Date for Completion	Current Position/ Progress as at September 2010
<b>Looked After Children</b>				
<p>1. Strengthen the role of the Virtual Head by ensuring that the work of the School Improvement and Effectiveness Team is more focused on supporting and challenging the attainment of Looked After children.</p>	<p>Appointment of Virtual Head Teacher.</p>	<p>Senior Director, Schools and Lifelong Learning</p>	<p>Immediate/ 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010</p>	<p>Process in place for completion September/ October 2010.</p>
<p>2. Develop the Independent Visiting Service to ensure that all eligible children in care able to have access to an Independent Visitor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complete Needs analysis.</li> <li>• Relocate the management and monitoring of service under Service Manager Safeguarding.</li> <li>• Service to be developed under the “Rights 2 Rights” service.</li> <li>• Recruit and train Independent Visitors.</li> <li>• Monitor uptake of service</li> <li>• Design performance Targets: Number of IVs Number of LAC allocated IV</li> </ul>	<p>Service Manager, Safeguarding Unit</p>	<p>31<sup>st</sup> October 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation with Rights 2 Rights completed.</li> <li>• DLT agreed transfer of Rights2Rights service to safeguarding from October 2010.</li> <li>• Rights2Rights to develop IVS scheme.</li> <li>• 10 IV’s recruited and training commenced.</li> <li>• Qualifying looked After Children to be identified and allocated October</li> </ul>

Areas for Improvement	Task/Action	Responsible Officer	Date for Completion	Current Position/ Progress as at September 2010
	<p>Number of LAC contributing to Reviews</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children's complaints resolved within timescale with acceptable outcome and reported annually to the Safeguarding Board</li> </ul>			<p>2010. Gap analysis to be reported to Safeguarding Manager.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguarding Board received report June 2010 with recommendations for further information required.</li> </ul>
<p>3. Strengthen the capacity of the Independent Reviewing Officer Service to ensure that all children and young people are effectively supported in making a contribution to their care plans and that care plans are robustly challenged.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the capacity within the service to meet the requirements of new statutory guidance.</li> <li>Increase capacity and improve practice to ensure care plans are addressing the needs of looked after children and that delay or drift in case planning is minimised.</li> <li>Design and agree performance management targets.</li> <li>Reviews within timescales.</li> <li>Minutes within timescales.</li> <li>Participation of LAC in reviews.</li> </ul>	<p>Service Manager, Safeguarding Unit</p>	<p>30<sup>th</sup> October 2010</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appointed 2 Agency IROs starting week commencing 20th September, 2010, bringing the total number of IROs up to 5¾ - <b>Completed.</b></li> <li>New Job Description and Person Spec written and under evaluation.</li> <li>Recruitment and business case resubmitted.</li> <li>Immediate vacancies covered on a temporary basis. (September 2010).</li> </ul>

<b>Areas for Improvement</b>	<b>Task/Action</b>	<b>Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Date for Completion</b>	<b>Current Position/ Progress as at September 2010</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Quality of care plans.</li><li>• Evidence of challenge.</li><li>• Quality audits undertaken.</li><li>• Assistant safeguarding Manager to attend locality and looked after team meetings to brief on new statutory guidance.</li></ul>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Backlog of minutes reduced.</li><li>• IROs to ensure permanency planning is addressed at 2nd LAC Review and any subsequent Review'.</li><li>• Independent Reviewing Officer to undertake audit at each review.</li><li>• Attendance at team meeting set.</li></ul>



# Inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services

Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

---

**Inspection dates:** 19 – 30 July 2010

**Reporting inspector:** Marie McGuinness HMI

**Age group:** All

**Published:** 27 August 2010

---

---

© Crown copyright 2010

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the local authority or at [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

## Contents

<b>About this inspection</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The inspecton judgements and what they mean</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Service information</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The inspection outcomes: safeguarding services</b>	<b>5</b>
1. Overall effectiveness	5
2. Capacity for improvement	5
3. Areas for improvement	6
4. Outcomes for children and young people	7
a. The effectiveness of services in taking reasonable steps to ensure children and young people are safe	7
b. The effectiveness of services in taking reasonable steps to ensure that children and young people feel safe	9
5. The quality of provision	10
6. Leadership and management	12
<b>The inspection outcomes: services for looked after children</b>	<b>15</b>
1. Overall effectiveness	15
2. Capacity for improvement	16
3. Areas for improvement	17
4. Outcomes for children and young people	17
5. The quality of provision	21
6. Leadership and management	23
<b>Record of main findings</b>	<b>26</b>

---

## About this inspection

1. The purpose of the inspection is to evaluate the contribution made by relevant services in the local area towards ensuring that children and young people are properly safeguarded and to determine the quality of service provision for looked after children and care leavers. The inspection team consisted of four of Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), one shadow HMI inspector and one inspector from the Care Quality Commission. The inspection was carried out under the Children Act 2004.
2. The evidence evaluated by inspectors included:
  - discussions with children and young people receiving services, front line managers, senior officers including the Leader of the Council, Chief Executive, Director of Children's Services and the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, elected members, Chief Executive Officers, chairs and non executive directors as well as senior managers and front line health staff from all the healthcare organisations in Rotherham, and a range of community representatives.
  - analysing and evaluating reports from a variety of sources including a review of the Children and Young People's Plan, performance data, information from the inspection of local settings, such as schools, health care settings and day care provision and the evaluations of six serious case reviews undertaken by Ofsted in accordance with 'Working Together To Safeguard Children', 2006.
  - a review of 34 case files for children and young people with a range of need. This provided a view of services provided over time and the quality of reporting, recording and decision making undertaken.
  - the outcomes of the most recent annual unannounced inspection of local authority contact, assessment and referral services undertaken in August 2009.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

3. All inspection judgements are made using the following four point scale.

Outstanding (Grade 1)	A service that significantly exceeds minimum requirements
-----------------------	---

Good (Grade 2)	A service that exceeds minimum requirements
Adequate (Grade 3)	A service that only meets minimum requirements
Inadequate (Grade 4)	A service that does not meet minimum requirements

## Service information

4. Rotherham is a metropolitan borough comprising 110 square miles within the South Yorkshire region. It contains a mix of urban areas and villages, interspersed with large areas of open countryside.

5. Rotherham is ranked 68 in the 2007 index of multiple deprivation. The central urban area comprises the main area of high deprivation with most of the area falling within the 20% most deprived areas in England.

6. The borough's population is 253,859 including 59,489 children and young people aged 18 years or under, of which 21% are aged 0 to three years. At January 2010 the proportion entitled to free school meals was 18.7% which is above the national average. Children and young people from minority ethnic groups account for 14.1% in primary schools and 10.9% in secondary schools. The percentage of pupils who speak English as a second language has increased slightly from 7.2% in 2009 to 7.9% in 2010.

7. Rotherham's Children and Young People's Board was established in 2006, along with the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership. Both of these have been reviewed recently and were replaced by the Children and Young People's Trust Board (CYPTB) in April 2010. A formal protocol governs the relationships between the CYPTB and the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Board (RSCB). The Strategic Partnership has now become the Think Family Board and this represents the wider partnership working at a strategic level. A multi-agency safeguarding unit is centrally based and there is a separate safeguarding team that supports the RSCB.

8. Children's social care is delivered through seven locality teams which include co-located health staff, youth workers and police officers. Plans are well advanced to modify this structure to increase the focus on safeguarding, corporate parenting and performance management. Fostering, adoption and services for children with disabilities are delivered on a borough-wide basis. There are 139 foster carers. In addition, as at 31 March 2010, there were 125 fostering placements within the independent sector. Six local children's homes



are provided by the council, two of which provide short breaks care for children with disabilities. At the time of the inspection there were 419 looked after children including 119 young children aged 0 to five, 241 school age children, and 59 young people aged 16 and over. There are 292 children and young people subject to a child protection plan with 17 of these being also looked after children. The leaving care service currently works with 118 care leavers. Care leaver services are commissioned from Action for Children.

9. The education of looked after children is supported through a virtual head teacher and the Get Real Team who provide additional support. Family support initiatives operate across a range of partner services with early intervention and prevention being undertaken in the Family Intervention Project (FIP) team and through Families and Schools Together (FAST).

10. Rotherham has 99 infant, junior or primary schools, 15 secondary schools, six special schools, and one academy. There are six pupil referral units with one shortly to be deregistered. There are 23 children's centres.

11. Planning and commissioning of health services for children are led by the council and NHS Rotherham (NHSR), the latter of which commissions acute hospital and maternity hospital services from The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust. Rotherham Community Health Services (RCHS) are commissioned by NHSR to provide children and young people's community health services (including health visiting and school nursing), are co-located with council services in locally based communities and schools. NHS Rotherham are the lead commissioners of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) services which are provided by Rotherham, Doncaster and South Humber Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust (RDaSH), Rotherham Community Health Services, Rotherham Mind (Third Sector not inspected here) and Sheffield Children Hospital (in-patient mental health services not inspected here). The council commissions specific therapeutic services for looked after children. Services for children with disabilities are delivered through an integrated social care and health team

## The inspection outcomes: Safeguarding services

### Overall effectiveness

### Grade 3 Adequate

12. The overall effectiveness of safeguarding services is adequate. Statutory requirements are met and there have been recognisable improvements in safeguarding over the last seven months since the Government issued a Notice to Improve in December 2009. The strong corporate ownership of the improvement plan, involving the leader of the council, lead member for children's services, the chief executive and the chief executive of NHS Rotherham has ensured that there is robust leadership and clear strategies in place to support the improvement process. This includes progress in tackling the areas for priority action identified by the unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment services in August 2009. Prior to this, progress was slow. However, the pace of change since December 2009 has been significant with a number of key performance indicators showing improvements. For example, the timeliness of initial and core assessments has improved significantly and a robust approach to the recruitment and retention of social workers and managers has resulted in vacancy rates reducing considerably from 43% in 2009 to two social worker vacancies at the time of the inspection. There have been demonstrable improvements in performance management and quality assurance arrangements, but there is still inconsistency in the work of social care teams. While some good work was seen, there remains some poor quality practice in a number of the cases tracked by inspectors, with particular weaknesses in case planning, recording and reviews. Partnership arrangements are sound and the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Board (RSCB) exercises increasingly effective leadership.

### Capacity for improvement

### Grade 3 Adequate

13. Capacity to improve is adequate. Determined and strong corporate leadership has led to significant recent improvements in provision for the most vulnerable children. A robust and well-monitored action plan is tackling the remaining challenges. Work is well advanced to reorganise front line social work teams to reduce the range of work undertaken by social workers in each team. For example, a worker in a team was identified to work specifically with looked after children and a borough wide looked after children service is also being established. There has been a change in Lead Member and the drive in leadership has continued. A number of new key senior management appointments have been made including the director of Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting and this has brought a fresh approach, drive and momentum to the council. Financial planning ensures that resources are available to meet identified need. Over the last year the council has invested an additional £3.1 million in order to improve front line services for the most vulnerable. Recent action has been taken to tackle the three priority areas for

action identified in the unannounced inspection of the contact, referral and assessment arrangements undertaken in August 2009. One of these highlighted the wide range of work undertaken by social workers in localities which undermined their capacity to deliver effective services to safeguard vulnerable children. During this inspection, inspectors did not find any children or young people who were at risk of significant harm and visits to the Access team and two locality teams indicated that the quality of the work was at least adequate. The recent fostering inspection undertaken by Ofsted was judged to be adequate.

14. Senior managers have an accurate knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of provision and have put in place robust performance management and quality assurance arrangements systems which are showing early signs of improving the quality of social care practice. Staff and managers now receive timely and accurate information about their performance which is being used to drive up further improvements.

15. Local partnership working is good; health agencies, South Yorkshire police service and the voluntary and community sector contribute well to strategic development and improvements. The RSCB works effectively and is well led by the independent chair. The Workforce Strategy is appropriately set within the context of the Children's Trust's priorities. It accurately sets key strategic priorities and the necessary actions to deliver these. Good attention has been paid to the recruitment and retention of social work staff. However, the accompanying learning and development delivery plan does not clearly link to the strategy and does not sufficiently explain how it will meet the development needs of all staff.

### **Areas for improvement**

16. In order to improve the quality of provision and services for safeguarding children and young people in Rotherham the local authority and its partners should take the following action:

#### **Immediately:**

- Ensure that all recording, including assessments, recording of meetings and within case files, incorporates up-to-date and key information and identifies risk and protective factors.
- Improve the effectiveness of strategy discussions and child protection plans and the active review of these by core groups and child protection reviews, and the quality of recording, including details on what action is to be taken.

### **Within three months**

- NHS Rotherham and Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust (NHSFT) should ensure that within A&E services there is access to suitably trained and qualified children's nursing staff when children and young people are seen in the department.
- NHS Rotherham should ensure that A&E staff at Rotherham Foundation NHS Trust have access to and use the electronic System 1, to ensure that children and young people can be easily identified if they are already known to social care services.
- Improve the quality of social care supervision so that staff receive the right level of challenge, development and support.
- Ensure that the workforce training and development plan clearly identifies how it will meet the development needs of all staff.
- Update the protocol for children missing from home, care and education to reflect the new national guidance.

### **Outcomes for children and young people**

#### **The effectiveness of services in taking reasonable steps to ensure that children and young people are safe. Grade 3 Adequate**

17. The Rotherham Safeguarding Children Board operates effectively. A new independent chair was appointed in September 2009 and is providing good leadership and direction to ensure that all statutory requirements in respect of the board's work are met. Governance arrangements have been recently strengthened between the CYPTB and RSCB. There is good challenge with all partners; in particular, health agencies play a key role in the CYPTB and the RSCB. Challenge has been further enhanced since the improvement notice was served and following the inspection of fostering services. For example, the chief executive of NHS Rotherham reviewed all placements of looked after children. Whilst there is regular monitoring and challenge of key priority areas, there is scope to improve clarity in respect of the mechanisms through which the RSCB hold the CYPTB to account. There is a clear reporting and monitoring schedule for sub groups which includes an appropriate focus on core child protection activity. Partnership work, including performance management, between safeguarding board members is sound. The links between the child death overview panel and the serious case review panel are effective. The safeguarding unit provides good assistance to partner agencies to support their contributions. A wide range of high quality multi and single-agency safeguarding training takes place and is well attended, including by general practitioners and the voluntary and community sector. This training is valued by stakeholders spoken to as part of this inspection. The RSCB does not currently evaluate training for impact on practice. However, designated health professionals have undertaken review and evaluation of training and changes to

provision have occurred as a result of this. For example, there has been increased access to training for GP practice staff, including practice managers, receptionists and GPs. Training data shows that all staff within NHSR and Rotherham Community Health Services have completed level 1 safeguarding training and nearly 90% of all other staff have completed levels 2 and 3 training as appropriate to their post.

18. Processes to ensure safe recruitment of staff in social care and education are adequate, with a central record in place. Files viewed by inspectors demonstrated that appropriate checks were undertaken and there was evidence of good risk assessment and senior management decision making by the director for safeguarding and corporate parenting. However, this practice is not underpinned by a protocol to ensure that this happens in all cases.

19. Adequate improvements in the identification of and response to child protection needs have been made and were evident during the inspection. These include the strengthening of initial decision making in the access team and the provision of additional administrative and other resources to enable social workers to spend more of their time working with children and families. However, there are still some gaps in the recording and tracking of referrals, particularly those that are assessed to be for no further action. Compliance with statutory requirements is closely monitored through accessible and up to date performance management information. Referrals are promptly followed up, a higher percentage of assessments are being completed within timescales, child protection conferences, core group meetings and child protection reviews take place within required timescales. The out of hours service is satisfactory overall, with a new experienced manager in post and staff report that this service is now much more responsive to need.

20. Previous A&E attendances of children and young people known to services are only held on the A&E system for six months. This system allows A&E staff to record parental concerns, although the system is not accessible by other health professionals across Rotherham and this has the potential to inhibit sharing of safeguarding information

There is no electronic flagging system in the Accident and Emergency department (A&E) at Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust (NHSFT) for children and young people known to social care. Previous A&E attendances of children and young people known to services are only held on the system for the past six months. The health visitor liaison post ensures that all children and young people's attendance at A&E is reviewed. However, there is no contingency when the post holder is absent. There is a lack of qualified nursing staff or staff with enhanced children competencies employed within the A&E department.

21. The Teenage Pregnancy Strategy is well implemented and provides a more localised approach to data collection with improved access to contraception. Targeted interventions are provided which supports parents to talk to their children about relationships. The Maltby Linx Young Women's

project is an effective partnership which works with vulnerable young women who may be at risk of sexual exploitation, or have a number of high risk behaviours. In the project's first year, only one young woman out of 96 participants became pregnant. The project works closely with the Long Acting Reversible Contraception nurse (LARC), which the young people find to be of great benefit.

22. Partnership working across the statutory and voluntary sectors provides a good range of targeted services to help to keep vulnerable children and young people safe. The Integrated Youth Support Services works effectively in hot spots to give information, advice and support to young people. Young men who regularly attend the youth café report that they feel safe in Rotherham and value the support of workers. The young carers' project delivered by Barnardo's provides good support to children and young people who access the service. Those spoken to were very positive about the team describing how the project has had a big impact on their lives, improving their self-esteem and enabling them to get support and respite when needed and most importantly how to keep themselves safe. The lesbian, gay and bisexual group meet in a safe confidential space and receive the support they need to help them keep safe. The service has helped to increase self-esteem for these young people who are now involved in staff interviews and give presentations and help to raise awareness in schools, colleges and at conferences. Multi-agency planning for children leaving custodial placements is good. All children are subject to pre-discharge meetings to ensure that they have suitable accommodation and are not homeless.

