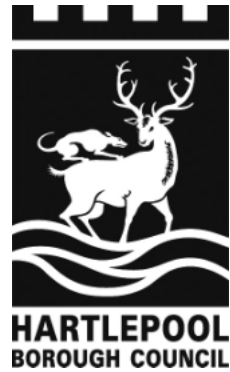


CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

DECISION SCHEDULE



Tuesday 6 September 2011

at 10.00 a.m.

**in Committee Room "C"
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.**

Councillor C Hill, Cabinet Member responsible for Children's Services will consider the following items.

1. KEY DECISIONS

- 1.1 Admissions to Community Primary Schools 2013/14; Coordinated Admissions Schemes for Primary, Secondary Schools and in Year Admissions 2013/14 – *Director of Child and Adult Services*

2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 2.1 Short Breaks Services Statement - *Director of Child and Adult Services*

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 3.1 Safeguarding Children in Hartlepool - *Director of Child and Adult Services*

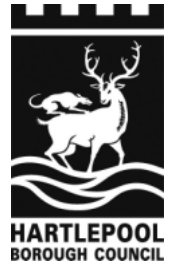
4. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS

No items.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

6 September 2011



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: ADMISSIONS TO COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOLS
2013/14
COORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEMES FOR
PRIMARY, SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND IN YEAR
ADMISSIONS 2013/14

SUMMARY

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval of the Portfolio Holder to the draft Admission arrangements for 2013/14 as the basis for consultation during the Autumn term 2011.

2.0 SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

Report attached detailing current admissions policy and coordinated admissions schemes (Primary, Secondary and In Year).

3.0 RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The Portfolio Holder has responsibility for Children's Services issues.

4.0 TYPE OF DECISION

Key decision, Reference CAS98/11, Test (ii).

5.0 DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Children's Services Portfolio Holder.

6.0 DECISION(S) REQUIRED

The Portfolio Holder is requested to approve the draft Admission arrangements and co-ordinated schemes for 2013/14 as the basis for consultation during the Autumn term 2011.

Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: ADMISSIONS TO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS 2013/14
COORDINATED ADMISSIONS TO PRIMARY AND
SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND IN YEAR
ADMISSIONS 2013/14

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval of the Portfolio Holder to the draft admission arrangements for 2013/14 as the basis for consultation during the Autumn term 2011.

2. BACKGROUND

General

- 2.1 Section 89 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 lays down the way in which an Admissions Authority must determine admission arrangements and requires them to consult with governing bodies and other admission authorities. The statutory code of practice, the School Admissions Code (the Code), came into force in February 2010 and applies to all maintained schools including foundation schools and academies. The Government are currently consulting on a new code which will come into force in February 2012 for admission round 2013/14 and therefore these proposed arrangements may require amending accordingly and further consultation maybe necessary.

Admission Authorities must ensure that their determined admission arrangements comply with the mandatory provisions of the code. This code is made under Section 84 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended by Section 40 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Failure to comply with these requirements would mean that Hartlepool Local Authority will be at risk of failing to meet their statutory duty.

- 2.2 In drawing up admission arrangements, admission authorities should aim to ensure that:

- the arrangements enable parents/carers to express a preference as to the school at which he/she wishes education to be provided for his/her child and to give reasons for their preferences;
- admissions criteria are clear, fair and objective, for the benefit of all children, including those with special educational needs, disabilities or in public care;
- local admission arrangements contribute to improving standards for all pupils;
- local admission authorities consult each other and co-ordinate their arrangements, including the rapid re-integration wherever possible of children who have been excluded from other schools;

- parents have easy access to helpful admissions information;
- local admission arrangements achieve full compliance with all relevant legislation and guidance – including infant class sizes and equal opportunities – and take full account of the guidance in the Code.

3. MANDATORY REQUIREMENTS

3.1.1 The Local Authority (LA) is the Admissions Authority in respect of community and voluntary controlled schools, while the governing body is the Admissions Authority in respect of voluntary aided, foundation schools and academies. All Admission Authorities must publish admission arrangements including:

- the number of pupils to be admitted in each year group;
- the criteria to be used in the event of over-subscription;
- the application process including forms, timetables, co-ordinated arrangements and waiting lists;
- admission arrangements for pupils with disabilities, special educational needs or challenging behaviour;
- admission arrangements for children in the care of the local authority (LAC).

3.1.2 LAs are required to consult on the admission arrangements for their schools. The consultation must give full details of admission arrangements that will operate in the area in the year in question.

3.1.3 Admission authorities must consult with other admission authorities and the governing bodies of community and voluntary controlled schools in the relevant area.

3.1.4 Admission authorities that determine an admission number for any school which is lower than that indicated by the DFE net capacity formula must, additionally, publish a notice to explain this in a local newspaper.

3.2 Co-ordinated Admissions

3.2.1 LAs must draw up a co-ordinated scheme for every school (excluding special schools) in its area. The purpose of co-ordinated admission schemes is to ensure that, as far as is reasonably practicable, every parent of a child living in the LA area who has applied for a school place in the normal admission round receives an offer of one, and only one, school place on the same day.

3.2.2 For secondary schools, places must be offered on the national offer date of 1st March in the year during which a child will be admitted to a school. For primary schools, places are offered on the 15th April in the year during which the child will be admitted to a school. Whilst the 15th April is not a national offer date it is the date which has been agreed between the other neighbouring admission authorities. This may change in 2013/14 subject to a new code coming into force early 2012.

- 3.2.3 For all schools, parents/carers must be invited to express at least three preferences on a common application form. This form may be paper based or an e-form via the on-line admissions website. The common application form can be supplemented (but not replaced) by additional forms where particular schools might need extra information, for example to assess denominational commitment. The form must enable parents/carers to:
- express their preferences;
 - give the reasons for applying for their preferred schools;
 - rank those preferences.
- 3.2.4 The LA must inform other admission authorities of any application made for their schools and pass on any relevant supporting information. The parent/carer's order of ranking needs only to be shared with other LAs or admission authorities whose own over-subscription criteria mention rank order.
- 3.2.5 Each preference must be considered by the admission authority of the school concerned. The school should then provide the LA with a list of all children who have applied for a place, ranked in order of priority under the schools admission arrangements. Neighbouring LAs must also inform each other if places are to be offered to children from another LA.
- 3.2.6 The LA then compares the lists for all schools in its area. When a child qualifies for a place at more than one school, the LA provisionally allocates a place at the school indicated by the terms of its co-ordinated scheme. It also adjusts the list for any other school for which a preference was expressed by that parent, moving another child who was previously not eligible up the list to the provisional place which has been vacated.
- 3.2.7 For secondary schools, LAs must notify each other by an agreed date in February, of any places which those LAs or schools in their area can offer in response to any preferences expressed. For primary schools, LA's must notify each other by an agreed date in March of any places which those LAs or schools in their area can offer in response to any preferences expressed.
- 3.2.8 LAs must also operate a co-ordinated scheme within their own area for all schools. However, parents/carers who are resident in one LA but who wish to apply for a place at a school maintained by another LA will apply through the maintaining LA's common application form.
- 3.2.9 From September 2010, all applications for school places, whether during the normal admission round or in year applications MUST be co-ordinated by the Local Authority. Hartlepool LA has developed an in year co-ordinated admission scheme which has been in operation since 1st September 2010. This may change subject to a new code coming into force early 2012.

4. ADMISSIONS POLICY FOR 2013/14

- 4.1 There is a voluntary aided Roman Catholic secondary school, a voluntary aided Church of England secondary school and 3 foundation secondary schools. All secondary schools in Hartlepool, with the exception of Catcote Special School MUST develop their own over subscription criteria and MUST consult on their arrangements with all Hartlepool Admission Authorities, neighbouring Admission Authorities and the wider community.
- 4.2 There are 6 voluntary aided Roman Catholic primary schools, 4 voluntary aided Church of England primary schools, 1 voluntary controlled primary school and 19 community primary schools (1 of which has applied for Academy status, effective from November 2011). All primary schools and academies in Hartlepool, with the exception of Springwell Special School MUST develop their own over subscription criteria and MUST consult on their arrangements with all Hartlepool Admission Authorities, neighbouring Admission Authorities and the wider community.

Parents/carers are invited to express preferences for up to 3 primary schools in priority order and give reasons for their preferences

The criterion below is the agreed oversubscription criteria for admission to community or voluntary controlled primary schools in September 2012.

- In the first instance, places will be awarded to those pupils with a statement of special educational needs where the school is named in the statement.
- The remaining places will be awarded in the following priority order:
 - 1) those children who are in the care of the local authority;
 - 2) those children who live in the school's admission zone;
 - 3) those children who have older brothers or sisters who will be attending the school in September 2012;
 - 4) those children who are distinguished from the great majority of other applicants whether on medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances and who would suffer significant hardship if they were unable to attend the school;
 - 5) those children who live closest to the school as determined by the shortest suitable walking distance.