23. The arrangements in place for monitoring children and young people missing from care, home and education are adequate. Services are currently delivered by a partnership including the police and the voluntary sector which has a good understanding of the needs of children who go missing and of the parallel processes that may need to be considered, for example, sexual exploitation, anti-bullying and forced marriages. This work is overseen by the RSCB and through reports to the council's scrutiny committee. However, the protocol for children missing from care, home and education has not been updated in line with new national guidance. The specialist nurse for unaccompanied asylum seekers and homelessness works closely with other health colleagues and social care services to track and ensure that these young people remain safe. The charity Safe @ Last provides a good service to children and young people who go missing. They undertake return interviews and find interim placements in hostels for young people when required.

**The effectiveness of services in taking reasonable steps to ensure that children and young people feel safe. Grade 3 Adequate**

24. Parents and children seen by inspectors expressed satisfaction with a range of services across the different levels of need and reported that these had helped them in many aspects of their lives. The Family Intervention Project

(FIP), and Families and Schools Together (FAST), which include support from parenting support advisors, have all had a positive impact in helping children, young people and their families feel safe. There has been effective and creative joint agency work to prevent sexual exploitation and young people seen confirm that they have been well supported with regards to this issue. Two coordinator posts across police and social care enhance coordination of this work. There are some good examples of cross-agency training with the raising of awareness by police and the youth service with regards to this issue, for example, in high schools, where initial resistance by schools to the training has turned around and is now welcomed.

25. Information from the council's lifestyle and tell us surveys indicate that children feel safe, supported and know how to access help and advice when needed. There is effective work undertaken by schools to address bullying. The Safe Havens project rolled out across 50% of secondary schools has been developed and led by young people themselves. There has been an increase in the percentage of pupils who said they got help and support with bullying from 37% in 2008 to 49% in 2009. Individual school surveys report that incidences of bullying are decreasing. However, some young people seen reported feeling unsafe in public spaces and parks in Rotherham; they reported issues with gang cultures on housing estates, as well as high alcohol misuse and associated anti-social behaviour.

### **The quality of provision**

### **Grade 3 Adequate**

26. The quality of safeguarding provision is adequate overall. The quality of assessment and care planning for the most vulnerable children and those in need of protection, although satisfactory overall, is inconsistent. At the same time, there are some effective and highly regarded services to support children and families across the different levels of need, which are making a good contribution to better outcomes for children and families.

27. Social workers, health visitors, school nurses and community midwives work in co-located teams in children's centres. Primary mental health workers are also being co-located within these teams, and these services are particularly targeted on those at risk of becoming children in need. Communication between partners is strong and partnership working is good at an operational level. A multi-agency Common Assessment Framework (CAF) resource team has very recently been established to support and develop the implementation of CAF, with an increasing focus on prevention and early intervention. The CAF is now being used by agencies including health and education to provide earlier assessment of children and young people and coordinated support to meet their needs. To date, 608 multi-agency professionals have been trained in the use of CAF and 372 CAFs have now been completed. These developments have been welcomed across children's services and by partners, although it is too early to assess the impact of this work as it is not yet sufficiently embedded.

28. The re-launched 'Safe and Well' protocol now supports consistency of access to and response from social care teams. The access team has been augmented with the addition of two qualified social work staff to strengthen decision making at the point of contact. A visit to the access team during the inspection confirmed that contacts and referrals are being dealt with satisfactorily and thresholds are now more clearly understood across partner agencies. Referrals to children's social care receive a prompt response and managerial decisions are made within statutory timescales. There has been a lack of strategic direction in the response to high levels of domestic abuse referrals. A social worker has now been appointed to screen and prioritise domestic abuse referrals to ensure that children and young people receive an appropriate response when needed, although the impact of this is not yet evident.

29. Most cases are allocated promptly and there are no unallocated child protection cases. Some children in need cases remain unallocated, including children with disabilities with less complex needs. A risk matrix effectively prioritises unallocated work and is overseen by senior managers. Good action has been taken to reduce these numbers and at the time of inspection, 16 cases remained unallocated across the area. Determined management action has resulted in a reduction in the high social work caseloads which are now generally more manageable. The deployment of additional administrative support, contact workers and social work posts has also helped to reduce the pressure on social workers. A significant number of newly qualified social workers have been recruited to the workforce and some of these are carrying complex cases including child protection cases. The Newly Qualified Social Workers' Scheme provides satisfactory support and regular supervision.

30. According to the council's latest data, the timeliness of initial assessments is considerably improved from 73% in December 2009 to 80% in July 2010. In most initial assessments, other agencies are appropriately involved and joint assessments are undertaken with health professionals. Assessments are routinely shared with families, and children are usually seen. Whilst no children were judged to be at risk of significant harm, the quality of analysis in many initial assessments seen was variable and some did not sufficiently consider the risk and protective factors which impact on children's safety and welfare. Strengthened management oversight is improving the quality of this work. The timeliness and quality of completed core assessments has improved from 68% in December 2009, to 87% in July 2010. A new format for the core assessment is reported as a great improvement in terms of supporting better quality analysis and more cohesive assessment in a format which is more meaningful both to professionals and families, although it is too early to evidence impact. Flexible and responsive inter-agency support is provided to children with disabilities across the spectrum of need and there is good transition planning.

31. The quality of case planning, reviews and recording, including for children in need cases, seen by inspectors is inadequate. Although practice is of an



adequate standard overall, case recording is poor. Some case records are of good quality and include up-to-date chronologies and case plans. It is good practice that children and young people with child protection plans are clearly flagged on the electronic file system and this is as a result of lessons learned from a serious case review. However, a significant number of case records did not include up-to-date key information. Child protection strategy discussions are poorly recorded with some lacking the required detail, and on occasions, they are conducted by staff who are not of sufficient seniority to undertake this task. However, attendance at meetings is good and police are always included in decision making with meetings often held in schools to facilitate attendance. The quality of some child protection plans seen by inspectors is too variable and they lack clarity about objectives and intended outcomes. Other plans seen demonstrated a more robust approach with sound assessment and appropriate decision making, including management oversight. The council is aware of the variation in the quality of work and are taking robust action to tackle these issues. Three practice improvement partners have been funded through the Department of Education (DfE) to help improve practice. It is clear that they have made an impact and that some improvements are evident, particularly with regards to audit, quality assurance and performance management. Managers at all levels now undertake regular audits of case files in order to improve the quality of work. A high number of initial child protection case conferences (95%) and 100% of review conferences take place within timescales. Core groups meet regularly and the appropriate partner agencies attend. Co-location of professionals and good links with designated health professionals in the safeguarding unit support good partnership working and attendance at conferences is audited and action taken.

32. Supervision is now taking place regularly for most social workers and is in line with the supervision policy. However, it is predominantly focused on case management and insufficiently focused on constructive challenge, development and support. Health professionals report good safeguarding supervision with increasingly flexible approaches which include some joint supervision with social workers.

33. Complaints processes are satisfactory. Complaints are analysed and lessons shared with workers. The safeguarding team have developed child friendly material. Interpreters are used when required to assist those children for whom English is not their first language and close links have been developed with the Mosque liaison group. Advocacy for parents and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is seen as a valuable resource. This advocacy scheme has included drop in facilities and multi-agency work to offer support to families and to help with their engagement with services. Statutory guidelines in relation to complaints made against staff working with children are consistently followed and the local authority designated officer (LADO) role is working effectively. Good support and advice is provided by the LADO with effective follow through of cases. Two cases sampled demonstrated a thorough assessment of risk and appropriate outcomes.

**Leadership and management****Grade 3 Adequate**

34. Leadership and management of safeguarding services are adequate. Since the Government Notice to Improve was issued in December 2009, there has been a strong corporate steer to make improvements in safeguarding. Additional resources of £3.1 million have been made available to help improve front line services, recruit more staff and promote early intervention. The new Children and Young People's Plan reflects the priority that the partnership places on safeguarding. The shift in focus to a preventative and early intervention approach along with the re-launch of the CAF, has resulted in a stronger emphasis on a multi-agency approach to safeguard children and young people.

35. Effective partnership arrangements are helping to ensure that the right plans are in place to deliver improved outcomes. The Children's Trust Board and the Safeguarding Children Board have good representation including all key partners. However, while governance arrangements between the RSCB and the CYPTB are in place, the arrangements between both boards for the quality assurance and auditing of provision are not robust. The designated nurse had been seconded to the RSCB and held the role of safeguarding manager for an interim period until a replacement safeguarding manager was appointed. During this time she had responsibility for overseeing the conclusion of three serious case reviews and two individual management reviews, which has strengthened health partners understanding of their role in safeguarding children and young people. Members from both boards are also represented on the improvement panel and play a vital role in driving forward the improvement agenda.

36. Safeguarding policies and procedures have been updated and comply with statutory requirements. There is a newly developed joint commissioning strategy and a joint commissioning partnership which meets quarterly to direct commissioning arrangements. There have been a number of recent new appointments to key senior management posts and there is a new lead member for children's services and these changes have contributed to an increasing momentum of change across the area, which all staff report on positively. The Director of Children and Young People's Community Health Services reports to the Strategic Director as well as the Managing Director and Chief Nurse of Rotherham community health services and is also a member of the Directorate Leadership This joint post is enabling a clearer and focused approach to be taken when commissioning services, particularly when reviewing joint commissioning.

37. Performance management and quality assurance processes have been significantly improved and there is evidence that this is having a positive impact. The chief executive, lead member and DCS receive weekly reports on performance and progress, meet regularly and take the necessary actions in response to variations in performance. Social care staff have access to an electronic portal that contains performance indicators and performance

management information which is updated on a daily basis and this is now being used effectively. Access and usage of the portal is closely monitored by senior managers and this has resulted in improved performance against key indicators, such as the timeliness of assessments.

38. A workforce strategy is in place, accompanied by a good recruitment and retention strategy. Staffing resources are now adequate and there has been a robust approach to the recruitment and retention of the social care workforce, with only two social worker vacancies remaining. However, the workforce training and development plan does not clearly identify how it will deliver training and support to newly recruited social workers. An effective skill mix review has taken place in both the health visiting and school nursing teams and appropriately qualified and trained health staff now support all children and young adults from 0 to 19 years.

39. User engagement is adequate. There is a good level of involvement and participation by parents in the Aughton Children's Centre. Good action has been taken to involve parents, children and young people in the evaluation of services and in contributing to commissioning and decommissioning of services. For example, young people have been involved with the implementation of the Connexions contract, commissioning of the Aiming High service and the changes to the young carers' service contract. User feedback from children with complex needs has been well used in the design of the new Kimberworth centre which will co-locate services to promote improved access and meet the needs of this group. Assessments and plans are routinely shared with parents and they are suitably supported in attending child protection conferences and review meetings. However, not all assessments and other records sufficiently include the views of children. While there are examples of good practice in enabling children's views to be heard at child protection conferences this is not yet routinely done and this is acknowledged as an area for development.

40. All serious case reviews have been judged adequate and actions taken as a result of findings from serious case reviews are reflected in practice. For example, the flagging on the councils own electronic recording system and Rotherham Community Health Services system, of children and their siblings who are subject to a child protection plan. Findings from serious case reviews are disseminated throughout partner and health organisations and action plans are closely monitored. Partnerships with stakeholders and the voluntary and community group consortium are strong and they contribute well to service improvements. The parent partnership is well established, with a group of parents who are enabled and empowered to work with the council and partners in improving services for children and young people with disabilities and additional needs. These parents recently attended a conference for special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) and led a workshop. Constructive feedback was provided on what works well and what could be improved for their children's reviews. The SENCO group positively embraced this feedback and reviews have now been changed to reflect parents' wishes and feelings.

41. Equality and Diversity is good. There are examples of direct work having a good impact in improving the lives and achievements of children and young people. The Early Years Foundation Stage work has been successful in narrowing the gap in achievement for the Black and Minority Ethnic group and Slovak/Roma children. There is a strong focus on community cohesion with good work undertaken in schools to develop anti-racism policies and involve children through events such as the 'show racism a red card' competition. Multi-agency work with the Roma migrant community and their children is effective and has improved access to health provision and education and this is a particular strength of the council. The social worker for unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people provides a weekly drop-in service. The specialist nurse for unaccompanied asylum seekers and homelessness works closely with other health colleagues and social care services to track young people and ensure that they remain safe.

42. Adequate work has been undertaken on benchmarking for value for money taking into account national and local performance indicators, performance profiles, and comparison with similar authorities. A Continuing Care Panel has been recently established between the Council and NHS Rotherham to determine partnership contributions to care costs. This work, alongside identification of the key priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan and the notice to improve, has been effective in ensuring that resources are directed to areas of greatest need or requiring most urgent improvement. Multi-agency working is beginning to demonstrate effective value for money. This is illustrated through the close working of the locality teams aligned with area assemblies, police safer neighbourhood teams and co-location of health professionals. Joint commissioning is well established with the voluntary and community sector's Consortium for Children's Services. Members are well engaged in consultation with service users in order to better match needs with service resources.

## **The inspection outcomes: services for looked after children**

### **Overall effectiveness**

### **Grade 3 Adequate**

43. The overall effectiveness of services for looked after children and young people are adequate. Outcomes are at least satisfactory and in some cases good, particularly in relation to the health of looked after children and their opportunity to make a positive contribution. Statutory requirements are met with all looked after children allocated to a qualified social worker. Reviews and statutory visits are undertaken within required timescales. Health needs are well met and looked after children are appropriately safeguarded in their placements. The Get Real Team provides a good approach to supporting children and young people in their education setting, although the role of the virtual head requires further clarity. Corporate parenting is adequate. The recently improved Corporate Parenting Strategy ensures that there is a shared

vision across partners, council officers, elected members and looked after children and young people. Elected members demonstrate a satisfactory commitment to developing and strengthening their role and receive relevant training in order to support them. However, the corporate parenting strategy is yet to be fully implemented.

44. For those children and young people now coming into the care system, the care plans viewed by inspectors were of a satisfactory quality with improved decision making resulting in more timely action being taken to support children and families who were at risk of becoming looked after. Social workers have complex generic workloads and until recently this impacted on the time they had to undertake direct work with looked after children and their families. In a minority of cases, the care plans viewed by inspectors for children who have been looked after for some time indicated a lack of planning before children entered care with poor assessments and limited availability of direct work. Independent reviewing officers (IRO's) demonstrate a good understanding of the issues that impact upon the care plans of children looked after and the steps needed to address those issues and effectively ensure that minimum requirements are met. However, given their numbers in proportion to the numbers of children in care, their capacity to quality assure care planning is limited. However, the council have recognised this and are in the process of recruiting more officers to meet needs.

45. The recently developed placement strategy demonstrates a good understanding of the current looked after population and includes a five-year projection. This enables the authority to develop a coordinated approach to service planning with the intention of reducing the number of looked after children placed out of authority. Commissioning arrangements are adequate. All external placements have been analysed and their costs are known. There are plans in place for some young people to return to their local area.

### **Capacity for improvement**

### **Grade 3 Adequate**

46. The capacity to improve services for looked after children is adequate. All statutory requirements are met and all outcomes are now at least adequate. No outcomes are deteriorating. The previous poor performance in relation to regulated provision, including the fostering service, has now been remedied through focused and determined efforts by managers and staff. All services are now judged as satisfactory. Good plans are in place to further improve the quality of these services.

47. The senior management team have taken good action to drive the improvement process and have been able to increase the momentum since the arrival of the new Director of Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting. This includes a reduction in the workloads of social workers, the appointment of a family finding social work post and a robust approach to the recruitment of foster carers and prospective adopters all of which are having a positive impact on increasing the local supply of foster carers and improving placement

stability. Performance management arrangements have significantly improved and there is now evidence that more robust quality assurance is improving the quality of care planning for looked after children. Social worker vacancies have significantly reduced and caseloads are more manageable, allowing workers the opportunity to focus on improving outcomes. Health assessments are of a good quality and there is a good contribution from children and young people to service design and evaluation of services, including the plans to re-configure the service. Looked after children and young people know how to complain and they are well supported by the Right2Rights service.

## Areas for improvement

48. In order to improve the quality of provision and services for looked after children and care leavers in Rotherham the local authority and its partners should take the following action:

### Immediately:

- Strengthen the role of the virtual head by ensuring that the work of the School Improvement and Effectiveness team is more focused on supporting and challenging schools to improve the attainment of looked after children.
- Develop the independent visiting service to ensure that all eligible children are able to have access to an independent visitor.

### Within three months:

- Strengthen the capacity of the independent reviewing officer service to ensure that all children and young people are effectively supported in making a contribution to their care plans and that care plans are robustly challenged.

## Outcomes for children and young people **Grade 3 Adequate**

49. Services to promote the health needs of looked after children and young people are good. All looked after children's health assessment files seen during the inspection were comprehensive and of good quality with clear action plans in place. Foster carers receive copies of children's health plans and this enables them to monitor the health needs of children in their care. There is a good track record of increasing the proportion of children, young people and care leavers who receive an annual health assessment. In 2009, 85.5% had an assessment, which was significantly improved from previous performance. The service is

now on track to exceed the current target of 90%. The designated nurse and doctor ensure that any Rotherham child placed out of the area receives their health assessment, and that any follow up actions are completed. The designated doctor provides well received advice to social care staff when placing children and young people in care settings as well as undertaking adoption health assessments, to ensure that the most suitable placement is found. Looked after children have good access to dentists with 91.3% receiving dental assessments and this is better than statistical neighbours and the England average. The community dentist teams support children and young people until their 18th birthday which is good practice. Immunisation rates are good.

50. Multi-agency health promotion is good. The 'Design for Life' programme involves all looked after children and their carers, including those living in foster homes. The programme offers valuable support to carers and enhances their skills. Looked after children have good access to timely Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) through the Looked After and Adopted Children team (LAAC) which is improving their emotional well being and placement stability. The CAMHS team also provides effective assessment for looked after children from other authorities placed in the borough. The designated nurse and the Long Acting Reversible Contraceptive (LARC) nurse undertake joint assessments within each of the children's homes which are promoting a better understanding of sexual health and relationships. These sessions provide young adults with an opportunity for direct access to contraceptive services and sexual health tests, in a familiar environment. Care leavers receive good support from the LAC specialist nurse during the transition period and into independence. She works flexibly and creatively to ensure that care leavers are able to maintain contact with health services and become increasingly able to manage their own health needs as they move towards independence. The transitions team for disabled children and looked after children is a highly motivated inter-professional and inter-agency team who demonstrate good, close and young person focused working relationships.

51. Arrangements for safeguarding looked after children and care leavers are adequate. They live in safe placements and all are allocated to a social worker, regular visits are undertaken in accordance with statutory requirements and reviews of care plans are undertaken at the required frequency. Safeguarding provision for looked after children is judged adequate in the six children's homes provided by the local authority. A fostering inspection was undertaken in June 2010 and was judged to be adequate. Children, young people and care leavers seen by inspectors confirm that they feel supported and safe in their placements, at school or college and in the communities in which they live. Adequate arrangements are in place to monitor the care of children and young people who are in external placements. Their placements and outcomes are monitored through an accredited provider scheme and further monitored through the work of the resource panel, contact with the advocacy service and regular visits from social workers.

52. All children and young people who are looked after have up-to-date care plans which are reviewed in accordance with statutory requirements. However, there are insufficient numbers of independent reviewing officers, given the rising numbers of looked after children; caseloads are high and the capacity of the reviewing officers to assure the quality of care planning is constrained. The case files viewed by inspectors during the inspection were adequate overall; the quality was variable and included a small number that demonstrated poor assessment and planning which resulted in drift for those children. This has been recognised by the authority and an audit has been undertaken of all children's plans to improve the quality and effectiveness of care planning. The impact of this was evident to inspectors in the recent case files reviewed during the course of the inspection.

53. The Junction, a service commissioned from Barnardo's, provides good support which is well-targeted towards looked after children and young people who may pose a sexual risk to other young people. The service includes training and support to foster carers along with safe home workshops for children's homes' staff and individual looked after children. The arrangements for monitoring and tracking children who are missing from care are satisfactory. The charity Safe @ Last provides good support for those returning which includes a return interview and appropriate support to identify the triggers that make young people go missing.

54. Educational outcomes and support for looked after children are adequate. The work of the Get Real Team is effective in coordinating services to ensure a holistic approach to support children and young people in their education placements. The recent part-time appointment to the role of the virtual head is not yet having sufficient impact in strengthening the work of the School Improvement and Effectiveness team to assist and challenge schools in improving attainment. The Get Real Team maintain current data about the authority's school aged children with good systems in place for monitoring individual pupil progress against their starting point. There is an improving trend in the educational attainment of looked after children at the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stages 1 and 4, where there is evidence of some narrowing of the gap between looked after children and all other children in Rotherham. However, this is not the case for those children at Key Stage 2. Monitoring of school attendance for looked after children, including those placed out of borough, is adequate. A specific focus on children missing education for more than 25 days has resulted in a reduction in absence rates from 20% in 2007/8 to 15% in 2008/09. This remains higher than the national average. However, the authority is aware of this and a strategy is in place to help to reduce this further. A good multi-agency focus on preventing looked after children and young people from being excluded from school has resulted in no looked after children being permanently excluded from school for three years, and fixed term exclusions are in line with the national average. When children's placements change, good consideration is given to the impact of a school move.



55. Only 86% of all looked after children have Personal Education Plans (PEP's) in place. Those PEP's viewed by inspectors were of a satisfactory quality overall. However, some plans do not contain precise targets to improve educational outcomes. This has been identified as an area for development and work has begun to improve the quality and effectiveness of PEP's, which includes training for social workers, designated teachers, school governors and independent reviewing officers. Early years PEP's have been introduced and those viewed by inspectors at the Aughton Children's Centre were of a good quality with children's starting points highlighted. They include challenging targets for progression. Personal Education Allowances are used well to provide a range of individual support, including individual tuition, access to computers and opportunities to participate in tailored activities to meet individual needs. However, those placed outside the authority do not benefit from the same level of support. There are dedicated school nurses for special schools who works with educational staff, undertakes any looked after children and young people health reviews and participates in special educational needs (SEN) reviews which reduces stress and repetition for young people. This service is highly regarded by all staff.

56. Targeted work by the Get Real Team and the LAAC team provides good opportunities for participation in a range of leisure activities that support the development of self-esteem and fosters high aspirations. These include Aspiration Interviews with Year 9 students and high quality partnership working with two local universities to encourage Year 10 and 11 students to aspire to further and higher education. Three care leavers are currently at university, with another four due to go this year. Care leavers who attend university receive a £5000 bursary from the council. Looked after children achievement is routinely celebrated by the council and its partners, including an annual event for those aged 16 and a biannual celebration of all looked after children's achievements.

57. Opportunities for looked after children and care leavers to make a positive contribution are good. The Children in Care council successfully engages children and young people ensuring their views are listened to and acted upon at a strategic level. Council members produce a newsletter which is sent to all looked after children to keep them updated on the work of the Council and on local and national issues relating them. However, children and young people spoken to as part of the inspection reported that they were unaware of the council's corporate parenting promise. Looked after children have been well consulted on the plans to improve services and good plans are in place to ensure they are kept informed of developments. Children and young people, including those with disabilities, are routinely involved in the appointment of children's services staff including senior appointments and their views are taken seriously. They also play an active role on Rotherham's Youth Council and through this contribute to borough-wide initiatives. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who attend the Orchard Centre for short

break care and activities are provided with good opportunities to participate in leisure programmes and their views have demonstrably influenced strategic planning. For example, they participated in the design of park playgrounds to ensure they are fully accessible.

58. Good work is taking place to reduce numbers of looked after children who are cautioned or convicted of offences. The Youth Offending Service works in partnership with the Crown Prosecution Service and the Youth Magistrates Court to ensure that appropriate consideration is given to the circumstances and welfare issues in relation to looked after children. This work has resulted in a reduction in the number of looked after children who are cautioned or convicted from 16% in 2008, to 9% in September 2009. Restorative Justice Schemes are also used to good effect to ensure that looked after children do not inappropriately have criminal records.

59. The impact of services to improve the economic well-being of care leavers is adequate. All care leavers have up-to-date Pathway Plans which are subject to regular quality assurance by a team manager. Those plans seen by inspectors during the inspection were of good quality with clear evidence of the young person's contribution. Care leavers receive good support from a range of professionals, including a Bridges leaving care worker, a Connexions PA, and a dedicated looked after children nurse, and all have access to learning mentors. A variety of post-16 provision is available within the borough, including a number of different vocational programmes. This ensures that young people can access a good range of further education programmes to suit their needs. The attendance, punctuality and attainment of care leavers in post-16 education and training is well monitored.

60. Partnership arrangements, including those with the private sector, offer access to a range of work experiences which offer the possibility of employment opportunities for some care leavers. The council offers a flexible and well-supported programme of short work placements. However, this has led to limited employment opportunities within the council. The work to develop a Care2work plan has been slow to develop and young people are yet to benefit from this initiative. The number of care leavers not in education, employment or training is in line with the national average and statistical neighbours. A good range of accommodation including supported lodgings and training flats ensure that care leavers live in accommodation that most suits their needs. Ten young people have been effectively involved in the planning and design of new purpose-built apartments and will shortly take up residence. Care leavers report they can access good 24 hour advice and support from a range of professionals, known to them.

## **The quality of provision**

## **Grade 3 Adequate**

61. Service responsiveness including complaints is adequate. Recent work to improve the use of management information along with the development of a

placement strategy has resulted in a better understanding of the patterns and trends in the looked after children population. This is helping to shape service provision and strengthen commissioning arrangements. An appropriate focus on securing more local foster carers and prospective adopters has led to a good recent improvement in the numbers recruited. Special Guardianship Orders are increasingly used to secure permanent placements. More frequent use of family and friends placements means that more looked after children and young people are placed within their own families. However, despite this positive action, a high number remain in external placements and although the placement strategy addresses this issue, it is too soon to measure the impact it will have on returning children to placements within the area. There are safe recruitment arrangements in place which meet statutory requirements.

62. All children seen by inspectors know how to make a complaint. The Right2Rights advocacy service provides good support to children and young people who value the support and advice they receive. Information collated from complaints is routinely used to improve services. Despite a recent recruitment drive, not all eligible children and young people have access to independent visitors and this limits the opportunities that children and young people have to voice their concerns to someone other than their main carer.

63. Assessment and direct work with looked after children are adequate. A good range of support systems are in place to support children and young people on the edge of care and prevent them from becoming looked after including the extended schools programme, Sure Start Children Centres and effective family support workers. Children's files viewed by inspectors indicated drift for a minority of those on the edge of care with poor assessments and limited availability of direct work, resulting in delays in decision making in relation to children becoming looked after children. However, there was no evidence to suggest that these children were at risk of harm. The council has recognised these weaknesses and have taken good steps to rectify this, including the newly developed prevention and early intervention strategy. The care plans of those children now entering care are of better quality with appropriate action taken to remove them from their families when they are at risk of harm. The LAAC, Get Real and the dedicated health teams undertake good direct work with individual children and young people and their carers. This is effective in supporting placement stability and ensuring children and young people have timely access to specialist services such as respite care or access to tier 1 and 2 CAMHS provision.

64. Care planning for children and young people is adequate. Recent files viewed by inspectors and examples provided by social workers during the inspection demonstrated a more robust focus on effective decision making and management oversight. This has led to improvements in the quality of care planning, reviewing and recording, resulting in more timely action being taken to secure the future of looked after children. This work has been well supported by the family finding officer whose work has been successful in improving the

numbers of children placed for adoption. The recent increase in the numbers of administrative support staff has resulted in a successful project being undertaken to associate all care planning documents in looked after children's files. This has impacted positively on improving the quality of children's files.

65. All looked after children's reviews are held in line with statutory requirements. Independent reviewing officers demonstrate a good understanding of the issues that impact upon the quality of care plans and the steps needed to remedy omissions. They ensure that minimum requirements are met. However, given the numbers of reviewing officers against the numbers of children in care, the capacity of the reviewing officers to quality assure care planning is constrained. Care leavers also benefit from good and readily available support which they report helps to make them feel safe when first moving to independent living.

## **Leadership and management**

## **Grade 3 Adequate**

66. Leadership and management of looked after services are adequate. The Children and Young People's Plan suitably prioritises the needs of looked after children and care leavers. The recent appointment of a director for safeguarding and corporate parenting has increased the priority afforded to looked after children. A number of new and revised strategies, including the corporate parenting strategy, have strengthened the shared vision across partners, council officers, elected members and children themselves. However, the strategy is yet to be fully implemented and the impact not yet measurable. Elected members demonstrate a satisfactory commitment to developing their role and they are provided with relevant training. The plans to develop a dedicated looked after children team are well under way and most staff are fully engaged with the change process.

67. Recent work has been undertaken to analyse the current looked after population and map trends to predict future placement requirements. This has resulted in the development of a placement strategy that prioritises the strengthening of commissioning arrangements and the reduction of children and young people placed externally. The chief executive of NHR, in his role as a critical friend to the council, has reviewed all current placements and the speed with which plans for permanent placements are being developed to ensure that work is responsive to the needs of all looked after children and young people.

68. Performance management systems are beginning to have an impact in improving outcomes for looked after children, including effective completion of care plans, timely reviews and placement stability, with performance targets met across the service which are in line with statistical and national averages. Supervision arrangements are adequate. Regular reporting to senior managers and scrutiny of performance by elected members is also contributing to

improvements. For example additional resources have been made available to improve the quality of children's homes.

69. User engagement with looked after children and care leavers is good. They report that through the children in care council that their views make a difference. Care leavers are regularly consulted about service developments, including their involvement in the planning and development of a new housing initiative. Regular consultation with children and young people with learning disabilities and difficulties and their parents ensures that their views influence service design and the targeting of resources, for example, their contribution to the development of services provided through the Orchard Centre. Parents of looked after children under three years old benefit from good supervised directed play activities during contact with their children at the Little Cherubs Playgroup. They appreciate the regular consultation including the opportunity to contribute to the planning of the sessions and to offer feedback. More recently there is evidence on children's case files of their views being appropriately recorded and account being taken of them. Pathway plans for care leavers clearly identify the views of young people who take an active role in planning for their future.

70. Partnerships are good. Participation in corporate parenting at a strategic level is satisfactory and most key partners are involved in delivering support for looked after children and young people. For example, the LAAC team which is funded by CAMHS and is co-located within the family placement team provides effective support through individualised packages to promote health and emotional well-being and placement stability. Good partnership working between the council, health and voluntary agencies is successful in providing targeted services for looked after children and young people, including services to care leavers provided through Action for Children and the Barnardo's Junction project. Good multi-agency youth work is effective in reducing anti-social behaviour of looked after children, this has resulted in reduced rates of offending and re-offending behaviour.

71. The promotion of equality and diversity for looked after children and young people are adequate. The council is taking suitable steps to recruit and match foster carers to account for cultural and diversity differences. It has been recognised that recruitment of foster carers from minority ethnic communities has been poor, action has been appropriately taken and two carers from an Asian background have been assessed. Action also includes a drive to recruit carers from the Roma/Slovak community in response to the changing population profile, although carers from minority ethnic groups are still under-represented overall. Unaccompanied asylum seeking children are well supported in Rotherham and one young person described the good support provided including, suitable accommodation and educational support.

72. Rotherham short breaks provision for disabled children has established good partnership working across the statutory and voluntary sectors with 319

children and young people accessing these services in the Rotherham area. The short breaks service has also taken effective action to include minority ethnic children, young people and families within its work, recognising that these groups may have less access to services and use services less. Good partnership and multi-agency working between health, social care and education ensures that a good range of equipment is provided to disabled children and their families and is in the best location for the children and young people to use. During long school holidays, health equipment that is usually kept in school is transported home to ensure that the most appropriate and beneficial equipment is provided.

73. Value for money is adequate. A value for money exercise undertaken in 2009/10 indicated that local fostering and residential costs and the overall unit costs for individual placements are lower than the average and in other authorities. However, the quality of residential provision is only adequate and it is recognised that more money needs to be invested to improve the quality of children's homes. This has been recognised with additional resources now available. The council acknowledge that placement management requires a more robust approach to improve efficiency and effectiveness and have taken steps to review all out of authority placements. This is demonstrating early impact as it has resulted in two children in expensive external placements returning safely to the local area. All new and extended placements are authorised by the director for safeguarding and corporate parenting. In conjunction with this, work is being developed through regional and sub regional commissioning to look at joint contracting and commissioning of services to provide improved value for money based on economies of scale. There are adequate systems for reviewing unintended high spending. Only accredited providers are used for out of authority placements and the use of high cost services must be approved by the resource panel. Scrutiny of special equipment provision for children and young people with disabilities and complex needs including those with life limiting conditions has been strengthened and is now robust with health, social care and education all contributing funding. This has resulted in most equipment being provided within eight weeks.

---

## Record of main findings: Rotherham

<b>Safeguarding services</b>	
Overall effectiveness	Adequate
Capacity for improvement	Adequate
<b>Outcomes for children and young people</b>	
Children and young people are safe: effectiveness of services in taking reasonable steps to ensure that children and young people are safe	Adequate
Children and young people feel safe: effectiveness of services in helping to ensure that children and young people feel safe	Adequate
<b>Quality of provision</b>	
Service responsiveness including complaints	Adequate
Assessment and direct work with children and families	Adequate
Case planning, review and recording	Inadequate
<b>Leadership and management</b>	
Ambition and prioritisation	Adequate
Evaluation, including performance management, quality assurance and workforce development	Adequate
User engagement	Adequate
Partnerships	Good
Equality and diversity	Good
Value for money	Adequate

<b>Services for looked after children</b>	
Overall effectiveness	Adequate
Capacity for improvement	Adequate
<b>Outcomes for looked after children and care leavers</b>	
Being healthy	Good
Staying safe	Adequate
Enjoying and achieving	Adequate
Making a positive contribution	Good
Economic well-being	Adequate
<b>Quality of provision</b>	
Service responsiveness	Adequate
Assessment and direct work with children	Adequate
Case planning, review and recording	Adequate
<b>Leadership and management</b>	
Ambition and prioritisation	Adequate
Evaluation, including performance management, quality assurance and workforce development	Adequate
User engagement	Good
Partnerships	Good
Equality and diversity	Adequate
Value for money	Adequate



<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
--

1	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Panel</b>
2	<b>Date:</b>	Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> October 2010
3	<b>Title:</b>	<b>The ‘Welcome Offer’ to vulnerable children and young people</b>
4	<b>Directorate:</b>	Children and Young People’s Services

### 5 **Summary**

Since 2008/9 the Local Authority has responded to significant and increasing challenges to its provision for children and young people arriving in Rotherham, principally from the newly incorporated European Economic Community countries, by fundamentally reorganising its services to this most vulnerable of groups. During Spring 2010, strategic overview of these initiatives was assumed within the Chief Executive’s office, exemplifying the importance attached to the work. This report provides an updated assessment of progress in relation to the schools’ element of this strategy approximately nine months after the initial summary to Council.