The Local Authority is proposing to change the oversubscription criteria for admission to a community or voluntary controlled primary schools in September 2013 as follows:

- In the first instance, places will be awarded to those pupils with a statement of special educational needs where the school is named in the statement.
- The remaining places will be awarded in the following priority order:
 - 1) those children who are in the care of the local authority;
 - 2) those children who have older brothers or sisters who will be attending the school in September 2013;
 - 3) those children who live in the school's admission zone;
 - 4) those children who are distinguished from the great majority of other applicants whether on medical grounds or by other exceptional circumstances and who would suffer significant hardship if they were unable to attend the school;
 - 5) those children who live closest to the school as determined by the shortest suitable walking distance.

No places can be allocated at an oversubscribed school to parents/carers who have not stated their preference in writing for that school.

In considering requests for admission to a particular school, all preferences will be considered on an equal basis.

We are proposing that the sibling criterion is moved above admission zone. This is a key change and your views are requested.

- 4.3 If an application is unsuccessful, a child's name may be placed on a waiting list. The position on the waiting list is determined in accordance with the published priority criteria. If a place subsequently becomes available, the place will be offered to the next child on the waiting list.
- 4.4 Children born between 1st September 2008 and 31st August 2009 can join the school on a full-time basis in September 2013. Parents/carers can, however, still defer the date of entry to Reception until the beginning of the term after their child's 5th birthday. Allocations for places at primary school will be based on a September intake and admission authorities and schools must keep a place available for that child.

In the secondary sector, children born between 1st September 2001 and 31st August 2002 will normally transfer to secondary school in September 2013.

- 4.5 Parents/carers have the right to appeal if their application for a place for their child is turned down. Details of the independent appeals process will be sent to parents/carers whose applications prove unsuccessful and an alternative placement cannot be agreed.

- 4.6 The timetables for secondary and primary admissions for 2013/14 are attached.
- 4.7 The LA will accept applications which are received late only where there is evidence of a good reason for the lateness AND only if the application is received before offers of places are made. Where the late application is accepted and offers of places have not been made the application will be treated in the same way as all other applications. In the event of a late application not being accepted or receipt is after the offer of places has been made, then places will be offered at the nearest school to the child's home, that is not already over-subscribed.

5. TIMETABLE FOR CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Schools Standards and Framework Act sets out a timetable for consultation on the admissions policy for 2013/14 as follows:
- consultation with all admission authorities in the area and with neighbouring LAs before 1st March 2012;
 - determination of the policy for 2013/14 before 15th April 2012;
 - notification of admission arrangements within fourteen days of determination.
- 5.2 To meet the statutory timetable for consultation on arrangements for the 2013/14 school year, and to enable the Admissions Forum to consider the proposals and any response to consultation, it is proposed that consultation take place as follows:

6 September 2011	Basis for consultation determined by Portfolio Holder
October 2011 – December 2011	Consultation
February 2012	Consideration by Admissions Forum
March 2012	Admissions Policy for 2013/14 determined by Portfolio Holder
March 2012	Admissions Policy notified to consultees
No later than 15 th April 2012	Admissions arrangements to Secretary of State

6. CONSIDERATION OF THE ADMISSION POLICY FOR 2013/14

- 6.1 The basic framework for admissions, based on residence in the admission zones has been well established.
- 6.2 The School Admissions Code states that Admission Authorities must give highest priority to those children who are in the care of the local authority (LAC), and that child with special educational needs, where the school is named in the statement, **must not** be part of the oversubscription criteria. The admission policy for 2013/14 takes account of this.

Criterion 4 allows the Authority to give priority to children on exceptional grounds. The decision as to whether a child would be within this category is made by a panel of professionals consisting of the Principal Education Psychologist, the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Manager, the Children & Families Services Manager, the Admissions, School Place Planning and Support Services Manager, the Head of Planning and Development.

- 6.3 Most admission policies include a criterion relating to distance from school as the final criterion or 'tie breaker'. Distance will be measured using the shortest safest walking route from the (ordnance survey) address point of the child's home address to the main entrance of the school, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving higher priority.

During last year's consultation the Local Authority suggested changing the way we measure our tie breaker by using a straight line from the (ordnance survey) address point of the child's home address to (ordnance survey) address point of the school, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving higher priority. Following the consultation it was decided not to change to this method. However, we would welcome your views.

7. ADMISSION LIMITS

- 7.1 The Department for Education net capacity formula for schools provides an indicative admission limit for each school. Actual admission limits can be set at or above the indicative admission limit at the discretion of the admission authority. Where an actual admission limit is proposed below that of the indicative limit, the relevant admission authority for that school must publish a notice in a local newspaper to enable parents/carers to object.
- 7.2 Proposed admission limits for September 2013 for all academy, community, foundation, voluntary aided and voluntary controlled schools will be set in the majority of cases at or above indicative limits. However occasionally, admission limits may be set below the indicative limit. The proposed admission limits will be the subject of consultation with the schools concerned. A copy of the proposed admission limits is attached at **Appendix 1**.

8. CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME FOR 2013/14

- 8.1 A co-ordinated admissions scheme for secondary schools for 2013/14 is attached at **Appendix 2**.
- 8.2 A similar scheme for primary schools for 2013/14 is attached at **Appendix 3**.
- 8.3 At the Admission Forum meeting in June 2008 the Forum agreed that all future in year applications should also be co-ordinated through the Local Authority in the same way that normal entry to school applies. From September 2010 this is a statutory requirement and an in year co-ordination scheme is attached at **Appendix 4**.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 It is recommended that consultation on 2013/14 admission arrangements (with an end date of December 2011) take place on the basis of seeking views on:
- The proposed oversubscription criteria for community and voluntary controlled primary schools which proposes to promote the sibling criteria above school admission zone criteria.
 - The proposed admission limits.
 - The Primary and Secondary and In Year Transfers co-ordinated admissions scheme.
 - The method that distances are calculated within the distance criteria or as a tiebreaker.

Contact Officer:

Caroline O'Neill, Assistant Director, Performance & Achievement

Tel: 01429 523914

PROPOSED ADMISSION LIMITS 2013/14

	2013/14
Bamard Grove Primary School	50
Brougham Primary School	45
Clavering Primary School	50
Eldon Grove Primary School	60
Fens Primary School	60
Golden Flatts Primary School	30
Grange Primary School	50
Greatham C of E Primary School	15
Hart Primary School	12
Holy Trinity CE Primary School	30
Jesmond Gardens Primary School	45
Kingsley Primary School	60
Lynnfield Primary School	50
Owton Manor Primary School	30
Rift House Primary School	30
Rossmere Primary School	45
Sacred Heart R.C. Primary School	60
St. Aidan's C.E. Memorial Primary School	50
St. Bega's R.C. Primary School	20
St. Cuthbert's R.C. Primary School	30
St. Helen's Primary School	45
St. John Vianney R.C. Primary School	30
St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School	24
St Peter's Elwick C of E Primary School	15
St. Teresa's R.C. Primary School	45
Stranton Primary School	50
Throston Primary School	60
Ward Jackson Church of England VA Primary School	25
West Park Primary School	45
West View Primary School	55
St. Hild's CE VA Secondary School	180
Dyke House Sports Technology College	210
High Tunstall College of Science	241
Manor College of Technology	250
English Martyrs R.C. School & Sixth Form College	240

**CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME
SECONDARY SCHOOLS
2013/14**

This scheme is made by Hartlepool Borough Council LA under the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act as amended by the 2002 Education Act.

The proposed scheme for Hartlepool LA is set out below. The proposed dates relating to the admissions process for the school year 2013/14 are attached at Annex 1 of Appendix 2.

A separate scheme exists in relation to primary schools and in year admissions.

Interpretation

In this scheme -

"The LA" means Hartlepool Borough Council acting in its capacity as local education authority.

"The LA area" means the area in respect of which the LA are the local authority.

"The school" means all community, voluntary controlled, voluntary aided and foundation secondary schools which are maintained by the LA.

"Admission Authority" means the LA in respect of any of the schools which is a community or voluntary controlled school, and the Governing Body of the school in respect of a Voluntary Aided or Foundation School.

"Parent" means the parent or guardian with whom the child normally lives.

"Suitable school" means the nearest available school which offers an efficient full-time programme of education appropriate to the individual child's needs in the view of the Authority.

The Co-ordinated Admission Scheme will apply for the admission arrangements for the school year commencing September 2013.

The LA will include in its admission arrangements for the 2013/14 school year the provisions set out in this scheme.

The Governing Body of each Voluntary Aided and Foundation School will include in its admission arrangements for the 2013/14 school year the provisions set out in this scheme, so far as relevant to that school.

The scheme shall apply to every secondary school in the LA area (except Catcote special school) and shall take effect from September 2013.

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 In line with the requirements of the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act as amended by the 2002 Education Act, this scheme has been drawn up by Hartlepool LA to co-ordinate admissions to its secondary schools. It applies to all maintained secondary schools in Hartlepool, except special schools, regardless of whether the LA or the governing body is the admissions authority.
- 1.2 The scheme's purpose is to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable, every parent living in Hartlepool whose child is due to transfer to secondary school and who has applied for a place in the normal admission round, receives an offer of one, and only one, school place on the national offer day of 1st March 2013. It also sets out the arrangements for handling late applications.
- 1.3 The scheme will be implemented in accordance with the timetable set out in **Annex 1**.
- 1.4 **Annex 1** lists the secondary schools to which the scheme applies.

2. **Common Application Forms**

- 2.1 There will be two forms known as the Common Application Forms, (these are either on line or paper). They will bear the references CAF/1 and CAF/2. CAF/1 will be used for Year 7 applications within the normal admissions round and CAF/2 will be used for all applications outside the normal admission round.

3. **Applications for Year 7 on form CAF/1**

- 3.1 CAF/1 will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into the first year intake group, i.e. Year 7, of secondary education in September 2013. It must be used as a means of expressing one or more preferences for the purposes of section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, by parents resident in the Hartlepool LA area who wish to express a preference for their child:

- to be admitted to a secondary school within Hartlepool (including voluntary aided and foundation schools);
- to be admitted to a secondary school located in another LA's area (including voluntary aided, academies and foundation schools).

- 3.2 The CAF/1 will:

- invite parents to express three preferences in rank order of preference including any schools outside the LA's area;
- allow parents to explain the reasons for their preferences;
- specify the closing date and where it must be returned;
- allow parents to provide supplementary information in support of their application. The supplementary information form will be part of CAF/1.

- 3.3 The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that CAF/1 forms are available to all parents with year 6 children who will be transferring to secondary schools in September 2013, in line with the timetable attached at **Annex 1**. An information booklet will be sent to parents advising of the benefits of making an on-line application. If a parent/carer would prefer to complete a CAF/1 form, these will be available from the Primary School Office or the LA.
- 3.4 The admissions authority of a Voluntary Aided/Foundation school can require parents who wish to express a preference for their school, to complete the supplementary information form attached to CAF/1. This information is necessary for the admissions authority to apply its over subscription criteria.
- 3.5 Where CAF/1 forms and any other supplementary information is sent directly to Voluntary Aided/Foundation schools by mistake they must be passed to the LA immediately.

4. **Closing Date for Return of CAF/1 and On-line Applications**

- 4.1 Completed CAF/1 forms must be returned by parents direct to the LA, or submitted on-line, by 23:59 on 31st October 2012. Where a preference has been received for a Voluntary Aided/Foundation school, the relevant supplementary information should be provided by the parent at the same time.
- 4.2 In relation to over-subscribed schools, preferences which are received or changed after the closing date but before the allocation date will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, e.g; where a family has recently moved into the area and was therefore unable to submit the form by the closing date. Parents will be asked to provide information in support of their late application and the relevant admissions authorities reserves the right to seek verification of any information provided.
- 4.3 In the event that an application is received after the allocation process, the admission authorities will be unable to accept the application irrespective of exceptional circumstances. Such an application will be considered after all allocations of places where a parent has expressed a preference.

5. **Determining Offers in Response to the CAF/1**

- 5.1 Places will be allocated using the Equal Ranking Scheme, by all admission authorities within Hartlepool.
- 5.2 The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the CAF/1. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the CAF/1 where:

- an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or
- an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school for which they have expressed a preference.

5.3 Information on the ranking of applicants to Voluntary Aided/Foundation schools must be returned by the relevant admissions authority to the LA in line with the dates specified in Annex 1, either electronically or by post.

6. Processing Parental Preferences

6.1 By 12th November 2012, the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every preference which has been expressed for that school, including all relevant details and any supplementary information which schools require to apply their over-subscription criteria. Where parents have requested a place at a school outside of the LA area, the information will be forwarded to the relevant LA.

6.2 By 14th January 2013 – VA/Foundation schools and other LAs, inform LA of allocation of places for all preferences received in the priority order of their admission policy. All applications made need to be listed in order of priority.

The LA compares lists and considers all preferences from the parent and whether these schools can be offered. Liaison will take place between VA/Foundation schools and other LA's until the allocation of places is resolved for each application, as required. The lists will be sent back to the VA schools for their approval before finalising allocations.

6.3 Where a child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, the LA will allocate a place at the nearest school which has places.

6.4 By 8th February 2013 the LA will match ranked lists for all schools and:

- Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools, that school will be allocated to the child;
- Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference.
- Where a child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, they will be offered a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy.

6.5 On 1st March 2013, the LA will post letters (second class) to all parents (if parents applied on-line, e-mails will also be sent on 1st March 2013) to let them know which school has been allocated to their child. The letter will also tell parents of their statutory right of appeal if they have been refused a place at their preferred school.

Parents will be asked to return their appeal forms to the appropriate admissions authority or the local authority as appropriate.

Parents will also receive details on what to do if they wish their child to be considered for any places that might become available in schools they ranked higher than the school they are offered, in the reallocation process set out below.

- 6.6 By 12th April 2013, parents should inform the LA if the offer of a place is not accepted.

Where a parent does not confirm acceptance of a place by 12th April 2013, the LA will write to warn the parent that if they do not accept the place within 14 days, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

If the parent fails to reply to the letter from the LA within the 14 days deadline, the parent will be issued with another letter 7 days later. This letter will confirm that the place has been withdrawn and will offer a place at the nearest school to the pupil's home that still has a place available.

7. Re-allocation of Places Not Taken Up

- 7.1 From 26th April 2013, the admission authority will re-allocate any places that may have become vacant since the 1st March 2013 offer date. Consideration will be given to all applicants including:

- those who have not been offered any school place, for example as a result of late applications;
- those who have been offered a place but not at any of the schools they expressed a preference for and a place has become available at one of their preferred schools; and
- those who have been offered a place at a school which was given as a lower priority on the CAF/1 than the school at which a place has become available.

- 7.2 Places will be re-allocated by applying the admission authority over-subscription criteria. During week commencing 23rd April 2013 the LA will liaise with the governing body for Voluntary Aided/Foundation schools regarding further applicants so that they can be ranked using the admission authority's over-subscription criteria.

8. Waiting Lists

- 8.1 After the admission round is concluded the LA will not co-ordinate the waiting lists for places at voluntary aided schools or foundation schools. If parents wish for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list they should contact the school direct. If a parent subsequently wishes to make an application for a school, the parent should contact the LA for an application form. The LA will continue to co-ordinate the allocation of places. Waiting lists must be compiled in accordance with the schools admission criteria and places offered accordingly.

9. **Late Applications Received After 23:59 on 31st October 2012**

- 9.1 The closing date for applications is 23:59 on 31st October 2012. As far as is reasonably practicable applications for places in the normal admission round that are received late and the LA is satisfied that the reasons for the lateness are exceptional, will be accepted provided that they are received before 8th February 2013 (the date the allocations are finalised).
- 9.2 Except in exceptional circumstances, late applications will be considered after all allocation decisions have been made. As far as possible late applications received prior to 1st March 2013 will be offered a school place on 1st March 2013, but the closer to the 1st March 2013 deadline that an application is received, the less likely it will be that an offer will be made on that date.
- 9.3 Where it is not possible to offer a place on 1st March 2013, a place will be offered as soon as practicable thereafter.

10. **No CAF/1 Received by 1st March 2013**

- 10.1 Where no CAF/1 is submitted, the child will, on 1st March 2013, be offered a place at the nearest school to the child's home which has a place following the allocation process outlined above.

ANNEX 1 (of Appendix 2)

TIMETABLE FOR CO-ORDINATED ADMISSIONS SCHEME

from 3 rd September 2012	CAF/1 forms and other information to parents
23:59 pm on 31st October 2012	Closing date for return of CAF/1 online applications or paper.
By 9 th November 2012	LA to notify other LAs of any preferences which have been expressed for schools in their area.
12 th November 2012	LA to send CAF/1 forms to voluntary aided/foundation schools of every preference which has been received for their school, including all relevant details and any supplementary information which schools require to apply their over-subscription criteria.
14 th November 2012	All VA/Foundation schools set up admission committees to considered applications.
By 14 th January 2013	The admissions authority at each voluntary aided/foundation school/other LA's to equally apply the school's over-subscription criteria (if appropriate) and provide the LA with a list of those applicants which should be offered a place. Liaison will take place between VA's, foundation schools and other LA's until the allocation of places is resolved for each application, as required.
By 8 th February 2013	Finalise allocations and further liaison as necessary.
1 st March 2013	Letters posted (second class) and e-mails send (if applied on-line) to all parents resident in home LA area, to let them know which school has been allocated to their child.
26 th April 2013	Admissions authorities to re-allocate any places that may have become vacant since the 1 st March offer date.
End May/June 2013	Appeal hearings arranged.