### 6 **Recommendations**

#### **That Scrutiny:**

- **Note the actions (detailed at Appendix 1) taken, and progress made, since the review was implemented.**
- **Supports the continued development of a coordinated strategy across all the appropriate Council services on behalf of this vulnerable group.**

### 7 **Proposals and Details**

Since Autumn 2008, fundamental changes have been effected in the provision of services within CYPS to those children who are newly arrived in Rotherham and who experience significant challenges in accessing learning. Those changes, moreover, have been an integral part of the overall expansion of the School Effectiveness Service (SES) and have represented a considerably enhanced commitment to vulnerable learners and groups across the spectrum of acute need.

In summer 2009, the management of services to ethnic minority pupils and students was formally transferred from the Inclusion Directorate to Learning Services and, in particular, to School Effectiveness. In practice, this was necessarily an incremental process which is now, for the moment, complete. SES has established a Vulnerable Groups team led by a Assistant Head of Service (AHOSE) who was previously Headteacher of a Special School and is passionately committed to the needs of vulnerable learners. The AHOSE is able to deploy small but very capable Primary and Secondary ethnic minority achievement teams each led by a Curriculum Adviser (CA) for each phase.

Both colleagues have the trust and respect of schools and are recognised as experts in this area of work by our partners in the Department for Education and the National Strategies.

The staffing of both teams has benefited from the deployment of colleagues previously based at the Kimberworth Welcome Centre which has closed as a pupil resource. Most colleagues have been allocated to Primary phase work and are attached to a single school or network of schools. Other colleagues are committed to Secondary phase work on a similar principle or staff the Pre-Admission Register (PAR), which supports newly arrived students in the initial stages of induction to school or college while their language and other learning needs are assessed and appropriate provision designed and implemented. New colleagues have been appointed to reinforce the teams, notably Teaching Assistants from the Slovak Roma community and a Programme Manager for Community Cohesion. This workforce is now better resourced in relation to the scale of the challenge in Rotherham and more strategically deployed to support schools in addressing the needs of their pupils. It remains unavoidable, however, that the resources available do not yet match the scale of the demands on schools and families.

The work on ethnic minority achievement embraces both the needs of newly arrived pupils, characteristically with very little or no English and a comparably limited experience of schooling, and support for advanced learners, typically British Asian students from well established Rotherham families. The numbers of newly arrived children from EU countries continues to grow locally despite the economic context which has led to a reduction in arrivals/ stayers elsewhere in the UK.

Approximately 544 school-age pupils have joined Rotherham since September 2009, of whom 364 are of Primary age and 180 Secondary. Of these, 449 pupils are from the EU and 379 of Roma origin. The total includes 26 asylum seekers. Actual school admissions are a lower number but at 277 during the year exceeds the previous years' totals, as follows:

2008/9	250	children
2007/8	220	children
2006/7	264	children

This is an unprecedented pressure on the educational resources and social cohesion of the main recipient schools and local services; St Anne's Primary School, for example, continues to admit a cohort significantly in excess of a class size annually and that pattern is replicated, at a proportionate level, across Coleridge PS, East Dene, Ferham and Thornhill with a dispersed impact well beyond that inner core of schools; it may well be the most significant continuing challenge to our educational and broader communities for the foreseeable future. It requires, therefore, constant vigilance and regular readjustment to ensure provision matches a changing reality on the ground.

It is essential that the urgency of the needs of EU migrant pupils is met but that the Service also focuses effectively on the needs of other vulnerable groups – and this is a significant challenge within the personnel resources available. In particular, we have renewed our approaches to the advanced learners whose

progress in Rotherham schools is encouraging by 16+ but cannot be taken for granted, especially at KS2. The coordination of all support for vulnerable groups – ethnic minority learners, Looked After Children (LAC), the More Able, students with Special Educational Needs (SEN), pupils in Special Schools and those who are part of the Positive Progression strategy and particularly vulnerable to become NEET – falls within the remit of the AHOSE Vulnerable Groups who deploys the entire workforce across this sphere. Each team, therefore, is able to learn from and benefit the others and we are working towards a greater coherence of approach and impact across the whole.

To date, SES would identify the following as the core benefits of the new 'Welcome Offer' developed during 2009/10:

1. a more efficient and effective deployment of the available staffing to school needs
2. a more coherent induction process for newly arrived children on the site of the school they will attend longer-term
3. a strategy which builds capacity in schools rather than encourages reliance on an external service which can never be sufficient to the scale and range of challenges
4. more productive partnership working between schools and between schools and the LA
5. improved strategic coordination between ethnic minority approaches and other programmes designed to address under-achievement, for example Raising the Bar, The Extra Mile initiative and Improving Schools Programme (ISP) in Primary
6. significantly improved schools' engagement, especially in secondary schools, where confidence in the LA was weakest
7. important new work in community cohesion where the lead officer has very quickly built strong relationships with schools and community partners and introduced a range of innovative programmes
8. exciting and innovative practice which is influencing broader work in schools and SES for all learners, for example the ethnic minority achievement website

Evidence to support this assessment would include the Autumn 2009 Audit Commission survey of schools which recorded fundamentally improved ratings for this area from both Primary and Secondary Headteachers in comparison with 2008. Moreover, much of our practice is recognised as strong-to-exemplary by the National Strategies who lead for government in this area and who have showcased our work at regional and national conferences. Equally, every effort has been made by the team to 'test' Rotherham practice against the best work available in other LAs.

Nevertheless, considerable challenges remain and our own advances are at least matched by the pace of change in the community. At this point it is critical that we enjoy the confidence of schools and are able to present them with a service which is highly committed, well trained and informed and able to make a difference on the ground. Dialogue with schools, particularly the Clifton Action Zone, has continued to shape changes in practice, notably the revised PAR arrangements from September 2010 and the deployment of staff.

**8 Finance**

Investment in the enhanced service has been achieved through a remodelling of existing SES and CYPS budgets and additional funding from contingency to meet acute needs, for example Roma speaking Teaching Assistants. Increased investment in this area of work has, necessarily, reduced funding to other priorities.

A review is currently in place to assess continuing needs and the sustainability of resources, particularly in the context of reduced staffing across SES from April 2011 when National Strategies funding ends and government cuts to Local Authorities increase in impact. This is an area where investment remains absolutely critical in the short and medium term both within SES and in the broader multi-agency services supporting schools and the community. It is not yet clear what policy direction and level of investment will be provided by central government from 2011.

**9 Risks and Uncertainties**

Failure to meet the needs of newly arrived and acutely vulnerable children and young people will have serious implications for Rotherham and its schools, including:

1. patterns of underachievement leading to individual pupil and school failure
2. negative inspection outcomes for schools and the LA, where the performance of vulnerable groups has an unprecedented level of importance
3. potential disturbance to the strong ethos Rotherham schools historically enjoy, provoking poor behaviour, absenteeism and other anti-social features
4. potential threats to the social cohesion of local communities if sections of the population become disengaged and disaffected because they feel denied equality of opportunity in schools

**10 Policy and Performance Agenda Implications**

Despite the important progress achieved during the last twelve months, this remains a high priority area for CYPS and the broader Council. New arrivals continue to pose significant challenges to a growing number of schools but especially those in the Clifton, Thrybergh and Winterhill communities. Some of these students will begin to impact on schools' performance profiles in 2010 at KS2 and GCSE and we are also seeing increased emphasis on their progress in the new Ofsted inspection framework outcomes – to date, very positively in the schools inspected since September 2009. Both schools and SES will need to respond as these challenges develop but we will not be successful without sustained support from across CYPS and the broader Council.

**11 Background Papers and Consultation**

**Contact Name:** David Light  
Head of School Effectiveness  
Telephone: 01709 336822  
E-mail: david.light@rotherham.gov.uk

## Cabinet's Response to Scrutiny Review: Newly Arrived Children

Recommendation	Cabinet Decision (Accepted/ Rejected/ Deferred)	Current Position (action taken since the review was reported)	Cabinet Response (detailing proposed action if accepted, rationale for rejection, and why and when issue will be reconsidered if deferred)	Officer Responsible	Action by (Date)
<p>1. That the authority hosts a meeting with other local authorities (including across the sub-region) to highlight good practice and the challenges of supporting EU new arrivals, particularly in relation of attainment targets. Using the office of our local MPs, invite relevant Government Ministers, Civil Servants and OFSTED inspectors.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The Assistant CX has held three multi-agency theme based meetings to look at the wider issues of EU Migration on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 5<sup>th</sup> August, and 16<sup>th</sup> September 2010.</p> <p>Funding has been secured and confirmed by LGYH and the research and consultation project has started. A research brief and project plan have been produced, a steering group established, and a series of consultation events and interviews with the various communities in Eastwood, key partners, agencies, and stakeholders started.</p> <p>The council's reports and actions plans have been shared with Sheffield City Council and additionally officers from NAS have met with their counterparts at Sheffield on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2010 to share knowledge and experience. The issues faced by both local authorities are almost identical and it was agreed to work cooperatively</p>	<p>That the authority hosts a meeting with other local authorities to highlight good practice and the challenges of supporting EU new arrivals, particularly in relation of attainment targets.</p>	<p>Zafar Saleem, Community Engagement &amp; Cohesion Manager</p>	<p>November 2009</p>

		and a further joint meeting is to take place 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2010.			
<p>2. The review group welcomed the EAL Strategy or 'Welcome Offer' but given that future numbers of new arrivals are difficult to predict, recommends that it is subject to regular evaluation (initially every six months) to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the needs of the newly arrived pupils and the existing school population are met;</li> <li>• those schools facing the greatest pressure have the opportunity to influence the strategy and highlight potential problems in its implementation;</li> <li>• schools who may not have great experience of receiving new arrivals are supported ;</li> <li>• that resources allocated to the 'Welcome Offer' are sufficient to meet need;</li> </ul>	Accepted	<p>The Welcome Centre has been closed as a physical resource and the staff, with their agreement, deployed to schools, principally in the primary phase in the Clifton Education Action Zone area.</p> <p>The Pre Admission Register (PAR) is supporting schools in inducting pupils who are new to English into mainstream classes.</p> <p>In September 2010 a National Strategies Advisor and a nominated school lead conducted a mini review of the work of the PAR. As a result of this two working groups are looking at how the work of PAR and the central schools can be even better co-ordinated to build on some already very successful work.</p> <p>There has been ongoing capacity building in schools with the support of the EMA team.</p> <p>This has included intensive work on assessment, teaching and learning with identified lead teachers in schools.</p> <p>Lessons learned in the work in St Ann's have been shared</p>	<p>Full review in October of the impact of the deployment programme and the developing 'Welcome Offer'.</p> <p>Lessons from the work at St Anne's will be shared with leadership teams in other high profile primary schools during June/July.</p> <p><b>See below for the secondary initiative – recommendation 7</b></p>	David Light/Martin Fittes	<p>Started Easter 2009; review in October;</p> <p>June/July 2009</p> <p>Renewal of programme from Sept 2009</p> <p>Termly reviews throughout 2009/10.</p>

		<p>across schools.</p> <p>The EMA team has been successful in recruiting workers from the Slovak and Roma communities. These workers have had a positive impact on the engagement of young people and families. More recently schools have begun to explore the possibilities of including these workers in their own staffing structures.</p>			
<p>3. Consideration should be given at a strategic level to the allocation policy to ensure that in the allocation of school places for new arrivals, we avoid placing disproportionate pressure on those schools with existing high numbers of EAL (English as an Additional Language) learners.</p>	Rejected	<p>PAR in place and supporting schools to induct young people into mainstream schools. Regular meetings of Heads and LA personnel seek to support the equal distribution of young people, within the confines of parental preferences and the availability of places in year groups.</p>	<p>Fair Access Policy and Admissions Policy mean that children will attend those schools nearest their homes, concentrating on provision in central Rotherham.</p>	<p>David Hill</p> <p>Cath Ratcliffe Martin Fittes David Hill</p>	<p>Sept 2009 for policy</p> <p>June 2009</p>
<p>4. Acknowledging the difficulties with funding based on 'census' day, explore the feasibility of introducing a flexible system of funding for schools experiencing greatest numbers of mobile pupils.</p>	Accepted	<p>Funding for New Arrivals comes from different pots, including DSG and EMAG. School Formula incorporates additional funding for 10%+ eth min pupils and mob factor within SEN delegation.</p>	<p>Analyse funding for new arrivals</p> <p>Analyse funding methodology with proposals to JLT, Cabinet Member and Schools Forum.</p>	<p>David Ashmore Joanne Robertson</p>	<p>July 2009 Dec 2009</p>

5. Using the model developed by Derby City Council, explore the feasibility with the School Forum of re-distributing money from Direct Schools Grant to those schools experiencing the greatest pressure.	Accepted	As for 4 above	As for 4 above	David Ashmore Joanne Robertson	July 2009 Dec 2009
6. Identify a strategic lead in Children and Young People's Services to link with other Council/partner bodies (housing, health etc) to ensure that there is effective interagency working.	Accepted	The alignment of work under a vulnerable groups banner in school effectiveness has strengthened the response to locality working Chief Exec's office has identified a lead in this area.	Whilst it is important that different sections of C&YPS "own" meeting the needs of newly arrived children and their families, one lead officer needs to be the point of contact for key partner agencies to avoid duplication. At this point this role is carried out by the Head of Inclusion, but will need to be reconsidered.	Tom Kelly	September 2009
7. Explore the feasibility of recruiting 'Advanced' EAL teachers within 'priority' or 'hub' schools to oversee the development of EAL support within schools.	Accepted	2009-10 saw the successful recruitment of lead teachers in central schools. These teachers worked with the LA and National Strategies to build capacity in schools, focussed on assessment, induction, teaching and learning, attendance, engagement and transition. Schools report a higher degree of competence and confidence in this area.	The Curriculum Adviser will develop the team of 5 Champions as a core network for the dissemination of good practice in EAL and as an 'expert' group within the LA to drive secondary strategy and practice in the field.	David Light/Martin Fittes	Network live from September 2009.  Review termly from December 2009.



<p>8. Explore the feasibility of developing links with Slovakian Universities (in the first instance) to train teaching, non-teaching staff and social care staff.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Initial contact made with Slovakian Director of Social Services in Kosice.</p> <p>The School Effectiveness Service has had no contact to date with a Slovakian University. Through the established relationships enjoyed by Wales HS, we have discussed the secondment of primary and secondary phase teachers with a Rumanian education authority – positive potential.</p>	<p>Follow through with further links in Universities.</p> <p>Potential secondment needs firming up for September 2010 start. Dependent on Council financial support and partnership with Sheffield Hallam University to provide professional development opportunities and, potentially, accommodation – already discussed with SHU and agreed in principle.</p>	<p>Pam Allen</p> <p>David Light</p>	<p>September – December 2009</p> <p>Agree proposal with RMBC and SHU, if achievable, early Autumn 2009.</p>
<p>9. The review group welcomes the proposals to develop a 'central admissions register' until attendance patterns are established for secondary-aged pupils. However, it recommends that options to address poor attendance for those primary schools in greatest need are developed.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Pre Admissions Register (PAR) active from 1/6/09 in secondary phase. Supporting induction of YP into mainstream schools.</p> <p>Schools are supported by educational and attendance teams, including Slovakian speaker.</p> <p>Additional staffing of Slovakian and Roma speaking Teaching Assistants has been successfully implemented, but funding currently under threat desirable but subject to funding.</p> <p>Work led by Clifton Action Zone identified the need for "community development</p>	<p>PAR will be trialled and reviewed by end October 2009 for potential to extend to primary phase.</p> <p>NB Considerable resource implications.</p>	<p>David Light/Martin Fittes/Cath Ratcliffe</p>	<p>First phase to be reviewed by October 2009.</p>

<p>10. Evaluate the impact of the RCAT provision to assess whether the outcomes are appropriate and provide value for money.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Some Y10 and Y11 students are currently attending RCAT : successful placements overall but College indicates capacity and funding issues still a constraint.</p> <p>Secondary Curriculum Advisor (EMA) is working with schools to develop 14-19 transition pathways for young people who are new to English. College continues to accommodate YP in Y10/11 but further development re curriculum pathways is needed.</p>	<p>Discussions due with RCAT re provision from September 2009 which should, if possible, include appropriate Y10 as well as Y11.</p>	<p>David Light/Martin Fittes</p>	<p>Review of provision and planning for 2009/10 secured by end of June 2009.</p>
<p>11. Evaluate whether existing Young People's Service provision is meeting the current needs of newly arrived groups and is flexible enough to meet future needs, particularly in light of the potential rise in numbers of young people not in Education, Employment or Training.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Access to youth service has been enhanced by the secondment of a member of staff to the Welcome Offer.</p> <p>PAR has established good links with the Youth Service. As part of the PAR induction young people are encouraged to attend extended sessions offered by YS. In addition 10 young attended a residential to Habershon House.</p> <p>Young people also attend the "Elephants in Step" session which is focused on the "aim higher" programme.</p>	<p>Youth Officers to check their local situations with regard to 'newly arrived young people' and include in area plans.</p> <p>Using list of 'newly arrived young people', interrogate eYS to find baseline contact figures.</p> <p>Use this information to inform universal and targeted planning.</p> <p>Review the relationship between seconded Youth Officer and provision across the Youth Service.</p> <p>Ensure that local planning, service planning and the Youth Offer are accessible to 'newly arrived young people'.</p> <p>Ensure that targeted provision is accessible to 'newly arrived young people'.</p>	<p>George Simpson/Chris Brodhurst Brown</p>	<p>Immediate</p> <p>August 2009</p> <p>September 2009</p> <p>Immediate</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>September 2009</p> <p>September 2009</p>