This scheme relates to the following schools in Hartlepool:

Dyke House Sports and Technology College
The English Martyrs RC School & Sixth Form College
High Tunstall College of Science
Manor College of Technology
St. Hild's Church of England VA School

**CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME
PRIMARY SCHOOLS
2013/2014**

This scheme is made by Hartlepool Borough Council LA under the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act as amended by the 2002 Education Act.

The proposed scheme for Hartlepool LA is set out below. The proposed dates relating to the admissions process for the school year 2013/14 are attached at **Annex 2**.

A separate scheme exists in relation to secondary schools and in year admissions.

Interpretation

In this scheme -

"The LA" means Hartlepool Borough Council acting in its capacity as local authority.

"The LA area" means the area in respect of which the LA are the local authority.

"The school" means all community, voluntary controlled, and voluntary aided primary schools which are maintained by the LA.

"Admission Authority" means the LA in respect of any of the schools which is a community or voluntary controlled school, and the Governing Body of the school in respect of a Voluntary Aided School or an Academy.

"Parent" means the parent or guardian with whom the child normally lives.

"Suitable school" means the nearest available school which offers an efficient full-time programme of education appropriate to the individual child's needs in the view of the Authority.

The Co-ordinated Admission Scheme will apply for the admission arrangements for the school year commencing September 2013.

The LA will include in its admission arrangements for the 2013/2014 school year the provisions set out in this scheme.

The Governing Body of each Voluntary Aided School and Academy School will include in its admission arrangements for the 2013/14 school year the provisions set out in this scheme, so far as relevant to that school.

The scheme shall apply to every primary school in the LA area (except primary special school) and shall take effect from September, 2013.

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 In line with the requirements of the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act as amended by the 2002 Education Act, this scheme has been drawn up by Hartlepool LA to co-ordinate admissions to its primary schools. It applies to all maintained primary schools in Hartlepool, except special schools, regardless of whether the LA or the governing body is the admissions authority.
- 1.2 The scheme's purpose is to ensure that as far as is reasonably practicable, every parent living in Hartlepool whose child is due to start primary school and who has applied for a place in the normal admission round, receives an offer of one, and only one, school place on the offer day of 19th April 2013. It also sets out the arrangements for handling late applications.
- 1.3 The scheme will be implemented in accordance with the timetable set out in **Annex 2**.
- 1.4 **Annex 3** lists the primary schools to which the scheme applies.

2. **Common Application Forms**

- 2.1 There will be two forms known as the Common Application Forms (these are either on-line or paper). They will bear the references CAF/1 and CAF/2. CAF/1 will be used for Reception Year applications within the normal admissions round and CAF/2 will be used for all applications outside the normal admission round.

3. **Applications for Reception on form CAF/1**

- 3.1 CAF/1 will be used for the purpose of admitting pupils into the first year intake group, i.e. Reception, of primary education in September 2013. It must be used as a means of expressing one or more preferences for the purpose of section 86 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, by parents resident in the Hartlepool LA area who wish to express a preference for their child:
- to be admitted to a primary school within Hartlepool (including voluntary aided schools and academies);
 - to be admitted to a primary school located in another LA's area (including voluntary aided, academies and foundation schools).
- 3.2 The CAF/1 will:
- invite parents to express up to three preferences in rank order of preference including any schools outside the LA's area;
 - allow parents to explain the reasons for their preferences;
 - specify the closing date and where it must be returned;
 - allow parents to provide supplementary information in support of their application. The supplementary information form will be part of CAF/1.

- 3.3 The LA will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that CAF/1 forms are available to all parents with reception age children who will be attending primary schools in September 2013, in line with the timetable attached at **Annex 2**. An information booklet will be sent to parents advising of the benefits of making an on-line application. If a parent/carer would prefer to complete a CAF1 form, these will be available from the LA.
- 3.4 The admissions authority of a voluntary aided school or an academy can require parents who wish to express a preference for their school, to complete the supplementary information form attached to CAF/1. This information is necessary for the admissions authority to apply its over subscription criteria.
- 3.5 Where CAF/1 forms and any other supplementary information is sent directly to voluntary aided schools by mistake they must be passed to the LA immediately.

4. Closing Date for Return of CAF/1 and On-line Applications

- 4.1 Completed CAF/1 forms must be returned by parents direct to the LA, or submitted on-line, by 23:59 on 15th January 2013. Where a preference has been received for a voluntary aided school, the relevant supplementary information should be provided at the same time.
- 4.2 In relation to over-subscribed schools, preferences which are received or changed after the closing date but before the allocation date will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, e.g. where a family has recently moved into the area and was therefore unable to submit the form by the closing date. Parents will be asked to provide information in support of their late application and the relevant admissions authorities reserves the right to seek verification of any information provided.
- 4.3 In the event that an application is received after the allocation process, the admission authorities will be unable to accept the application irrespective of exceptional circumstances. Such an application will be considered after all allocations of places where a parent has expressed a preference.

5. Determining Offers in Response to the CAF/1

- 5.1 Places will be allocated using the Equal Ranking Scheme, by all admission authorities within Hartlepool.
- 5.2 The LA will act as a clearing house for the allocation of places by the relevant admission authorities in response to the CAF/1. The LA will only make any decision with respect to the offer or refusal of a place in response to any preference expressed on the CAF/1 where:
- an applicant is eligible for a place at more than one school, or
 - an applicant is not eligible for a place at any school for which they have expressed a preference.

- 5.3 Information on the ranking of applicants to voluntary aided schools must be returned by the relevant admissions authority to the LA in line with the dates specified in Annex 2, either electronically or by post.

6. **Processing Parental Preferences**

- 6.1 By 4th February 2013 the LA will notify the admission authority for each of the schools of every application that has been made for that school, including all relevant details and any supplementary information which schools require to apply their over-subscription criteria. Where parents have requested a place at a school outside the LA area, the information will be forwarded to the relevant LA.

- 6.2 By 8th March 2013 – VA schools, academies and other LA's, inform LA of allocation of places for all preferences received in the priority order of their admission policy. All applications made need to be listed in order of priority.

The LA compares lists and considers all preferences from the parent and whether these schools can be offered. Liaison will take place between VA's, academies and other LA's until the allocation of places is resolved for each application, as required. The lists will be sent back to the VA schools and academies for their approval before finalising allocations.

- 6.3 Where a child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, the LA will allocate a place at the nearest school which has places.

- 6.4 By 29th March 2013 the LA will match ranked lists for all schools and:

- Where the child is eligible for a place at only one of the nominated schools, that school will be allocated to the child;
- Where the child is eligible for a place at two or more of the nominated schools, they will be allocated a place at whichever of these is the highest ranked preference.
- Where a child is not eligible for a place at any of the nominated schools, they will be offered a place at the nearest appropriate school with a vacancy.

- 6.5 On the 19th April 2013 the LA will post letters (second class) to all parents to let them know which school has been allocated to their child (if parents applied on-line, e-mails will be sent on 19th April 2013). The letter will also tell parents of their statutory right of appeal if they have been refused a place at their preferred school.

Parents will be asked to return their appeal forms to the appropriate admissions authority or the local authority as appropriate.

Parents will also receive details on what to do if they wish their child to be considered for any places that might become available in schools they ranked higher than the school they are offered, in the reallocation process set out below.

- 6.6 By 17th May 2013, parents should inform the LA if the offer of a place is not accepted.

Where a parent does not confirm acceptance of a place by 17th May 2013, the LA will write to warn the parent that if they do not accept the place within 14 days, the offer of a place will be withdrawn.

If the parent fails to reply to the letter from the LA within the 14 days deadline, the parent will be issued with another letter 7 days later. This letter will confirm that the place has been withdrawn and will offer a place at the nearest school to the pupil's home that still has a place available.

7. Re-allocation of Places Not Taken Up

7.1 From 22nd May 2013 the admission authority will re-allocate any places that may have become vacant since the 19th April 2013 offer date. Consideration will be given to all applicants including:

- those who have not been offered any school place, for example as a result of late applications;
- those who have been offered a place but not at any of the schools they expressed a preference for and a place has become available at one of their preferred schools; and
- those who have been offered a place at a school which was given as a lower priority on the CAF/1 than the school at which a place has become available.

7.2 Places will be re-allocated by applying the admission authority over-subscription criteria. During week commencing 20th May 2013 the LA will liaise with the governing body for voluntary aided schools regarding outstanding applicants so that they can be ranked using the admission authority's over-subscription criteria.

8. Waiting Lists

8.1 After 22nd May 2013 the LA will not co-ordinate the waiting lists for places at voluntary aided schools. If parents wish for their child's name to be placed on the waiting list they should contact the school direct. If a parent subsequently wishes to make an application for a school, the parent should contact the LA for an application form. The LA will continue to co-ordinate the allocation of places.

8.2 A waiting list will be kept by the LA for the community schools and voluntary controlled schools within its jurisdiction. The LA will continue to operate a waiting list after the commencement of the academic year in September 2013. All parents will have the choice of including their child's name on this waiting list for any of the community or voluntary controlled schools irrespective of whether that school was included on the form CAF/1.

8.3 All waiting lists must be compiled in accordance with the relevant admission authorities admission criteria and places offered accordingly.

9. **Late Applications Received After 23:59 pm on 15th January 2013**

- 9.1 The closing date for applications is 23:59 pm on 15th January 2013. As far as is reasonably practicable applications for places in the normal admission round that are received late and the LA is satisfied that the reasons for the lateness are exceptional, will be accepted provided that they are received before 29th March 2013 (the date the allocation process begins).
- 9.2 Except in exceptional circumstances, late applications will be considered after all allocation decisions have been made. As far as possible late applications received prior to 19th April 2013 will be offered a school place on 19th April 2013, but the closer to the 19th April deadline that an application is received, the less likely it will be that an offer will be made on that date.
- 9.3 Where it is not possible to offer a place on 19th April 2013, a place will be offered as soon as practicable thereafter.

10. **No CAF/1 Received by 19th April 2013**

- 10.1 Where no CAF/1 is submitted, the child will, on 19th April 2013, be offered a place at the nearest school to the child's home which has a place following the allocation process outlined above.

ANNEX 2 (of Appendix 3)

TIMETABLE FOR CO-ORDINATED PRIMARY ADMISSIONS SCHEME

w/c 26 th November 2012	CAF/1 forms and other information to parents.
23:59 pm on 15 th January 2013	Closing date for return of CAF/1 and online applications.
By 4 th February 2013	LA to notify other LAs of any preferences which have been expressed for schools in their area.
4 th February 2013	LA to send CAF/1 forms to voluntary aided schools of every preference which has been received for their school, including all relevant details and any supplementary information which schools require to apply their over-subscription criteria.
February/Beginning March 2013	All VA schools and academies set up admission committees to considered applications.
By 8 th March 2013	<p>The admissions authority at each voluntary aided school/other LA's to equally apply the school's over-subscription criteria (if appropriate) and provide the LA with a list of those applicants which should be offered a place. All applications needs to be ranked.</p> <p>Liaison will take place between VA's, academies and other LA's until the allocation of places is resolved for each application, as required.</p>
29 th March 2013	Finalise allocations and further liaison as necessary.
19 th April 2013	Letters posted (second class) to all parents resident in home LA area, to let them know which school has been allocated to their child.
From 22 nd May 2013	Admissions authorities to re-allocate any places that may have become vacant since the 15 th April 2013 offer date.
June/Beginning July 2013	Appeal hearings arranged.

ANNEX 3 (of Appendix 2)

This scheme relates to the following primary schools in Hartlepool:

Bamard Grove
Brougham
Clavering
Eldon Grove
Fens
Golden Flatts
Grange
Greatham C of E
Hart
Holy Trinity
Jesmond Gardens
Kingsley
Lynnfield
Owton Manor
Rift House
Rossmere
Sacred Heart RC
St Aidans CE Memorial
St Bega's RC
St Cuthbert's RC
St Helen's
St John Vianney RC
St Joseph's RC
St Peters Elwick
St Teresa's RC
Stranton
Throston
Ward Jackson C of E
West Park
West View

**CO-ORDINATED ADMISSION SCHEME
ADMISSIONS OUTSIDE OF NORMAL TRANSFER ROUND (In-Year Admissions)
2013/2014**

Background

From September 2010, the School Admissions Code requires local authorities to co-ordinate all applications for school places for **all** schools for children resident within their area. Pupils **must** be admitted to the preferred school, if there is a vacancy, within 20 school days of the application being received by the Local Authority (LA). There may be exceptional cases that need to be considered as part of the local authority's agreed 'in-year fair access' or 'managed moves'.

Applying for a school place outside of the normal transfer times

Parents with children of statutory school age who move into or within Hartlepool and require a school place outside of the normal transfer times must apply for a school place by completing an in-year application form (CAF2) available from the Local Authority (LA) Admissions Team.

If any parent approaches a school directly, the school must advise parents that they need to apply for a school place through the LA and for safeguarding purposes take details of the pupil(s) forwarding this to the LA. All applications (including children attending out of authority schools, private schools, etc.) will be dealt with by the School Admissions Team.

Applications for school places can only be considered up to 6 weeks prior to the date the place will be required (eg an application for a place at the beginning of May will be considered from mid-March at the earliest). Children **must** be resident within the country before an application can be considered. Service and Crown Personnel are exempt from the above.

Application

Parents **must** apply to their 'home' local authority regardless of where the school they are applying for is located. The application form allows parents to apply for any school (excluding independent schools) and to give reasons for their preferences. If schools receive direct applications for parents, the school **must** forward it to the 'home' local authority for co-ordination.

The application form will ask the parents for the following information:

- Details of the child for whom the application is being made (address, date of birth);
- Details about the person completing the application (name, address, relationship to child, contact details);
- Name of the child's current school;
- Express up to three preferences in rank order,
- Reasons for their preferences;
- Indicate if the child has a statement of special educational needs; and
- Indicate if the child is 'looked after' by a local authority.

Parents are required to return the completed paper application form to the School Admissions Team.

Applications for Community or Voluntary Controlled Schools

The Local Authority will ensure that all parents' preferences are logged on the CAPITA ONE admissions database within 5 school days of receipt of application.

If there are more applications than places available, the local authority will apply the oversubscription criteria.

If the LA is unable to meet any of the preferences requested by the parents, a place will be allocated at the school nearest to the child's home address that has a place available unless the child already has a school place within close proximity to their home address. In this case, no alternative offer will be made unless requested by the parent.

The LA **must** inform parents in writing of the outcome of their application. Please note that a child **must** be admitted to the school within 20 school days of receipt of the application by the relevant local authority.

Applications for Voluntary Aided and Foundation Schools and Academies

The Local Authority will ensure that all parents' preferences are logged on the CAPITA ONE admissions database within 5 school days of receipt of application.

The LA will send details of all applications received, including any supplementary information, to the relevant voluntary aided and foundation schools within 5 school days of receipt if the school is shown as first preference, or when we are unable to offer a higher preference.

Voluntary aided and foundation school's admissions authorities **must** consider all applications without unnecessary delay. The school's admissions authority **must** admit the child if there is a space available (unless exempt under 3.32 of the School Admissions Code). If there are more applications than places available the school's admissions authority are required to apply their oversubscription criteria.

The admission authority should notify the parent of its decision with a copy to the LA.

Parents who are refused admission must be offered a right of appeal. Information about the appeals process must be provided by the relevant admission authority in the refusal letter and a copy must be sent to the LA. The LA will then allocate a place at the school nearest to the child's home address that has a place available unless the child already has a school place within close proximity to their home address. In this case, no alternative offer will be made unless requested by the parent.

Applications for schools in other local authorities (LAs)

Parents resident in Hartlepool who wish to apply for a place at a school in a different LA **must** apply to Hartlepool, who will liaise with the LA that maintains the school to progress the application. Timescales in this situation may be extended from those above, however, the Admissions Team will endeavour to keep in contact with the family to communicate progress.

Hartlepool LA, following confirmation from the maintaining LA that a place is available for the child, **must** make the offer of a school place.

Applications made by Hartlepool residents direct to a different LA for a place at a school within their area **must** be forwarded to Hartlepool for processing. They **must** also state whether a place is available at the preferred school and, if so, Hartlepool must issue the offer of a school place letter to the parent.

For families moving from Hartlepool into a different LA, the LA into which they are moving becomes their home LA for the purpose of an application for a school place.

The LA will monitor the progress of applications for in-year admission and try to ensure a school place is awarded without delay.

Children with Statements of Special Education Needs

Children with a current Statement of Special Education Needs must be referred to their local Special Educational Needs (SEN) team. The SEN Team will work with the parents of the child to secure a place at a school where the specific needs of the child can be met. Where a child has a Statement of SEN naming a school, a place will be offered even if the year group is already full.

Looked After Children

A child that is “looked after” by a local authority must be offered a place, even if the year group is full. Schools that are their own admission authorities will also be required to admit “looked after” children, even if they year group is full. In respect of admissions for KS1 classes, “looked after” children would be admitted as “excepted pupils”.