			<p>Consider how best to give voice and influence to 'newly arrived young people'.</p> <p>Review how/where the Youth Service fits in services for 'newly arrived young people'.</p> <p>Note: The majority of Youth Service provision is targeted at young people 13 to 19 years of age. (With a wider brief for young people 11 to 25 years of age who have special needs).</p>		
12. Ensure that there is a consistent and timely approach to recording information on children missing from education that is shared across schools, Admissions and Safeguarding Teams. Given the sub-regional movement of families, protocols should also be developed with other authorities.	Accepted	A Children Missing Education officer post based in the Safeguarding Children Unit. The work of the officer is compliant with legislation and national guidance. Local protocols are currently being developed to integrate with children and families who go missing.	New Children Missing Education (CME) officer appointment to be made who will prioritise information sharing protocols.	Annie Redmond	September 2009
13. Revisit protocols to ensure that schools are able to link with locality teams and share information or concerns about children on a consistent and timely basis.	Accepted	As above and learning community focus on protocols and practices so that all staff are aware.	New CME officer and Assistant Safeguard Manager	Annie Redmond	September 2009
<b>LOCAL AUTHORITY AND PARTNERS</b>					
14. Working with other directorates and partners, develop a 'bank' of translators/interpreters for all agencies to use. Ensure that relevant teams (e.g. Admissions) have appropriate access to	Accepted	A new service is being commissioned and a service specification has been produced jointly by CXD and RBT to enable this.	Promote and market the list of local and regional interpreters and translators held by the Co-ordinator –	Zafar Saleem, Community Engagement & Cohesion Manager	September 2009

<p>language support.</p>		<p>The specification/Bid has now been published on <a href="http://scms.alito.co.uk">scms.alito.co.uk</a> and within the European Union on <a href="http://mytenders.co.uk">mytenders.co.uk</a>. The deadline for the return was Monday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2010. 41 expressions of interest have been received and the short listing process is being developed together with a selection panel.</p> <p>The specification allows other partners to purchase the service through our contract should they wish.</p>	<p>Translation and Interpretation, NAS.</p> <p>Promote LLS within the council.</p>		<p>September 2009</p>
<p>15. That the 'welcome pack' is introduced and work undertaken to increase access to ESOL courses for newly arrived communities, particularly Roma, as a matter of urgency. Links should be made with employers via the Chamber of Commerce and other for , e.g. Works and Skills Board and Trade Unions to see whether English Language classes can be introduced at work places.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>Roma Khamoro Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Managed by Unity Centre</li> <li>- venue trusted by community</li> <li>- Employs 2 full time Roma link workers</li> <li>- 12-hours of community drop-in sessions per week - supported by CAB advice worker</li> <li>- 2000 contacts at drop in sessions in 2009/10</li> <li>- 14 hours per week direct support to partner agencies by Roma workers</li> </ul> <p>Welcome pack developed and distributed to organisations working with new migrants – e.g. Unity Centre, CAB, Visitor Centre, Area Partnership Teams and published on RMBC's website in English, Czech</p>	<p>The findings from the Scrutiny Report should be submitted to the Works and Skills Board to consider the feasibility of providing English Language classes in work places.</p> <p>Funding to continue ESOL provision be explored by the Community Learning and Well-Being Service and the Chief Executive's Directorate.</p>	<p>Jeff Wharfe, Achieving Theme Board Manager</p> <p>Zafar Saleem, Community Engagement Manager, and Helen Shaw, Strategic Leader, Community Learning and Well Being</p>	<p>September 2009</p> <p>September 2009</p>

		<p>and Slovakian. A text version is also available of the website so that Google translator can be used for translation into other languages.</p> <p>Migration Impacts Funding (MIF) was successfully applied for to secure Living in My Community and ESOL progression courses, delivered by CYPS, Extended Learning service. Action is being taken to target and include Roma people, for example targeting Roma parents for courses via Coleridge Children's Centre to help parents support their children in school – various options for supporting Roma participants are being trialled to improve their attendance and reduce drop out rates, which are still a concern. MIF funded has been subject to a 50% in-year reduction, however RMBC are currently considering options for sustaining this and other MIF projects to March 2011 and beyond.</p>			
<p>16. That the learning from the Cluj-Napoca visit (outlined in section 4.9) is explored and an action plan developed to apply appropriate measures.</p>	<p>Accepted</p>	<p>The learning from Cluj re Roma integration confirmed the approach we are taking in Rotherham by employing Roma workers and Roma community organisations as a means of engaging Roma communities, for example: Roma teaching assistants; Roma language speaking Education Welfare Officer</p>	<p>Actions to assist the integration of new communities are already part of community cohesion project plans.</p> <p>Regular update reports are made to the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Development and LSP Chief Exec Officers Group.</p>	<p>Deborah Fellowes, Policy, External &amp; Regional Affairs Manager</p>	

		<p>and; Roma Khamoro project funded by Community Cohesion funding.</p> <p>Actions to assist the integration of new communities are already part of community cohesion project plans and regular update reports are made to the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Development and LSP Chief Exec Officers Group.</p>	<p>The majority of Roma people in Rotherham are Slovakian and the (Education) Welcome Offer has made links with Slovakia.</p> <p>There are reports of a small number of newly arrived Romanian Roma people so the opportunities for future links may prove useful.</p> <p>There is a corporate partnership agreement between RMBC and Cluj council and so good contacts are in place if future collaboration around Roma issues is to be explored.</p>		
17. Identify a Cabinet Member with lead responsibility for co-ordinating services for new arrivals.	Rejected		There already exists a "Newly Arrived" working party, chaired by Cllr Sharman	Matt Gladstone	

<b>ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS</b>
--

<b>1.</b>	<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2010</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Title:</b>	<b>Children and Young People's Services Notice to Improve - Progress and Exception Report</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Directorate:</b>	<b>Children and Young People's Services</b>

### **5. Summary**

This report provides an overview of the progress made since the Notice to Improve was received in December 2009, the overarching action plan used to monitor improvements identifies a RAG rating and a direction of travel for the areas of improvement, some areas of good performance and key risks and issues to meeting the stretching targets set for the council and its strategic partners.

### **6. Recommendations**

**i) That CYPS Scrutiny Panel notes the progress being made against the targets set in the Notice to Improve.**

## 7. Proposals and Details

This report provides an overview of the progress made and reported to the Improvement Panel Meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

The action plan used to monitor improvements identifies a RAG rating and a direction of travel for the areas of improvement, and key risks and issues to meeting the stretching targets set for the council and its strategic partners.

There are 29 individual actions covering the key performance measures ( including the 3 social care indicators) in addition to the operational targets around Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Leadership and Management and Capacity Building, Performance Management, and Recruitment and Retention.

Based on a RAG rating the following is the current position as at 29<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

Red: 1 – 3%

Amber : 23 - 80%

Green: 5 – 17%

### Social care indicators

The commentary on the social care indicators includes the performance of statistical neighbours and national as a comparator.

	Baseline Performance (Nov 09)	Current Performance	Targets	Statistical Neighbour ( March 09)	National ( March 09)
NI 68 (Referrals to initial)	59.8%	80.08% 09/10 outturn 73.4%	Oct 10 – 68% Mar 11- 70%	69.2%	63.8%
NI 59 (initial assessment)	73%	80.79% 09/10 outturn 75.2%	Oct 10 – 85% Mar 11- 87%	71.6%	71.8%
NI 60 (core assessment)	68%	87.07% 09/10 outturn 80%	Oct 10 – 84% Mar 11- 87%	80.4%	78.2%

### NI 68 – referrals of children in need which go onto initial assessment

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 80.08% of referrals to social care go onto an initial assessment, this is from the baseline of 59.8% in November 2009.

Performance continues to exceed both the October 2010 and March 2011 targets of 68% and 70%. The March 2009/10 outturn was 73.4% which is higher than previous years statistical neighbour and national comparators.



### **NI59 – initial assessments in 7 working days**

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 80.79% of initial assessments were carried out in time, this is from the baseline of 73% in November 2009.

The targets for October 2010 and March 2011 are 85% and 87%.

The March 2009/10 outturn was 75.2% which is higher than the previous years statistical neighbours and national comparators.

This indicator is one of the key parts of the social care process and trends over the last 8 months are showing the following improvements:

January: 72%

February: 76%

March: 77%

April: 80.17%

May: 76.01%

June 83.78%

July 76.92%

August 80.08%

Although there have been major improvements in performance around this indicator, and given that the milestone target for October 2010 of 85% is not being met, an internal challenge session will take place at DLT on the 12<sup>th</sup> October to explore further the performance of this National Indicator.

### **NI60 – Core Assessments in 35 working days**

From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 87.07% of core assessments were carried out in time, this is from the baseline of 68% in November 2009.

Performance continues to exceed both the October 2010 and March 2011 targets of 84% and 87%.

The March 2009/10 outturn was 80% which is equivalent to the March 09 statistical neighbour and higher than national comparators,

### **High Risk areas ( red risks)**

The expenditure on agency staff continues to increase with currently £618,434 having been spent on social workers and team managers and £32,817 on admin staff since the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010. This does not include expenditure on Practice Improvement Partners which were commissioned separately.

### **Areas of Concern**

Currently all social worker posts are filled either covered by permanent establishment posts or agency staff ( 17.8 posts covered) out of the 8 post vacant (9.8%) with further permanent staff being interviewed in the next few weeks.

In relation to team manager posts, there are 5 vacancies (33%) with 4 covered by agency staff.

Currently out of an establishment of 81.6 social worker posts there are 8 vacancies, however ,17.8 agency staff are currently in post covering these 8 vacancies giving us 9.8 staff over establishment posts. Further permanent staff are being interviewed in the next few weeks.

In relation to Team Manager posts, there are 5 vacancies (33%) with 4 covered by agency staff.

### **Areas of Improvement**

Following the OFSTED Safeguarding and Looked After Children Inspection in July and the DfE meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> August. A clear message from the OFSTED inspectors was that we needed to focus now on driving up the quality of practice to underpin the work we had done in improving the quantitative figures.

In addition, the letter sent to Cllr Stone on the 27<sup>th</sup> August from Tim Loughton MP he stated that "In light of OFSTEDs findings if in December we can evidence continued improvement and more secure supervision and quality assurance mechanisms, I will consider lifting the improvement notice early"

Quality Assurance therefore continues to be a high focus and improvements are being seen specifically around key documentation / information being in place on cases.

A single framework will be launched in October which will cover more of the quality of practice in the audits.

Common Assessment Framework continues to be embedded, 392 CAFs have been registered since January 2010, a 59% increase from last year. The Access Team has been piloting a new process, advising professionals whose referrals do not meet the threshold for social care intervention to undertake CAFs. This has resulted in 9 CAF recommendations to date and will go 'live' on the 1<sup>st</sup> October. Ongoing work is taking place with individual learning communities to develop multi-agency panels, support early intervention and the use of CAF processes.

### **8. Finance**

The DfE has agreed up to £150,000 financial support to assist with recovery, a further £125,000 has been secured from the RIEP to fund the work around implementation of Common Assessment Framework. The DfE funding is being used to supplement social work staffing resources and to employ independent staff to assist in the review and further improvement of and service quality activities. A review has been conducted of Children and Young People's placements; both Rotherham based and in out of authority facilities. This has focussed on whether the placements can end, in line with the care plan review, whether the council is getting the best value for money and that the placements are of the required quality.

In order to strengthen financial management arrangements all managers with budget holder responsibility attended specific training. The moratorium which has been in place since December 2009 continues into 2010/11 to ensure that resources are directed to priority areas. In addition, a savings work programme is in place to identify efficiencies and enable re-investment into priority areas.

Further work is now taking place in relation to the overall budget position and the recent government announcements, with more anticipated in the Comprehensive Spending Review..

## 9. Risks and Uncertainties

The key performance risks (red) are identified in the report and there are service delivery risks associated with the Notice to Improve action plan. Where these are significant they are being fed into the CYPS risk register.

## 10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Annual Performance Assessment 2008 result was the trigger for the CYPS Review, which was commissioned jointly by the Council and NHS Rotherham. A number of recommendations arose from this review which were included in an Improvement action plan.

On 4th and 5th August 2009, CYPS received an unannounced inspection of its Contact, Referral and Assessment service. The inspection confirmed many issues related to performance, caseload and capacity, quality assurance. Ofsted's recommendation was that we should take immediate action to address the issues raised in order to prevent further decline in service performance, quality and capacity. A notice to improve was issued in December 2009.

The annual Fostering Inspection was concluded in June 2010 and found to be adequate, however the letter indicated that significant improvements were visible. The Safeguarding and Looked After Children Inspection took place between the 19<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> July, the outcome of this was adequate.

Action plans are in place to monitor the implementation of both sets of recommendations.

There is a possibility that before the end of the year a further unannounced inspection of Contact Referral and Assessment service takes place as this is an annual inspection cycle.

Failure to address these issues would impact further on the CYPS and the council and could still lead to external intervention.

## 11. Background Papers and Consultation

The Notice To Improve

Ofsted Inspection - Contact, Referral and Assessment, 4th and 5th August 2009

Children First Review and Resource Benchmarking – Jan to June 2009

Fostering Inspection June 2010

Safeguarding and LAC inspection July 2010

CYP Directorate Performance reports

Notice to Improve action plan

**Contact Name :** Sue Wilson, Performance, Information & Quality Manager,  
CYPS [sue-cyps.wilson@rotherham.gov.uk](mailto:sue-cyps.wilson@rotherham.gov.uk) 01709 822511

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL  
3rd September, 2010**

Present:- Councillor G. A. Russell (in the Chair); Councillors Ali, Dodson, Fenoughty, Kaye, License, Rushforth and Sharp.

Also in attendance were:- Mr. M. Burn, Mr. M. Hall and Father A. Hayne (Diocese of Hallam) Dr. Susan Warren

Apologies were received from:- Councillors Buckley, Falvey, Sims, Mrs. J. Blanch-Nicholson, Mr. C. A. Marvin, Mrs. K. Muscroft, Mrs. L. Pitchley and Tranmer

**C26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

**C27. QUESTIONS FROM THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

**C28. MATTERS REFERRED FROM THE YOUTH CABINET**

The Scrutiny Panel noted that the report of the scrutiny review of the Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) curriculum (study by the Youth Cabinet) would be considered by the Council's Cabinet at its meeting to be held on Wednesday 8th September, 2010.

**C29. COMMUNICATIONS**

The Scrutiny Panel discussed the following issues:-

(1) proposed Scrutiny Review of the incidence of autism amongst Rotherham school pupils, its diagnosis and the impact of early intervention measures on the planning of future service delivery – Councillor Kaye and co-opted member Mr. M. Hall were appointed to this scrutiny review panel, with other members to be appointed.

(2) Scrutiny Review of the temporary closure of Rotherham schools during periods of inclement weather – the report of this scrutiny review would be submitted to the next meeting of this Scrutiny Panel, to be held during October, 2010.

**C30. AIMING HIGH FOR DISABLED CHILDREN – SHORT BREAKS SERVICES**

Further to Minute No. 31 of the meeting of the Children and Young

People's Scrutiny Panel held on 24<sup>th</sup> July, 2009, consideration was given to a report presented by the Principal Officer (Resources, Planning and Performance) stating that Aiming High for Disabled Children (AHDC) is the Government's transformation programme for disabled children's services in England. A Strategic Vision for the AHDC programme, along with a Needs Assessment, Commissioning Strategy and spending plan for Year 1 of the Short Breaks programme were received by Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel on 24th July, 2009.

This submitted report includes an update of Rotherham's delivery of the AHDC National Core Offer, summarises the outcomes of the first year of the AHDC Short Breaks programme in Rotherham and describes progress towards achieving the Short Breaks Full Service Offer.

The Scrutiny Panel's discussion of this report included the following salient issues:-

- future funding of the short breaks service after the current contracts ended on 31 March, 2011 (currently, funding was included within 'Area Based Grant' financial allocations, although the finance was not specifically ring-fenced for the short breaks service);
- the involvement of the voluntary sector in service delivery;
- compliance with National Performance Indicator 54 (services to disabled children);
- obtaining the views of parents about the short breaks service;
- key achievements of the service during 2009/ 10;
- efforts to ensure that as many eligible people as possible were able to gain access to the short break service;
- provision of the service and the proportion of take-up of the service by the Black and Minority Ethnic communities;
- eligibility criteria for the short breaks service;
- establishing links with local clubs in respect of sports and leisure activities.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That a further report about the future funding of the Short Breaks programme be submitted to an early meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel.

(3) That further consideration be given to the need for a scrutiny review of the delivery of the Short Breaks programme.

**C31. ROTHERHAM'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT 2009/ 2010**

Further to Minute No. 95 of the meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel held on 12<sup>th</sup> February, 2009, consideration was given to a report presented by the Imagination Library Project Manager about the Imagination Library, a literacy scheme for under fives through which children receive one high quality age appropriate book each month, delivered to them personally through the post. The report described how the scheme was working in Rotherham, including the key developments of the scheme from April, 2009 to date.

The Scrutiny Panel viewed a film about the Imagination Library., which was used for marketing and publicity purposes. The staff and work experience students at the Rawmarsh City Learning Centre had undertaken the filming, editing and production of this dvd film.

The Scrutiny Panel's debate of this item included the following salient issues:-

- the Imagination Library Annual Report 2009/ 2010 (a copy of which was included with the submitted report);
- current and future funding of the Imagination Library;
- 74% of Rotherham children, aged 0-5 years were now registered with the Imagination Library and efforts were continually being made to increase this figure;
- use of the Sure Start database for registering children with the Imagination Library;
- inviting children to join their local library, in addition to joining the Imagination Library;
- ensuring extensive publicity for the Imagination Library;
- the impact upon literacy and reading standards in the

Rotherham Borough area;

- future challenges for the Imagination Library, especially those in the forthcoming year.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the contents of the Imagination Library Annual Report 2009/ 2010 be noted.