Applications for Children from Multiple Births

In the case of a single place remaining and the next child to be offered is a twin or other multiple birth, then the Authority will use its discretion in deciding whether to offer over the Published Admission Number (PAN).

Managed Moves

The managed moves scheme which is in operation in Hartlepool will continue. Any applications for casual admission will be dealt with in accordance with the above co-ordinated admission scheme unless it is deemed to fall under the criteria for a managed move.

This scheme relates to all Hartlepool Primary and Secondary Schools.

The In Year Co-ordinated Admission Scheme may need changing for 2013/14 subject to a new code coming into force early 2012.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

6th September 2011



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: SHORT BREAKS SERVICES STATEMENT

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the final Short Breaks Services Statement and seek approval for the implementation and publication of the Statement.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 2.1 Paragraph 6 of schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989 requires local authorities to provide a short break service designed to assist individuals who provide care for disabled children. This duty and the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2010 came into force on 1st April 2011. The regulations require each local authority to produce a Short Breaks Services Statement so that families know what services are available, the eligibility criteria for those services and how the range of short breaks are designed to meet the needs of local families with disabled children. There is a requirement for the Short Breaks Services Statement to be published on the Council's website by 1st October 2011.

3. RELEVANCE TO THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

- 3.1 This is a statutory requirement and the responsibility of Children's Services.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

- 4.1 Non – key decision.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

- 5.1 Children's Services Portfolio Holder, 6th September 2011

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- 6.1 Children's Services Portfolio Holder is requested to approve the publication of the Short Breaks Services Statement.

Report of: Director of Child & Adult Services

Subject: SHORT BREAKS SERVICES STATEMENT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the final Short Breaks Services Statement and seek approval for the implementation and publication of the Statement.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Paragraph 6 of schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989 requires Local Authorities to provide a short break service designed to assist individuals who provide care for disabled children. This duty and the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2010 came into force on 1st April 2011. The regulations require each local authority to produce a Short Breaks Services Statement so that families know what services are available, the eligibility criteria for those services, and how the range of short breaks is designed to meet the needs of local families with disabled children.
- 2.2 Short Breaks provide disabled children and young people with the opportunity to spend time away from their parents, relaxing and having fun with their friends. They provide families with a break from their caring responsibilities.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The priorities identified in this Statement will need to be delivered as part of the Early Intervention Strategy for 2012/13.

4. THE PREPARATION OF THE STATEMENT

- 4.1 The draft Statement was prepared in collaboration with parents of 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future and officers within the Local Authority Child & Adult Services Department. The lead officers responsible for preparing the statement are Jane Young, Tracy Liveras and Mark Gwilt. The draft Statement was subject to wider consultation between 22nd July and 5th August 2011 and was made available for viewing and comments on both the council's website and the website of 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future. It was also circulated in paper format for those parents who don't have access to the internet, highlighted via the free texting service, circulated to staff in the local authority and distributed to members of appropriate task groups and boards that may have a stake in the delivery of short breaks.

- 4.2 The final Short Breaks Services Statement is contained in **Appendix 1** of this report and the Regulations of short break care are detailed in Appendix A of the statement, providing detail of the short break offer and requirements.

5. THE PURPOSE OF THE STATEMENT

- 5.1 The Statement will be the foundation of the delivery plans for short break care for 2012 – 2013 and will be reviewed on an annual basis. The review arrangements will ensure that any provision is reflective of need. Parents and disabled children and young people will continue to be involved in the process and the Parent Led Forum (1 Hart 1 Mind 1Future) will be the driving force behind the shaping of short break services.

6. PUBLICATION AND REVIEW

- 6.1 The Short Breaks Services Statement has to be published and made available to the general public by 1st October 2011. The Statement will be published on the Council's website, the parent's website 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future and will also be made available in paper form. A summary of the statement will also be disseminated to families of disabled children by means of Care Coordination, the Disability Network and the parent led newsletter.
- 6.2 The statement will be reviewed annually in consultation with parents and monitored through the Parent Led Forum (1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future) and the Short Break Core Steering Group.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Children's Services Portfolio Holder is requested to:

Approve the Short Breaks Services Statement and approve the publication of the Statement on or before 1st October 2011

8. CONTACT OFFICERS:

Jane Young - Head of Business Unit (Specialist Services)
Tracy Liveras – Young People & Play Coordinator (Short Break Lead)
Mark Gwilt - Children's Disability Team Manager

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

SHORT BREAK SERVICES STATEMENT



1 H♥rt
1 Mind
1 Future

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Foreword

The information in this statement has been gathered by consulting parents and carers directly; asking them what services they would like and what would make a difference. This has been done mainly through the Aiming High for Disabled Children Transformation Programme and through the five Parent Led Conferences that were held by parents, carers and involving professionals to work closely together to help change and shape the future of Short Breaks.

Julie Carter - Chair of 1 Hart 1 Mind 1 Future

What are Short Breaks?

Short Breaks provide disabled children and young people with the opportunity to spend time away either with or without their parents, to be able to relax and have fun, positive experiences with their friends and peers. They also provide families with a break from their caring responsibilities, giving parents a chance to unwind, rest and spend time with their other children.

Our aim is to ensure that families of disabled children have the support they need to live 'ordinary lives' as a matter of course. Disabled children and their families have the same human rights as others, including the right to the same quality of life as those who do not have a disability. However we recognise that all families are different, so they need different levels of support and different types of short breaks depending on the age of the child. Some families may need more support because of their family circumstances, this may be a short period of time or it may be for longer.

How does the council know what type of short breaks are needed and how much?

Hartlepool began its consultation process in September 2008 as part of the Aiming High for Disabled Children Transformation Programme launched by the government to transform services for disabled children and their families. An integral part of the transformation programme was to work in partnership with families to understand their needs and design services to meet those needs. Participation of families in this process included consultation, conferences, involvement in strategic meetings, workshops and questionnaires to gain a comprehensive view of the needs of a whole spectrum of families.

Using this initial information, the council identified priorities and designed service specifications to deliver a short break offer. The offer currently includes:

- Holiday Playschemes
- After School Clubs
- Out of School Holiday Care
- Extended Activities Provision
- Swimming Sessions
- Access to training for both parents and practitioners
- Day Care
- Personal Assistants
- Overnight Stays, including local residential or foster care provision
- Weekend Clubs
- Social groups
- Formal childcare placements
- Specialist Toy Loan Service (including Stay & Play)
- Independent Travel Training

We continue to work with our families and providers collating feedback to ensure that the short breaks offer is still relevant to their needs.

There is a variety of data available to us about children and young people with disabilities and additional needs. This includes, amongst other things, the number of children whose family is in receipt of Disability Living Allowance and/or a Direct Payment, Disability Prevalence Rates and the number of children with a Statement of Special Educational Needs. However, this data can only tell us how many children and young people may have a disability in Hartlepool. We understand that every family is different and it is therefore quite difficult to predict exactly how many short breaks will be needed year on year.

We do, however, know how many families currently access short breaks, how often and the type of short breaks they use. We use this information to forecast how many more children are likely to use short breaks within each year and how many young people will move on to adult services, no longer requiring short breaks within children's services. This gives a baseline figure that helps us to commission sufficient short breaks throughout the year. These figures are reviewed quarterly which enables us to assess the demand for services and plan accordingly.

This is what parents said about the services accessed via funding through aiming high:

"As a family having access to Funky World play sessions during the school holidays has given us peace of mind that our son is looked after and that we can do things that we couldn't do when our son is with us."

"I am a lone parent with five children, two of which have a disability and three who are teenagers. The school holidays are stressful for most parents, but can be even more so for parents of disabled children. Thanks to the play sessions I was able to access over the school holidays, I was able to enjoy several hours of valuable and much needed respite, and able to go shopping and spend time with my eldest daughter, meet mums for a coffee or go home and watch TV whilst ironing. The things that instilled confidence in me to access the service were: the welcoming and inclusive service provided, how well organised the sessions were, familiarity of the setting and staff, together with the variety of activities."

"The swimming sessions delivered by the Small Steps Team have been so beneficial to my autistic son. We attend these sessions as a family, which means we all get time to have fun together, but at the same time my son has improved his social skills and confidence regarding the swimming pool routine. Thanks to the support of the Small Steps Team, my son progressed in both social and swimming skills that he is about to attend universal swimming lessons, which would not have been possible without that stepping stone of specialist swimming sessions."

“The funding has provided 1:1 support through school holidays for my child to access her nursery provision. This has helped her maintain a routine through the school holidays and has also encouraged social integration with her peers, both of which are important to her development.”

“My son enjoyed the playscheme which he attended both during the summer holidays and autumn half term. I was pleased he was able to attend and that he had something structured to do twice a week in an environment that understands his needs and the needs of his parents too. It was a fantastic short break and I would like to see this valuable service continue.”

“Special needs toys are so expensive to buy. The Toy Loan Service gives you the opportunity to try them out first. The Play & Stay Sessions are an ideal opportunity to meet other parents and discuss other ideas with parents.”

“The Toy Library is a service that is greatly appreciated by many parents who have disabled children. It offers a wide range of toys for hire at a very reasonable price. These toys include educational toys; toys that help improve balance and motor skills, to specialist sensory toys and equipment. Many of these toys are expensive and the Toy Library gives the opportunity for children to play with the toys at home.”

How have families of disabled children participated in the development of short break services?

In Hartlepool we have a very proactive Parent Led Forum that works in partnership with the Local Authority Short Breaks Lead Officer and other relevant agencies and groups to ensure that service delivery meets the need of families of disabled children.

There is also parent representation on a number of task and development groups within the local authority who shape the development of future services at both an operational and strategic level.

Parents have also identified the need for a number of focus groups and invite professionals to attend to support the delivery of short break services. The focus groups are very active and support the facilitation of the annual parent led conferences, events, training and workshops. Parents and the Short Break Focus Group are involved in the procurement process to deliver short breaks. Children and young people are actively engaged in having their say about the things they like to do. This has been and is still carried out in a number of ways, including: questionnaires, face to face discussion, and group work within short break sessions. This information is collated to plan for future delivery.

All of our commissioned services are required as part of their terms and conditions of grant to engage service users in evaluating services on a regular basis, so that services are designed to meet needs at an individual level.

Parents have said:

“The Parent Forum and Focus Groups have given me the opportunity to have my voice heard and to enable me to make a positive contribution to shaping services in Hartlepool, allowing our children to reach their full potential.”

“Some very positive and excellent services have evolved from the Parent Participation Focus Groups, for example: the Information Group which has developed the free texting service and parent’s newsletters The Short Break Focus Group has supported the delivery of many specialist and universal services, which has given me more choice in the services I can access.”

“Since the aiming high programme my life has changed dramatically. I have met a lot of people, other parents and professionals. Being part of this has been very rewarding, knowing I am helping to make a difference not just for my own child, but of others as well. For myself, the best thing to come out of this is working relationships parents now have with professionals, with both working TOGETHER, whether on a focus group or at a conference.”

What do the council offer to families that need a Short Break?

Hartlepool Borough Council offer a range of short breaks for all families who care for a disabled child. Families maybe eligible for more specialist short breaks if their child has a substantial and/or permanent impairment, which may have a substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

The range of short breaks available is meant to meet the needs of a broad range of need and family circumstances.

Universal Short Breaks

All families can access a number of short breaks for their child. These breaks are short, regular sessions that provide the carer with the opportunity after school, at weekends, school-holidays to relax, have time to themselves or spend time with other family members. These take the form of clubs that offer a wide range of activities for children such as art and crafts, sport and physical activity, or simply a place to meet with friends and chat.

Targeted Short Breaks

Carers may need support and services individually tailored to their child's needs. This level of support is available to families following an initial assessment of the child by a social worker. Any family that feels their disabled child's needs cannot be met using universal services can ask for this assessment. Following the assessment the social worker will work with the family to identify support which may include short breaks. If the child requires support that cannot be met by universal services, the family and the social worker discuss which services are available and will work best for the family. The options are considered through the relevant personnel/panels, ensuring that the family get a package of support that works for them and meets the assessed need. This might include a Family Resource Worker, Day Care or a

Direct Payment for the family to arrange support of their own. The support package is reviewed regularly by a social worker to ensure that services continue to meet the changing needs of the child as he or she grows and matures and those of his/her family.

Specialist Short Breaks

Sometimes a child or a family have more significant or complex needs due to their child's disability and/or family circumstances, and need additional support and interventions. The specialist short break package may include universal provision and targeted short breaks, and could include overnight stays within a residential or foster placement or breaks commissioned specifically for the child's needs. The authority is currently exploring the use of individual budgets which will enable families to arrange services for themselves. They may also receive help from a short break unit with nursing care. These arrangements are discussed by the Hartlepool multi agency Commissioning Panel. Health-commissioned breaks are paid for by the Primary Care Trust and will follow a specialist health assessment which is not arranged by the Council but can be discussed with the health professional and social worker involved with the family. Complex and high need cases such as this may require the continued support of a social worker to ensure that the child and carer's needs continue to be met.

Where can families get more information about Short Breaks?

Currently information on short break activities can be accessed by contacting the Families Information Service in Hartlepool (FISH), a practitioner working with the family, or a family can simply contact the provider and refer themselves. FISH is a universal service providing advice and signposting to **all** families in Hartlepool looking for services for their children. Parents can subscribe to a free texting service that informs them of the opportunities to access various short breaks, meetings and events. As well as this service, FISH maintains a website of activities/events available to families across the Borough called Family Service Directory, where there is also a link to the Parents website www.ourhart.org.uk. The Council has developed a Guide to Services to support both parents and providers which can be accessed via the council's internet and is also available in hard copy. A Parent Led Newsletter is produced at least twice a year and is made available to all families of disabled children in a booklet format and or via both websites.

How is the council developing the workforce?

The vision in Hartlepool is for all children and young people to be supported to develop their speech, language, communication and social skills in order to ensure that they can access learning, develop social networks and attend activities and local groups, including childcare provision, to make positive contribution to the wider community.

To help us understand what skills and knowledge people need to successfully support children with additional needs and disabilities, a skills audit questionnaire was distributed to all sectors of the children's workforce across Hartlepool.

The responses received highlighted a number of basic and enhanced training requirements, these were collated alongside the training needs for parents and carers enabling us to prioritise and plan how and when the training will be delivered.

The Short Break Workforce Development Focus Group, led by parents has worked alongside the Child & Adult Workforce Development Team and colleagues from Health in supporting the planning and delivery of training.

The short break training requirements have been agreed and are incorporated in the wider Hartlepool Children's Workforce Plan and can be accessed by any provider working with children and young people with additional needs and/or disabilities.

Training delivered specifically through aiming high is:

- Introduction to Communication Passports/Pocket Profiles
- Attitudinal Fear (2 sides of the coin)
- Sleep Management
- Portage Training
- Makaton Training
- Picture Exchange Communication Training
- Key Worker Training
- Independent Travel Training
- MIDAS (Minibus driver training)
- DCATCH(Breaking down barriers to disabled children accessing formal childcare)

In addition to the above, the following training has also been included in the plan for 2011/12; should parents or practitioners identify any additional training not delivered within the plan this will be provided if relevant to meet the needs of the child

- Moving & Handling (children), including use of hoists
- Detailed Communication Passport Training
- Early Bird & Early Bird Plus
- Autism Awareness
- Team Teach

- Basic Epilepsy Awareness
- Inclusive play
- Behaviour Management
- Total Communication Counts
- Music Makers
- Safeguarding Children with Disabilities

The council will continue to offer development opportunities to maintain the quality and capacity of short break workers in the future and this will feature within the authority's children's workforce plan.

This is what parents have told us:

Key Worker Training

"After having completed the Basic Key Worker training we were given the opportunity to participate in the second phase of the Key Worker training. The course was attended by parents of disabled children alongside several professionals representing different services demonstrating the messages of the day in 'working together'. The delivery of the course was also done jointly with a parent trainer.

The training day generated some interesting discussions and lots of insight was gained by parents and professionals. The excellent facilitators ensured that an enjoyable and interesting day for everyone."

Portage Training

"The training was fantastic"

"I found the training really informal and learnt lots of things that I will definitely put into practice when I get home."

"It met more than my expectations"

Sleep Deprivation Workshop

"I recently attended this workshop and as a mum of a four year old who doesn't like to sleep much and when he does sleep I am so used to being awake that I find it hard to get off to sleep. The lady running the workshop had a wealth of knowledge on how the brain works and how the body reacts to the lack of sleep and explained it in simple language so that everyone could understand. We were given lots of advice and ideas on how to achieve relaxation and sleep and at the end of the session we were treated to a relaxation exercise which was wonderful."

Attitudinal Fears

"The workshop was a real eye opener; it raised awareness of what easily avoidable difficulties that people with disabilities can face in every day life. It became clear throughout the workshop that is can sometimes only take very small and reasonable adjustments in the work place to allow people to reach their full potential and be a fully productive member of a team but frustratingly, some businesses still resist against making these changes."

The course as a whole was enjoyable and interactive which dealt with not just the negatives and challenges people face being disabled, but also focused on concentrating on the strengths of the individual and how to use those strengths regardless of any disability they may have."

A lot of the course has embedded itself in my head and it has led me to think about things when I not only think of my sons future and any challenges he may face, but also when I may be dealing with other people with a wide range of disabilities, be they physical or mental."