**C32. CORPORATE PARENTING REVIEW - CABINET RESPONSE - UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. 230 of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2010, consideration was given to a report presented by the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services concerning the review of Corporate Parenting, undertaken from November, 2009 to March, 2010 by the Looked After Children Scrutiny Sub-Panel, utilising a Corporate Parenting Toolkit developed by the National Children's Bureau. The review report recommended modernising the arrangements in line with the Government Agenda and with Ofsted Inspection expectations (the Action Plan, including recommendations, was attached to the submitted report).

Reference was made to the establishment of the Corporate Parenting Board, whose initial meeting was scheduled to take place on Wednesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> September, 2010.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That an update of progress be reported to a meeting of this Scrutiny Panel in six months' time.

**C33. INSPECTION OF FOSTERING SERVICES - SUMMARY OF REPORT AND ACTION PLAN**

Further to Minute No. 22 of the meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel held on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2010, consideration was given to a report presented by the Interim Service Manager – Provider Services summarising the main findings of the inspection of the Fostering Service undertaken by Ofsted during June, 2010. Appended to the report was the action plan devised to address the recommendations of the Inspectors. The overall judgement of the inspection is 'Satisfactory', with 'Good' being achieved in:-

- Helping children to be healthy
- Achieve well and enjoy what they do

- Make a positive contribution
- Achieving economic well-being

Resolved:- (1) That the report and accompanying action plan be received and their contents noted.

(2) That an update of progress and an updated action plan be reported to a meeting of this Scrutiny Panel in six months' time.

**C34. INSPECTION OF SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN - JULY 2010**

Further to Minute No. 9 of the meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel held on 4<sup>th</sup> June, 2010, the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services reported that the Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children had taken place between 19<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> July, 2010. The Inspection had been very positive, resulting in an overall rating of Adequate, with some elements rated as Good.

It was agreed that a written report and action plan, about the inspection, be submitted to the next meeting of this Scrutiny Panel, to be held during October, 2010.

**C35. ROAD SAFETY OUTSIDE SCHOOLS - SCRUTINY REVIEW**

Further to Minute No. 89 of the meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel held on 27<sup>th</sup> November, 2009, consideration was given to a report presented by the Senior Engineer which provided an update on progress with the implementation of the recommendations of the joint scrutiny review into road safety outside schools.

The Scrutiny Panel's discussion of this item included the following issues:-

- the coalition Government was preparing a revised National Road Safety Strategy;
- road safety features were being designed for installation on roads outside schools at Dinnington and at Wath upon Dearne;
- introduction of the 'Walk to School on Wednesdays' initiative;
- the review of speed limits of all A and B class roads in Rotherham was now complete and the financial implications of



reviewing speed limits and introducing any consequent changes on roads outside schools would have to be assessed;

- the 'School Keep Clear' Traffic Regulation Orders were to be extended outside schools in Brampton Bierlow, Swinton, Wath upon Dearne and West Melton;
- enforcement of traffic regulation orders.

Resolved:- (1) That this Scrutiny Panel notes the progress, as now reported, with the implementation of the recommendations of the joint Children and Young People's Services/ Regeneration Scrutiny Review into Road Safety outside Schools.

(2) That a further update of progress be reported to a meeting of this Scrutiny Panel in twelve months' time.

**C36. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES - PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QUARTER 1 - 2010/ 2011**

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Performance Management Officer outlining the performance of the Children and Young People's Services Directorate at the end of 2010/ 11 Quarter One against targets, with direction of travel against previous year's performance and comparisons with statistical neighbours and national data.

The Scrutiny Panel learned that, to date, the coalition Government had not announced plans for any revised legislation affecting the National Performance Indicators. Consequently, the current performance indicator monitoring system would be operating unchanged until such time as any new legislative proposals were announced by Central Government.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the recommendations regarding performance clinics, as contained in the report submitted, be supported.

**C37. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES - BUDGET UPDATE**

The Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services informed the Scrutiny Panel of the current year's (2010/ 11) budget position of the Directorate. It was noted that specific budget pressures existed in respect of safeguarding of children / corporate parenting which principally affected fostering placements for children (including out-of-authority placements and residential placements)

and the use of agency staff.

Resolved:- That the budget details be noted and a written report be submitted to the next meeting of this Scrutiny Panel, to be held during October, 2010.

**C38. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 2ND JULY, 2010**

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel held on 2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2010, be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman, with the inclusion of Dr. S. Warren in the list of persons who gave their apologies for absence for that meeting.

**C39. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES TRUST BOARD HELD ON 6TH AUGUST, 2010**

Resolved:- That the contents of the minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People's Trust Board held on 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2010, be noted.

**C40. MINUTES OF MEETINGS OF THE CABINET MEMBER AND ADVISERS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES**

Resolved:- That the contents of the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Children and Young People's Services held on 22<sup>nd</sup> June, 2010, 23<sup>rd</sup> June, 2010, 7<sup>th</sup> July, 2010, 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2010 and on 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2010, be noted.

**C41. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE HELD ON 25TH JUNE, 2010, 9TH JULY, 2010 AND ON 23RD JULY, 2010**

Resolved:- That the contents of the minutes of the meetings of the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee held on 25<sup>th</sup> June, 2010, 9<sup>th</sup> July, 2010 and on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2010, be noted.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES TRUST BOARD  
Wednesday, 8th September, 2010

Present:- Councillor Lakin (in the Chair); Andy Buck, Dr Russell Byrnes, Sue Skalycz, Joyce Thacker, Pat Ward and Janet Wheatley.

In attendance:- Sue Farmery, Dean Fenton, Jackie Lincoln, Jenny Lingrell, Gani Martins and Janet Wheatley.

Apologies for absence were received from Martin Kimber.

**D13. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES TRUST BOARD HELD ON 6TH AUGUST 2010**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Children and Young People's Trust Board held on 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2010, were approved as a correct record.

**D14. MATTERS ARISING**

Value for Money Review (VFM) – Prevention and Early Intervention Scoping Paper

Andy Buck reported that NHS Rotherham had now been involved since mid-August with a further meeting having taken place yesterday.

Common Assessment Framework Team Funding

Reference was made to the recommendation from Minute No D6 of the previous meeting which stated that a further report would be submitted to the board on funding options and cost/benefits for 2011/12, and a query was raised as to when this was expected. It was confirmed that Simon Perry was the lead for this and that it would be brought to the meeting in October.

It was agreed that this would also be discussed as part of today's Risk Management Training Session.

Corporate Parenting Review

Reference was made to the Annual Report in respect of the above, and it was suggested and agreed that a position statement to date be presented to the next meeting with an annual report from when the new Board is established.

**D15. ISSUES AND CONCERNS**

It was agreed that issues and concerns were be addressed as part of the Risk Management Training session.

**D16. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE INDICATOR QUARTER 1 2010/ 11**

Consideration was given to a report presented by Julie Westwood, Director of Resources, Planning and Performance in respect of Children and Young People's Services Performance Indicators 2010/11 Quarter One.

Members attention was drawn to Appendix A of the report, Performance Assessment by Every Child Matters Outcome which provided details of performance by each Every Child Matters theme including:-

- Performance against targets (Comparing outturn performance against set targets)
- Direction of travel analysis (Comparing 2010/11 quarter one performance to 2009/10 outturn performance)
- Year to Date Performance (judged by corporate monitoring system Performance Plus)
- Performance against Statistical Neighbours average
- Performance against National average
- Areas of Success
- Areas of Under-performance
- An update on previous performance clinics
- Recommendations for future performance clinics

**Overall Performance**

Across all themes, 50% of the National Indicator components targets had been met, which was a 2% decrease from 52% in 2009/10 outturn report. It was noted that a number of indicators collected quarterly was significantly reduced compared to the outturn and therefore affected the %. There had been a significant increase in the Staying Safe theme which had 67% indicators on target compared to 36% at outturn.

There were still however, 40% of all indicators not meeting targets. The Achieving Economic Wellbeing theme was particularly underperforming with 67% of indicators not meeting targets, although only three indicators components were collected. Future targets were being reviewed by managers to ensure that they were appropriate and realistic, whilst continuing to drive improvement.

Across all themes, 57% of the National Indicator components in Quarter 1 had shown improvement from the 2009/10 outturn. This was particularly evident in the Staying Safe at home which showed 78% of components improving. Performance had declined in 27% of components in comparison with 2009/10 outturn performance. This could be seen predominantly within the Achieving Economic Wellbeing theme which showed 33% of components having a downwards direction of travel

although this related to only 1 out of 3 components.

This quarter, the benchmarking data downloaded from the Local Area Interactive Tool showed that 40% of indicator components were in line or above the national average with only 23% being below. Comparison against statistical neighbours showed that 47% of components were inline or above and 27% were below the statistical neighbour average.

### **Areas of Success**

Being Healthy – the take up of primary school lunches (No 1a/NI 52a) continued to improve. An outturn figure of 43.9% had been achieved against a target of 40.5% and there had been a further increase to 45.9%. This was 6.6% above the latest available national average of 39.3%.

### **Staying Safe**

Two indicators were performing at least 2% or better above target. These were:

Percentage of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time (No 8/NI65) had reduced from an outturn figure of 13.8% to 7.4% for Q1. This exceeded the target between 10% and 15% and was better than both National and Statistical Neighbour averages of 13.5% and 11.7% respectively.

Percentage of child protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales (No 10/NI67) had maintained top performance of 100% and was above the statistical neighbour average of 99.8% and the national average of 99.1%

### **Enjoying and Achieving**

Special Educational Needs statements issued within 26 weeks (No 15 a & b / NI 103 a & b) had maintained top performance (100%) excluding exceptions. This exceeded the target of 95% and was above the statistical neighbour average of 97.2%. This was an improvement on 2009/10 outturn figure of 97.4% and was above the statistical neighbour average of 94.4% and the national average of 82%.

### **Making a Positive Contribution**

First time entrants to the Youth Justice System aged 10-17 (No 20 / NI 111 a & b). The number of first time entrants (part a) was 248 and the number of first time entrants per 100,000 population (part b) was 917. Both significantly exceeded the targets of 514 and 1900 respectively.

### **Achieving Economic Wellbeing**

Care leavers in employment, education and training (No 24 / NI148) had a

Q1 figure of 87.5% which was above the target of 67% and showed an improvement on the 2009/10 outturn of 63.6%. This was above both the statistical neighbour average of 58.2% and the national average of 63%.

### **Areas of Under Performance**

#### **Being Healthy**

The take up of secondary school lunches (No 1 b / NI52 b). Q1 performance of 33.1% was below the target set of 34.2% and had a downward direction of travel against the 2009/10 outturn of 35%.

#### **Staying Safe**

Timeliness of placements of looked after children for adoption following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption (No 5 . NI61). This was a cumulative indicator and therefore performance would improve through the performance calendar. There was a new focus within family finding which ensured the adoption of children who had waited the longest. This would mean an initial dip in performance but was an essential part of the recovery plan and overall performance was therefore on trajectory to improve.

#### **Enjoying and Achieving**

Reduction of number of schools judged as requiring special measures and improvement in time to come out of the category (No 14a / NI89a). This indicator had historically been a major area of success with no schools being in Special Measures from December 2006 until the 2009/10 academic year. Performance at Q1 showed five schools in special measures, which had increased from two at the 2009/10 outturn and was not hitting the target of 0. Ofsted procedures made it unlikely that any of the schools would be released from special measures before Spring 2011. However all but one had demonstrated at least Satisfactory progress on Ofsted monitoring visits in the last term and were therefore on track for release during 2010/11.

#### **Making a Positive Contribution**

Young people within the Youth Justice System receiving a conviction in court who were sentenced to custody (No 17 / NI43). This National Indicator performance of 11% did not meet the target of 5% and showed a downward direction of travel from 7.1% in the previous quarter. Performance was also worse than both the statistical neighbour average of 4.4% and the national average of 5.8%. Whilst custody figures were beginning to decline in real terms, the rate of custody continued to be below target due to the success of reducing the number of first time entrants (NI 111) which continued to drop quarter on quarter.

Young offenders' engagement in suitable education, training and development (No 18 / NI45). The National Indicator performance of 68.2% did not meet the target of 78% and showed a downward direction of travel from the previous quarter performance of 71%. Performance was also worse than both the statistical neighbour average of 75.6% and the national average of 73.10%.

### **Achieving Economic Wellbeing**

Care leavers in suitable accommodation (No 23 / NI147). The National Indicator performance of 87.5% did not meet the target of 92% and showed a downward direction of travel from 100% at 2009/10 outturn. This was also below the statistical neighbour and national averages of 89.3% and 89.6% respectively. It was noted however, that the impact on the performance against the target of one young person being in unsuitable accommodation was high because on the small number in the cohort.

#### **"PERFORMANCE CLINICS"**

Resolved:- (1) That the Performance Report be received and performance noted.

(2) That the recommendations regarding performance clinics be approved.

### **D17. INSPECTION OF FOSTERING SERVICES - SUMMARY OF THE REPORT AND ACTION PLAN**

Gani Martins, Director of Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting presented a report which summarised the main findings of the inspection of the Fostering Service undertaken by Ofsted, week commencing 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2010, and presented an action plan devised to address the recommendations of the Inspectors.

The overall judgement of the inspection was 'Satisfactory' with 'Good' being achieved in:-

- Helping children to be healthy
- Achieve well and enjoy what they do
- Make a positive contribution and;
- Achieving economic well-being.

Resolved:- That the Fostering Service Inspection report and action plan arising from it be noted.

### **D18. INSPECTION OF SAFEGUARDING AND LAC**

Julie Westwood, Director of Resources, Planning and Performance presented the submitted report in respect of the Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children.

The Inspection was very positive and this had resulted in an overall rating of Adequate with some elements rated as Good. The key recommendations were:-

#### **For Immediate**

- Ensure that all recording, including assessments, recording of meetings and within case files, incorporates up to date and key information and identifies risk and protective factors.
- Improve the effectiveness of strategy discussions and child protection plans and the active review of these by core groups and child protection reviews, and the quality of recording, including details on what action is to be taken.

#### **For the Next Three Months**

- NHS Rotherham and Rotherham Foundation NHST should ensure that within A&E services there is access to suitably trained and qualified children's nursing staff when children and young people are seen in the department
- NHS Rotherham should ensure that A&E staff at Rotherham Foundation NHS Trust have access to and use the electronic System 1, to ensure that children and young people can be easily identified if they are already known to social care services.
- Improve the quality of social care supervision so that staff receive the right level of challenge, development and support.
- Ensure that the workforce training and development plan clearly identifies how it will meet the development needs of all staff.
- Update the protocol for children missing from home, care and education to reflect the new national guidance.

The key recommendations for Looked After Children were:

#### **For Immediate**

- To strengthen the role of the virtual head by ensuring that the work of the School Improvement and Effectiveness team is more focused on supporting and challenging schools to improve the attainment of looked after children.



- Develop the independent visiting service to ensure that all eligible children are able to have access to an independent visitor.

**For Next Three Months:**

- To strengthen the capacity of the independent reviewing officer service to ensure that all children and young people are effectively supported in making a contribution to their care plans and that care plans are robustly challenged.

An Action Plan was being produced and would be monitored closely to ensure full completion in timescale and that full compliance was achieved. All actions were already in train as these were picked up in the self assessment prior to the inspection.

(1) That the report be received and the key recommendations to be implemented be noted.

(2) That all staff be thanked for the work undertaken in respect of this inspection and congratulated on the outcome.

**D19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Joyce Thacker, Strategic Director referred to the Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy which was launched in April 2010 and asked for comments on when it would be most appropriate to look at progress on this, before the Comprehensive Spending Review or after.

It was suggested that this be looked at as part of today's Risk Management Training session and to have a substantive discussion at the next Board meeting in October.

1DCABINET MEMBER FOR SAFEGUARDING AND DEVELOPING LEARNING  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN - 08/ 09/ 10

CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFEGUARDING AND DEVELOPING LEARNING  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN  
Wednesday, 8th September, 2010

Present:- Councillor Lakin (in the Chair); Councillors Havenhand and Currie.

**D44. PETER RENNIE**

The Chairman reported that this was Peter's last meeting before he retired. He was wished a long and healthy retirement.

**D45. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 20TH JULY, 2010 AND ON 21ST JULY, 2010**

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Children and Young People's Services, held on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2010 and on 21<sup>st</sup> July, 2010 be approved as correct records for signature by the Chairman.

**D46. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES TRUST BOARD HELD ON 6TH AUGUST, 2010**

Resolved:- That the contents of the minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People's Trust Board, held on 6<sup>th</sup> August, 2010, be noted.

**D47. FOSTERING PANEL 2010/ 2011 - APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLOR**

Resolved:- That Councillor Sharman be appointed to the Fostering Panel for the Municipal Year 2010/ 2011.

**D48. FORMER OAKWOOD SWIMMING POOL, MOORGATE ROAD, MOORGATE, ROTHERHAM**

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services concerning the former swimming pool at Oakwood, situated on 0.75 acres/ 0.30 hectares of land adjacent to the Oakwood Technology College. The report stated that the swimming pool was surplus to the requirements of the Culture and Leisure Service and, in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations, was proposed to be appropriated to Children and Young People's Services.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the former Oakwood Swimming Pool be appropriated from

Culture and Leisure Services to Children and Young People's Services at a value of £225,000, as detailed in the submitted report.

(3) That the Assistant Chief Executive, Legal and Democratic Services complete the necessary documentation.

(4) That the Director of Central Finance amend the Council's financial records accordingly.

#### **D49. REVIEW OF DIRECT PAYMENTS**

Further to Minute No. 155 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Children and Young People's Services held on 7<sup>th</sup> April, 2010, consideration was given to a report presented by the Children and Families Special Needs Service Manager concerning recommendations relating to Children and Young People's Services' use of Direct Payments.

Following a review of the statutory guidance, it had become clear that it was not appropriate to align the eligibility criteria for children and young people with that used to assess adults and that they should be assessed within existing frameworks. Furthermore, Fair Access to Care Services Practice Guidance was based on the fundamental premise of independence whereas children and young people were fundamentally dependent.

Attached as an Appendix was the new documentation that had been developed seeking to clarify and differentiate between the distinct eligibility criteria that was used to assess children and young people and adults (who may be the parents/ carers of children and young people).

Following assessment, the Directorate would seek to allocate and review direct payments consistently and transparently to meet the needs of families, in line with principles of personalisation and prevention and early intervention.

Further clarification of the support available to disabled children and young people and their families had been prepared by updating the Children's Disability Team Statement of Purpose (Appendix 2) and the Eligibility Criteria for Short Breaks developed as part of the Aiming High for Disabled Children Full Service Offer (Appendix 3).

The 2010/ 11 revenue budget was £222,523 with projected outturn currently standing at £262,502, significantly lower than 2009/ 10. This reflected an improving measure of control. The

**3DCABINET MEMBER FOR SAFEGUARDING AND DEVELOPING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN - 08/ 09/ 10**

difference would be made up from the AHDC grant.

There were currently 115 families of disabled children in receipt of Direct Payments as of 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2010. Where payments were being made for provision which was not an alternative to a Council service, these had been ceased.

Demand for Direct Payments was expected to remain high. Support from the Aiming High for Disabled Children Grant could not be guaranteed beyond 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2011. The new practice guidance would provide the necessary rigour in decision making.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the practice guidance for assessing eligibility for direct payments allocations in Children and Young People's Services, as now submitted, be approved for consultation.

(3) That the outcome of the consultation process be reported to the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Safeguarding and Developing Learning Opportunities for Children, prior to implementation of the revised direct payments system.

**D50. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S FESTIVAL**

The School Effectiveness Service Business Manager submitted a report on the first Children and Young People's Festival, held in June/ July, 2010, which had provided exciting opportunities for the children and young people in the Borough.

The School Effectiveness Service had successfully delivered celebration events during the summer term annually for a number of years. The 2010 Festival had been designed by the Service to raise the work to a new level with the particular aim of embracing all the different activities within a coherent and co-ordinated programme promoting many of the core themes of Transforming Rotherham Learning and the professional and learning cultures of the Rotherham Partnership of Schools.

The core objectives included children's creativity, community engagement, 0-19 learning, the centrality of literacy and language development in learning and the raising of aspirations. The Festival was an important contribution to fulfilling the 2008-10 Learning without Limits Partnership Plan and in demonstrating the interconnectedness of several workstreams especially new initiatives such as Inspire Rotherham.

Magna and their marketing team were very keen to work with the Service again and to raise the Festival's profile. It was proposed that the first week of the 2011 Festival would be an education show on a regional basis which would hopefully bring in additional sponsorship.

Approximately 9,000 people attended the events. Every Secondary (16) and Special (6) School participated and all but 6 of the 99 Primary Schools engaged. Colleagues from Early Years settings, the Tryline Centre, Clifton Detached Project, the City Learning Centres, Education Action Zones and the Gifted and Talented Groups were also fully engaged.

Resolved:- That a similar Festival be delivered in the summer term of 2011 subject to the necessary funds being secured.

**D51. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES SERVICES - PERFORMANCE INDICATORS QUARTER 1 - 2010/ 2011**

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Performance Manager outlining the performance of the Children and Young People's Services' Directorate at the end of the first quarter 2010/ 11. The report provided analysis against targets, direction of travel against previous performance and, where possible, comparisons with the statistical neighbour local authorities and national data.

The Cabinet Member's attention was drawn to Appendix A – Performance Assessment by Ever Child Matters Outcome which provided details of performance by each Every Child Matters theme including:-

- Performance against targets (comparing outturn performance against set targets)
- Direction of travel analysis (comparing 2010/ 11 quarter 1 performance to 2009/ 10 outturn performance)
- Year to Date Performance (judged by Corporate monitoring system performance plus)
- Performance against statistical neighbours average
- Performance against national average
- Areas of success
- Areas of under performance
- An update on previous performance clinics
- Recommendations for future performance clinics

Discussion ensued on future performance clinics. It was felt that a clinic should be held on Initial Assessments.

**5DCABINET MEMBER FOR SAFEGUARDING AND DEVELOPING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN - 08/ 09/ 10**

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the Performance Report and the accompanying Assessment and performance table be received and the performance noted.

(3) That the recommendations regarding performance clinics be approved.

(4) That the report be submitted to the Children's Trust Board.

**D52. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES NOTICE TO IMPROVE - PROGRESS UPDATE**

Further to Minute No. 34 of 21st July, 2010, the Performance, Information and Quality Manager reported on progress made since the Notice to Improve had been received identifying a RAG rating and a direction of travel for the areas of improvement, some areas of good performance and key risks. Also highlighted were the issues to meet the stretching targets set for the Council and its strategic partners.

There were now 29 individual actions covering the key performance measures (3 social care indicators) in addition to the operational targets around Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Leadership and Management and Capacity Building, Performance Management and Recruitment and Retention. Based on a RAG rating, the current position as at 20<sup>th</sup> August, 2010, was:-

Red	5 (including 4 new actions)	(17%)
Amber	19	(66%)
Green	5	(17%)

2 new areas had been included in relation to the action plans following the recommendations from both the Fostering and the Safeguarding and LAC inspections. Work had already commenced and action plans were in place.

The report highlighted:-

- High Risk areas (red risks)
  - o Expenditure on agency staff continued to increase - £435,922 having been spent on social workers and team managers and £31,357 for administration staff since 1<sup>st</sup> April
  - o NI59 – Since 1<sup>st</sup> April, 80.11% of initial assessments had been completed in timescales. The milestone target for October, 2010, was 85%, however as at the end of March,

2010, the statistical neighbour comparison was 71.6% and national 71.8%. The 2009/ 10 outturn for Rotherham was 75.2%. However, if the Indicator was measured against the 10 day measurement from the 1<sup>st</sup> April, it showed that 83.57% of initial assessments were carried out within 10 days as opposed to 80.11%

- Areas of Improvement
  - o NI68 – referrals which go onto an initial assessment was 79.74% which was higher than the March, 2011 target of 70%. The statistical neighbour comparison was 69.2% and 63.8% for national, the 2009/ 10 outturn for Rotherham was 73.4%
  - o The Safeguarding and Looked After Children inspection outcome was adequate and identified improvements in the Service and recognised areas of good practice
  - o Audit work continued to increase with 52 case file audits carried out in July and 300 additional NFA cases independently audited during August

The DfE had agreed up to £150,000 financial support to assist with recovery, and a further £125,000 had been secured from the RIEP to fund the work around implementation of Common Assessment Framework. The DfE funding was being used to supplement Social Work staffing resources and to employ independent staff to assist in the review and further improvement of and service quality activities. In order to strengthen financial management arrangements, all managers with budget holder responsibility attended specific training. The moratorium which had been in place since December, 2009, continued into 2010/ 11 to ensure that resources were directed to priority areas. In addition a work programme was in place to identify efficiencies and enable re-investment into priority areas.

Resolved:- (1) That the progress being made against the targets set in the Notice to Improve be noted.

(2) That the report be referred to Cabinet.

#### **D53. INSPECTION OF SAFEGUARDING AND LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN**

The Director of Resources, Planning and Performance reported that the Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children had taken place between 19<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> July, 2010.

The Inspection had been very positive and had resulted in an overall

**7DCABINET MEMBER FOR SAFEGUARDING AND DEVELOPING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN - 08/ 09/ 10**

rating of Adequate with some elements rated as Good. They key recommendations for Safeguarding were:-

For Immediate

- Ensure that all recording, including assessments, recording of meetings and within case files, incorporates up-to-date and key information and identifies risk and protective factors
- Improve the effectiveness of strategy discussions and child protection plans and the active review of these by core groups and child protection reviews and the quality of recording including details on what action was to be taken

For Next Three Months

- NHS Rotherham and Rotherham Foundation NHST should ensure that within A&E services there was access to suitably trained and qualified children's nursing staff when children and young people were seen in the department
- NHS Rotherham should ensure that A&E staff at Rotherham Foundation NHS Trust had access to and use the electronic System 1, to ensure that children and young people could be easily identified if they were already known to social care services
- Improve the quality of social care supervision so that staff received the right level of challenge, development and support
- Ensure that the workforce training and development plan clearly identifies how it would meet the development needs of all staff
- Update the protocol for children missing from home, care and education to reflect the new national guidance

Key recommendations for Looked After Children were:-

For Immediate

- Strengthen the role of the virtual head by ensuring that the work of the School Improvement and Effectiveness Team was more focussed on supporting and challenging schools to improve the attainment of looked after children
- Develop the independent visiting service to ensure that all eligible children were able to have access to an independent visitor

For Next Three Months



- Strengthen the capacity of the independent reviewing officer service to ensure that all children and young people were effectively supported in making a contribution to their care plans and that care plans were robustly challenged

Resolved:- Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and the key recommendations to be implemented noted.

(2) That the report be referred to Cabinet.

**D54. INSPECTION OF FOSTERING SERVICES - SUMMARY OF THE REPORT AND ACTION PLAN**

The Interim Services Manager, Provider Services, submitted a report summarising the main findings of the Ofsted inspection of the Fostering Service undertaken during the week commencing 21<sup>st</sup> June, 2010.

The overall judgement was 'Satisfactory' with 'Good' being achieved in:-

- Helping children to be healthy
- Achieve well and enjoy what they do
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieving economic wellbeing

The report highlighted many aspects of the work of the Service that were identified as providing good support to children in foster care including:-

- Good support to children and young people, including care leavers, by the Looked After Children's Nurse and the Health Support Worker
- Staying Safe – the Service worked effectively in placing children with carers who were an appropriate match and took care to monitor and support when placements were made outside carers' approval terms
- Get Real Team – offered very good support
- Families Together Service – offered good, individualised and flexible support
- Improvement in practice in respect of the assessment of family and friends carers

The Inspectors also identified:-

- A number of areas in which practice needed to improve
- A number of areas they considered undermined the Service's

**9DCABINET MEMBER FOR SAFEGUARDING AND DEVELOPING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN - 08/ 09/ 10**

capacity to keep children safe

- The delay in some young people being allocated a Leaving Care Personal Advisor and the consequent delay in producing a Pathway Plan

Resolved:- (1) That the Fostering Service Inspection report and action plan arising therefrom be noted.

(2) That the report be referred to Cabinet.

**D55. REARRANGEMENT OF 16-19 RESPONSIBILITIES: IMPLICATIONS OF CHANGES TO FUNDING AND FUNCTIONS FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES**

On 20<sup>th</sup> July, 2010, the Secretary of State for Education announced that some of the functions transferred to Local Authorities under the 'Apprenticeship Skills and Learning Act' December 2009 were to be reassigned with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2010. The Assistant Head of School Effectiveness Service, submitted a report setting out the background and revised arrangements in the context of the direction of education policy and the implications for the Authority.

The Apprenticeship Skills, Children and Learning Act, from 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2010, enacted:-

- Dissolution of the Learning and Skills Council
- Establishment of the Young People's Learning Agency
- Creation of the Skills Funding Agency
- Requirement of local authorities to organise into sub-regional clusters for the purpose of planning post-16 provision
- Requirement of local authorities to establish Regional Planning Groups

Further changes had been introduced from 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2010:-

- Young People's Agency would directly fund provision for:-
  - o Young people aged 16-19 or 19-25 subject to learning difficulty or disability assessment in GFE colleges, SFCs, FE in Higher Education, local authority providers, private and charitable providers and independent specialist providers
  - o Young people aged 10-18 in Young Offender institutions
  - o Learners in open Academies
- "Lagged" basis for funding
- No plans to introduce in-year funding adjustments
- In-year contract adjustments for independent providers where

necessary

- No requirement for sub-regional and regional planning groups

The YPLA would continue to provide funds to local authorities to pass onto maintained SSFs for Young Apprenticeships and Education Business Partnerships and funding would transfer from the Department for Education to the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills for funding 16-18 Apprenticeships. The SkFA would fund providers for the delivery of Apprenticeships and local authorities would have a crucial role in securing provision for learners with learning difficulties and/ or disabilities.

Resolved:- That the implications of the changes to governance arrangements be noted.

**D56. THE WELCOME OFFER TO VULNERABLE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

The Head of School Effectiveness submitted an updated assessment of progress in relation to the schools' element of the strategy following a strategic overview of the initiatives by the Chief Executive's office.

In summer 2009 the management of services to ethnic minority pupils and students was formally transferred from the Inclusion Directorate to Schools and Lifelong Learning, in particular School Effectiveness. The School Effectiveness Services had established a Vulnerable Groups Team led by an Assistant Head of Service (AHOSE). The AHOSE was able to deploy a small but very capable Primary and Secondary Ethnic Minority Achievement Teams each led by a Curriculum Adviser for each phase.

The staffing of both Teams had benefited from the deployment of colleagues previously based at the Kimberworth Welcome Centre. The work of ethnic minority achievement embraced both the needs of newly arrived pupils and support for advanced learners. The numbers of newly arrived children from EU countries continued to grow locally despite the economic context which has led to a reduction in arrivals/ stayers elsewhere in the country.

It was essential that the urgency of the needs of EU migrant pupils were met but that the Service also focussed effectively on the needs of other vulnerable groups. To date, SES would identified the following as the core benefits of the new "Welcome Offer" developed during 2009/ 10:-

**11DCABINET MEMBER FOR SAFEGUARDING AND DEVELOPING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN - 08/ 09/ 10**

- A more efficient and effective deployment of the available staffing to school needs
- A more coherent induction process for newly arrived children on the site of the school they will attend longer term
- A strategy which built capacity in schools rather than encouraged reliance on an external service which could never be sufficient to the scale and range of challenges
- More productive partnership working between schools and between schools and the local authority
- Improved strategic co-ordination between ethnic minority approaches and other programmes designed to address under achievement
- Significantly improved schools' engagement
- Important new work in community cohesion
- Existing and innovative practice

Investment in the enhanced service had been achieved through a remodelling of existing SES and CYPs budgets and additional funding from contingency to meet acute needs. A review was currently in place to assess continuing needs and the sustainability of resources particularly in light of reduced staffing across SES from April, 2011, when National Strategies funding ends and Government cuts to local authorities increase in impact.

Resolved;- (1) That the report be received.

(2) That the progress made in the introduction of the "Welcome Offer" in the context of continuing challenges to schools and the local authority in meeting the needs of this group of pupils be noted.

(3) That the drive to encourage all schools to continue to develop their provision in addressing the needs of these acutely vulnerable pupils and their families be endorsed.

(4) That the good work of the Vulnerable Groups Team in this urgent and important area of work be recognised.

(5) That the continued development of a co-ordinated strategy across all the appropriate Council services on behalf of this vulnerable group be supported.

(6) That the issue be referred to Cabinet.

**D57. THE IMPACT OF THE REVISED OFSTED INSPECTION FRAMEWORK 2009**

The Head of School Effectiveness submitted a report on the impact

of the revised Ofsted Inspection Framework introduced on 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2009.

The new Framework had received a controversial reception from schools, professional associations and local authorities because of the perception that it was being applied unevenly across the school system to the particular disadvantage of schools serving underprivileged communities.

During 2009/ 10 Rotherham had received inspections whose outcomes were:-

Phase	Number of Inspections	% Outstanding	% Good	% Satisfactory	% Inade
Primary	30	10%	30%	40%	20%
Secondary	3	0%	0%	100%	0%
Special/ PRU	4	50%	0%	50%	0%
All	37	14%	24%	46%	16%

There was evidence that inspections were targeted on the most vulnerable schools. A number of Rotherham primary schools had been placed in Ofsted categories of concern in the spring term but, since this time, 4 had had exceedingly positive HMI monitoring visits. Primary schools during the summer term were more positive with a number of satisfactory schools moving to good. Satisfactory outcomes were achieved in the 2 secondary schools inspected in the autumn term both of which recorded their best ever GCSE results in 2009.

Resolved- (1) That the report be received.

(2) That the implications for schools of the new Framework and its potential impact on the performance profile of the Local Authority be noted.

(3) That the Cabinet Member continue to assess the impact of the revised Framework and its effect on Rotherham schools and Local authority support services.

#### **D58. HEALTH, WELFARE AND SAFETY PANEL - VISITS OF INSPECTION**

Consideration was given to a report of the visits of inspection made by members of the Council's Health, Welfare and Safety Panel, on Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 2010, to (i) Aston Fence Primary School and (ii)

**13DCABINET MEMBER FOR SAFEGUARDING AND DEVELOPING LEARNING  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN - 08/ 09/ 10**

Rockingham Primary School. The report listed the issues noted by the Panel members.

Resolved:- That the report be received and appropriate action be taken in response to the issues noted.

**CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFEGUARDING AND  
DEVELOPING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN  
22nd September, 2010**

Present:- Councillor Lakin (in the Chair); Councillors Havenhand and Currie.

**D59. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 8TH SEPTEMBER,  
2010**

Resolved:- That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2010 be approved as a correct record.

**D60. MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES  
TRUST BOARD HELD ON 8TH SEPTEMBER, 2010**

Resolved:- That the contents of the minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People's Trust Board, held on 8<sup>th</sup> September, 2010, be noted.

**D61. 14 - 19 LEARNING PLAN 2010 TO 2015**

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Learning Services Co-ordinator detailing the progress in developing a new Rotherham 14-19 (up to 25 for young people with Learning Difficulties and/ or Disabilities) Learning Plan for 2010-2015, as a response to the 'Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to Deliver' White Paper (2008) and the Apprenticeship, Skills and Learning Act 2009.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That a re-draft of the 14-19 (25) Learning Plan, which will take account of the announcement by the Secretary of State for Education on 20 July 2010, be endorsed.

(3) That Cabinet be informed that the 14-19 (25) Learning Plan will not be submitted to Elected Members for consideration, as it will no longer be a key decision from September, 2010.

(4) That the Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee be informed that the Borough Council is no longer required to commission 16-19 (25) provision and will therefore not be producing a Commissioning Statement requiring scrutiny in October, 2010.

**D62. BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE**

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services stating that, on 5th July, 2010, the Department for Education ceased the Building Schools for the Future Programme. For Rotherham this ended the plans for new secondary and special schools for 20,000 young people as well as a 'state of the art' ICT infrastructure. Subsequently, the Secretary of State for Education has confirmed there will be capital spend on school projects dependent on the results of a Capital Review, whose findings should be known in December 2010. Discussion took place on the possible implications of the Capital Review for the Maltby Academy campus and premises.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the Council expresses its profound dismay at the cessation of the Building Schools for the Future Programme.

(3) That the Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services submit a further report on the results of the Government's Capital Review process, to a meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Safeguarding and Developing Learning Opportunities for Children in December, 2010 or January, 2011.

**D63. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES - CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2010/ 2011**

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Finance manager stating that the Children and Young People's Services' Capital Programme 2010/ 2011 is £20,769,000. The capital programme is forecast to be fully spent by 31st March, 2011. This submitted report shows the capital programme's actual expenditure to 31st July, 2010 and projected expenditure to 31st March, 2011.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That it be noted that:-

(a) the Children and Young People's Services' Capital Programme for 2010/ 11 is £20,769,000, with expenditure to 31st July, 2010 totalling £4,804,000; and

(b) the Capital Programme is expected to spend to budget by 31st March, 2011.

**D64. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**



Resolved:- That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, as amended (information relating to financial or business affairs of both the Local Authority and private sector contractors).

**D65. ORCHARD CHILDREN'S CENTRE - CONTRACT FOR WORK TO CHERRY TREE HOUSE GARDEN**

Further to Minute No. D114 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Children and Young People's Services held on 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2010, consideration was given to a report presented by the Orchard Centre Resource Manager concerning the initiative to redevelop the garden area within the Cherry Tree House unit of the Orchard Children's Centre.

As the specialist providers in the design and commissioning of play areas and interactive centres Groundwork Dearne Valley were commissioned to provide project designs based on the service users specifications. The designs were reported previously and the current report included an appraisal of the tenders received for the construction contract.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That consideration of this matter be deferred pending receipt of a further report concerning additional, detailed analysis of the submitted tenders.

**D66. GOODWIN CRESCENT CHILDREN'S HOME, SWINTON - PROPOSED CLOSURE**

Further to Minute No. D138(4) of the meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Children and Young People's Services held on 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2010, consideration was given to a report presented by the Director of Safeguarding and Corporate Parenting concerning the condition of the Children's Home premises at Goodwin Crescent, Swinton. The report stated that the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) had expressed concerns about the suitability of this Children's Home and, accordingly, Elected Members were being asked to consider a proposal to close the premises.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That the Cabinet be requested to:-

- (a) approve the closure of the Children's Homes premises at Goodwin Crescent, Swinton by 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2011;
- (b) approve the necessary process of consultation involving residents, staff and other interested parties affected by the proposed closure of these premises; and
- (c) consider the future use or disposal of the land and premises.

**CABINET MEMBER FOR SAFEGUARDING AND DEVELOPING LEARNING  
OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN  
22nd September, 2010**

Present:- Councillor Lakin (in the Chair); Councillors Currie and Littleboy.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Havenhand.

**D67. SCHOOL GOVERNOR VACANCIES - PROCEDURE**

Further to Minute No. D55 of the meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Children and Young People's Services held on 6<sup>th</sup> October, 2009, consideration was given to a report, presented by the Co-ordinator of Governor Services, concerning the procedures for appointing/ electing governors in Rotherham schools and the current position of governor vacancies per governor category.

Resolved:- (1) That the report be received and its contents noted.

(2) That a formal review be conducted of the procedures for appointing/ electing governors in Rotherham schools and a further report about the review be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet Member and Advisers for Safeguarding and Developing Learning Opportunities for Children.

(3) That the report referred to at (2) above shall include (i) reference to the appointment procedures used by other local authorities and (ii) details of the role and function required of a Local Authority-appointed school governor.

**D68. APPOINTMENT OF LEA SCHOOL GOVERNORS**

Pursuant to Minute No. C50 of January 2000, consideration was given to nominations received to fill Local Authority vacancies on school governing bodies.

Resolved:- (1) That, with the effective date of appointment as shown, the following appointments be made to school governing bodies, subject to satisfactory checks being undertaken:-

**New Appointments**

Bramley Sunnyside Junior	Mrs. Lynda Blakesley	22.09.2010
East Dene Junior and Infant	Mr. Haroon Rashid	22.09.2010
Dalton Listerdale Junior and Infant	Mr. Wayne	
Ventour		22.09.2010
Wickersley Northfield Primary	Mrs. Elizabeth Duncan	22.09.2010

**Re-appointment**

Rawmarsh Children's Centre	Mr. Robert Bird	26.09.2010
Rawmarsh Community School (Secondary)	Mr. Robert Bird	26.09.2010
Milton Special School	Councillor John Doyle	26.09.2010

(2) That consideration of the remaining application be deferred.

**PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**  
**10th September, 2010**

Present:- Councillor Whelbourn (in the Chair); Councillors The Mayor (Councillor McNeely), Gilding, J. Hamilton, Jack, G. A. Russell, Steele, Swift and Whysall.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Austen and P. A. Russell.

**D43. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

**D44. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS.**

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

**D45. ROTHERHAM PARTNERSHIP REVIEW**

Matt Gladstone, Assistant Chief Executive, presented the submitted report indicating progress on the review of the Rotherham Partnership.

The report covered:-

- background and context of the review
- Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Team self analysis
- LSP Board Members one to ones
- Future of the Partnership

The composition and workings of the LSP were outlined.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- new environment for LSP's under the Coalition Government and impact on scope of the review
- membership of, and attendance at, LSP meetings
- participation of members at LSP meetings
- responsibility for setting up the Board
- governance arrangements

- terms of office/ election arrangements
- involvement of non-executive members
- need to retain a sharper more focused, leaner partnership
- accountability of partner input and reviewing such before end of term of office
- flexibility of attendance at the Board based on topics discussed
- need to look at how wider number of members could be involved in the review process
- LSP a statutory requirement as part of the Community Strategy
- possible discussion item at the Members' Training and Development Panel

Resolved:- (1) That the information be noted.

(2) That this matter be referred to every scrutiny panel for consideration.

(3) That Cath Saltis and Matt Gladstone liaise regarding possible discussion at the Members' Training and Development Panel.

#### **D46. SUPPORTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

Sarah McCall, Performance and Project Officer, presented the submitted report setting out how the Council was supporting currently the local economy through its procurement function and outlining actions being planned in order to strengthen that support including a proposal to take a town wide and public sector wide approach.

The report covered:-

- How procurement was supporting currently the local economy
  - Council Website
  - The Procurement Forward Plan
  - Supplier Contract Management System (SCMS)
  - Meet the Buyer
  - Standardised Contract Clauses
  - Assessing the Impact on the Local Economy

- Supporting SMEs
- SME Friendly Concordat
- Prompt Payment
- Local Consortia Building
  
- Monitoring Performance
  
- Improving Performance
  - Meet the Buyer
  - YorBuild
  - Encouraging Local Consortium Bids
  - Improving Performance Measurement Tools
  - Working with Neighbouring Local Authorities
  - Reviewing Procurement Rules
  - Encouraging Local Sub-Contracting
  - Targeting Spend to Encourage Business Growth
  - Further Capacity Building
  - Increasing Promotion of Opportunities
  - Apprenticeships
  - West Midlands Procurement Framework for Jobs and Skills
  - Performance Clinic
  
- A Whole Area Approach

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- comparator authorities for local spend
- costs and outcomes of Meet the Buyer events
- invitees to Meet the Buyer events
- increased business from existing suppliers
- performance clinic
- definition of local
- LSP Chief Executives' Group and nomination of representatives
- LEPs
- ongoing work with the Chamber of Commerce regarding supplier lists

**35D PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE - 10/ 09/ 10**

Resolved:- (1) That the work to support the local economy be noted.

(2) That quarterly progress reports be submitted to this Committee.

**D47. EQUALITY MONITORING OF COMPLAINTS**

Matt Gladstone, Assistant Chief Executive, presented the submitted report setting out the current position on equalities monitoring of complaints.

The report covered:-

- A prior internal review of the existing system reports from the CRM system
- inconsistent collection of equality data monitoring across the Council
- there was no mechanism to extract automatically the equalities monitoring data on complaints from the Siebel Customer Relationship Management System but that this had been under review and a possible solution identified.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- legal duty to collect the information
- need to understand the customer base
- the progress of the action plan, implemented in response to the scrutiny review of complaints
- scale of complaints received
- that Councillor surgeries were not included as complaints

Resolved:- That the information be noted and a further report be presented as appropriate.

**D48. REGIONAL SCRUTINY**

Further to Minute No. 148 of the meeting of this Committee held on 26th February, 2010, Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny, presented the



submitted briefing note updating members on the progress made.

Particular reference was made to the Members' Regional Network Event to be held in York on 29th September, 2010 and that the agenda would include:-

- The Regional Context
- LEPs and City Regions
- The future role of scrutiny, including health scrutiny (abolition of PCT's etc.)
- Community Safety

Elected member attendance at the event was invited.

Resolved:- That details of the York event be distributed to members and anyone wishing to attend notify the Scrutiny Office.

#### **D49. MINUTES**

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd July, 2010 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman, subject to the inclusion of Councillor Swift in the list of apologies.

#### **D50. WORK IN PROGRESS**

(a) Councillor Whysall reported that the next two meetings of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel to be held on 6th and 20th October, 2010 were to be themed meetings on economic regeneration and transport respectively.

(b) Councillor G. A. Russell reported that the latest meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel considered:-

- Aiming High for Disabled Children – Short Breaks Services
- Rotherham Imagination Library Annual Report 2009/ 10
- Corporate Parenting Review – Cabinet response
- Inspection of Fostering Services
- Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children

- Road Safety Outside Schools – Scrutiny Review
- Children and Young People’s Services – Performance Indicators Quarter 1
- Children and Young People’s Services – Budget update

(c) Councillor Jack reported that the Adult Services and Health Scrutiny Panel at its meeting yesterday had considered:-

- Presentation in respect of the Safeguarding Adults Annual Report 2009/ 10
- Presentation in respect of Supporting People Programme, Contribution to Prevention
- Presentation in respect of Personalisation in Rotherham
- Shaping Our Future – Community Health Services
- Briefing on the Equity and Excellence White Paper : Implications for Rotherham
- Forward Plan of Key Decisions

Councillor Jack also reported that the final meeting of the Assistive Technology Review Group had been held and papers had been distributed in respect of the Diabetes Review.

(d) Councillor Whelbourn reported the need for every scrutiny panel to consider the budget following the comprehensive spending review.

**D51. CALL-IN ISSUES**

There were no formal call-in requests.

(The Chairman authorised consideration of the following items to enable the necessary arrangements to be made)

**D52. CARE SERVICE**

The Chairman reported a request for scrutiny views in respect of the Care Service.

Resolved:- That reports be submitted to this Committee for consideration whereupon invites be extended to interested members from the relevant scrutiny panels.

**D53. POLICE REFORM - CONSULTATION**

Cath Saltis, Head of Scrutiny, reported on proposals to respond to the above consultation paper, the deadline for which was 20th September, 2010.

Resolved:- (1) That the matter be considered by the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel at its meeting on 16th September, 2010 and any views be forwarded to the Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods.

(2) That Councillor S. Wright be invited to the discussions at the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel.

(3) That the finalised Council response to the consultation should be forward to the local M.Ps.

**PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE**

Friday, 24th September, 2010

Present:- Councillor Whelbourn (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Gilding, J. Hamilton, Jack, License, G. A. Russell and Whysall.

Apologies for absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor McNeely), P. A. Russell, Steele and Swift.

**54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST.**

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

**55. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS.**

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

**56. EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE: LIBERATING THE NHS - WHITE PAPER AND RESPONDING TO THE CONSULTATION**

Kate Taylor, Policy Officer, presented the submitted report which set out how the Government's Health White Paper preceded legislation to be placed before Parliament in the current parliamentary session. It proposed major reforms to the NHS and also changed roles for Local Government.

A suite of consultation documents had subsequently been published, which required a response by 11th October, 2010. This report set out the key proposals within the White Paper and the implications these would have for the Council and Partners, as well as making recommendations for responding effectively to the consultation and next steps for public health in Rotherham.

The report set out clearly:-

- The Key Proposals.
- Implications for Rotherham.
- Consultation Process.
- Local Democratic Legitimacy in Health.
- Commissioning for Patients.
- Transparency in Outcomes – A Framework for the NHS.
- Regulating Healthcare Providers.
- Responding to the Consultation.
- Rotherham Joint Public Health Strategy.

A ring-fenced health improvement budget, which included a bonus for outcomes, would be provided to all Directors of Public Health.

Further detail regarding the amount of this budget and how it would be ring-fenced was not yet known. It was expected that the Public Health White paper, out in the autumn, would provide more information.

Implementation of some White Paper proposals could be influenced by the Spending Review expected from the Treasury in October, 2010 and the Localism and Decentralisation Bill expected from CLG in December, 2010. For example, what the Bill said about the governance arrangements for Councils and what the Review said about placed-based budgets.

There was also uncertainty with regards to the proposals in relation to the new health improvement roles and responsibilities for local authorities; including details of the ring-fenced budget and Director of Public Health and staff. Further clarity on such proposals would be provided by the publication of the Public Health White Paper due in autumn.

The Council needed to consider all proposals and implications of this and future health related White Papers to ensure it was fully equipped to take on the new role. The risk of not looking at this immediately could be ineffective partnership and integrated working with the new arrangements and, therefore, poor outcomes for services.

The report had been received by Cabinet at its meeting on 8th September, 2010.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued and the following issues were covered:-

- scrutiny arrangements : concerns executive scrutinising itself
- children and safeguarding issues
- Health and Wellbeing Board establishment and representation
- monitoring of target waiting days
- implications of cross boundary issues
- appropriate reporting line for consultation papers

Resolved:- (1) That the information be noted.

(2) That a working group of this Committee meet on Tuesday, 28th

September, 2010, to consider the consultation paper questions in detail and feed into the formal consultation response.

(3) That Cabinet be requested to consider the appropriate route for consideration of consultation papers and this Committee's view that scrutiny should be the first port of call.

#### **57. 11 MILLION TAKEOVER DAY**

Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, presented the submitted report indicating that "11 Million Takeover Day 2010" was to be held on Friday, 12th November, 2010.

The Committee noted the success of the event in previous years and welcomed the opportunity to participate again in 2010.

Resolved:- (1) That "11 Million Takeover Day 2010" be supported.

(2) That the Youth Cabinet and Looked After Children's Council be invited to take over this Committee's meeting on 12th November, 2010 (re-scheduled from 19th November, 2010).

(3) That members of the Cabinet be invited to attend the event.

(4) That further reports be submitted as appropriate.

#### **58. POLICE REFORM CONSULTATION : FEEDBACK**

Further to Minute No. 53 of the meeting of this Committee held on 10th September, 2010, it was reported that the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel considered the draft consultation response on 16th September, 2010. Taking account of the comments made by the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel, Councillor Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods considered the matter at his delegated powers meeting on 20th September, 2010. The response was approved with the first part of the consultation draft being amended to read "Rotherham Borough Council are opposed to the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners".

Resolved:- That the information be noted.

#### **59. MINUTES**

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 10th September, 2010 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

60. WORK IN PROGRESS

(a) Councillor J. Hamilton reported that the latest meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel had considered:-

- presentation from Councillor Akhtar, Cabinet Member for Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods, on his priorities under the Safe Theme Board
- policing in the 21st Century
- Community Leadership Fund
- combined parliamentary and local elections May, 2010
- Rotherham election turnout analysis

The next meeting would be considering running a referendum at the same time as an election.

(b) Councillor Jack reported that the Assistive Technology Review was nearing completion.

(c) Councillor Whysall reported that the next meeting of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel to be held on 6th October, 2010 at MAGNA was an economic regeneration themed meeting to which members were invited to attend.

(d) Councillor G. A. Russell reported

- scrutiny review group looking at incidences of autism was being set up
- review of the temporary closure of Rotherham schools during periods of inclement weather would be reported to the next meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel in October
- an invitation had been received to participate in the Health consultation on children's cardiac services
- the October meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel would also be considering Building Schools for the Future

(e) Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, reported - on behalf of

the Mayor (Councillor McNeely), that the review group looking at the housing private renting sector had been set up and the first meeting was scheduled for 1st October, 2010

- the latest meeting of the Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panel had considered proposals around the future shape of social housing

(f) Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, reported an invite from the Centre for Public Scrutiny to be part of a reference group looking at corporate parenting. A productive meeting had been held last week.

(g) Councillor Whelbourn reported:

- Cabinet had welcomed the breastfeeding review and recommendations would be implemented finance permitting
- Financial Services were carrying out a review of central establishment charges

Resolved:- That the potential to feed into the review be discussed further at the next meeting.

#### **61. CALL-IN ISSUES**

There were no formal call-in requests.

#### **62. BEN KNIGHT**

The Committee placed on record its thanks to Ben for his services to the Committee and scrutiny and wished him every success in his new appointment at Warrington.



Document is Restricted