How does the council support transitions to adult services?

In Hartlepool we want to support all young people with a disability into adulthood successfully. Becoming an adult is about developing independence, enjoying a social life and getting a job. This means that a young person with a disability may need support to access further education, training and employment, social opportunities and housing advice. The young person's family may continue to need short breaks, so, young people approaching adulthood and their families should be involved in planning their adult lives in order to ensure that support and services genuinely responsive to their needs.

A Transitions Working Group has identified all young people who may require the continued provision of support and services into adulthood. Each young person has an identified transitions lead person and training for the transition leads is underway. A Families Guide to Transition has been produced and will be distributed when all transition leads are familiar with the process.

A pilot looking at person centred reviews to support the transition process was held at Catcote School for a sample of Year 9 pupils. The pilot proved successful and it is anticipated that this process will be rolled out to all eligible pupils across all secondary schools in Hartlepool.

For all young people, planning for their future should commence from the 14+ education review and involves all relevant partners working with the young person. Following a young person's 16th birthday, any young person receiving a children's social care service and identified as potentially requiring services into adulthood is referred to Adult Social Care to ensure an effective transition occurs when the young person reaches 18 years of age.

The Local Authority will review its current transition process in the future to ensure it meets the recommendations contained within the Green Paper, "Support and Aspiration: A new approach to Special educational needs and

disability”, Department for Education, March 2011 and any changes to policy or legislation arising from this consultation.

How accessible are universal Council services?

Across the Council, there is a strategy to ensure that our public buildings and services are accessible to all. A programme of development has been taking place to ensure that buildings can be accessed by wheelchairs, induction loops are installed and that there are accessible toilets. In addition, every reasonable effort is made to ensure there is access to all areas in public buildings, and where this is not possible, alternative arrangements are put in place to ensure that people with disabilities are not prevented from accessing services and support. Other developments include: additional disabled parking bays, drop off zones and kerbs being installed at bus stops to make public transport more accessible.

Fully equipped accessible changing places have been installed in 3 venues in the Borough, located at Millhouse Leisure Centre, Hartlepool Maritime Experience and Coronation Drive, Seaton Carew. In addition to the above accessible changing places are also located within a number of other settings for example The One Life Centre and Central Library.

What is the council doing to help families with transport?

The council is working with short break providers to improve accessibility to services, so now more short breaks are offered in different areas across the Borough.

Some short break providers, as part of their service, provide transport services to and from home to enable children and young people to access services for a nominal charge and this service also provides the carer with additional hours of a short break.

As part of our roll-out of the Independent Travel Training Programme (Safe on the Move in Hartlepool), we are encouraging any person who feels they may require support during their journey to sign up to the scheme to assist in their safe travel around the town.

From time-to-time those accessing the programme may require some additional support while undertaking their journey. The best way to offer support would be through staff at the facilities accessed by users on the programme. This support could range from assisting the person to read a bus time table, directing them to the appropriate bus stop or help in making a call to a parent or carer. Special signage is displayed in various outlets that have signed up to the scheme and received training.

What are the Council's priorities to develop services for disabled children, and how are they being tackled?

During the development of this Statement, parents and young people told us what their priorities are for the development of short break provision. The next steps identified at the fifth parent conference and during a parent/ provider workshop delivered in January 2011 highlighted a number of issues that need development or improvement. The table below shows these issues and the actions being taken to improve or develop them:

Priority	Action
Holiday Playschemes	Increase holiday playscheme provision for 2011 summer holidays. Other holiday weeks still to be developed
Weekday Afterschool and Extended Activities	Service specification under development to increase the range and accessibility of provision
Weekend Daytime Activities	Service specification under development to increase the range

	and accessibility of provision
Family Based short breaks	Discussions with a number of providers have been undertaken and visits arranged to include parents in the planning of family based short breaks
Integrated Youth Provision	Further discussion with integrated youth service to be supported through a bridging scheme to support young people through transition from specialist to universal services
Specialist Toy Loan Service	Continued support of the service, to include stay and play sessions available to both families and providers
Taster Sport/Physical Activities	Explore with services within the local authority through the provision of a variety of physical taster sessions to encourage young people to access club based activities
Increase access to information	Free texting service facility to continue. Support parents with the development of their own webpage. Update Guide to Services Produce a marketing strategy to ensure information is accessible. Continue to support the production of the Parent Led Newsletter
Continue to support Parent Participation to influence the development of services	Support the parent led forum to become constituted to enable them to apply for funding and become sustainable in the future. Continue to support the work of the focus groups.

2.1
Appendix 1

	Increase the membership base of the group to ensure a broader range of parents are involved in the development of services, in turn increasing their skills and knowledge base and ensuring continued effective partnership working
Increasing the capacity of the workforce to support children and young people in a broader range of settings regardless of their disability	Continue to offer training for staff working across all sectors, including parents to ensure they have the right skills and knowledge for working with children with disabilities.
Roll out of person centred reviewing process for young people aged 14 plus	Awareness raising of person centred approaches across all secondary schools and training with regards to up skilling the workforce to support the person centred process.

Appendix A

Draft Regulations laid before Parliament under section 104(3A) of the Children Act 1989, for approval by resolution of each House of Parliament.

The Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2010

Made 2010

Coming into force 1st April 2011

The Secretary of State for Education makes the following Regulations in exercise of the powers conferred by paragraph 6(2) of schedule 2 to the Children Act 1989 (1).

In accordance with section 104(3A) of that Act, a draft of these regulations was laid before Parliament and approved by resolution of each House of Parliament.

Citation and commencement

1. These Regulations may be cited as the Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children Regulations 2010 and come into force on 1st April 2011.

Interpretation

2. In these Regulations-

“the 1989 Act” means the Children Act 1889;

“carer” means a person who provides care for a disabled child and who is-

(a) The child’s parent, or

(b) A person who is not the child’s parent but who has parental responsibility for that child; and

“disabled” has the meaning given in section 17(11) of the 1989 Act (2).

Duty to make provision

3. In performing their duty under paragraph 6 (1)(c) of schedule 2 to the 1989 Act (3), a local authority must-
- (a) have regard to the needs of those carers who would be unable to continue to provide care unless breaks from caring were given to them; and
 - (b) have regard to the needs of those carers who would be able to provide care for their disabled child more effectively if breaks from caring were given to them to allow them to-
 - (i) Undertake education, training or any regular leisure activity,
 - (ii) Meet the needs of other children in the family more effectively, or
 - (iii) Carry out day to day tasks which they must perform in order to run their household.

Types of services which must be provided

4. (1) In performing their duty under paragraph 6(1)(c) of schedule 2 to the 1989 Act, a local authority must provide, so far as is reasonably practicable, a range of services which is sufficient to assist carers to continue to provide care or to do so more effectively.
- (2) In particular, the local authority must provide, as appropriate, a range of –
- (a) day-time care in homes of disabled children or elsewhere,
 - (b) overnight care in the homes of disabled children or elsewhere,
 - (c) educational or leisure activities for disabled children outside their homes, and
 - (d) services available to assist carers in the evenings, at weekends and during the school holidays.

Short breaks services statement

5. (1) A local authority must by 1st October 2011, prepare a statement for carers in their area (a “short breaks services statement”) setting out details of –
- (a) the range of services provided in accordance with regulation 4,
 - (b) any criteria by which eligibility for those services will be assessed, and
 - (c) how the range of services is designed to meet the needs of carers in their area.
- (2) The local authority must publish their short breaks services statement, including by placing a copy of their statement on their website.
- (3) The local authority must keep their short breaks services statement under review and, where appropriate revise the statement.
- (4) In preparing and revising their statement, the local authority must have regard to the views of carers in their area.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
6th September 2011



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN
HARTLEPOOL

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To present information on the workload of children's social work teams in providing service to children in need in Hartlepool including those in need of protection and children looked after.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

This report presents information on the workload of children's social work teams and the current demands on the service. The information provided is an analysis of the activity during the first quarter of 2011/12.

The report provides details of the numbers of children referred for and receiving services, workload and workforce information and details of complaints, comments and compliments received by the service during the quarter.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The Portfolio Holder has a statutory responsibility to ensure that coordinated action is in place to safeguard children and should receive regular reports about how services are being delivered.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Portfolio Holder meeting 6th September 2011.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

That the Portfolio Holder notes the contents of this report of activity within children's social care.

Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN HARTLEPOOL

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To present information on the workload of children's social work teams in providing service to children in need in Hartlepool including those in need of protection and children looked after.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There is a clear expectation from Government that Elected Members are routinely and regularly informed of the workload of children's social care services. The Government requires that the information set out in this report is regularly presented to Members to ensure the Council is fulfilling its statutory responsibilities.
- 2.2 The report provides details of the activity in children's social care in the first quarter (April to June) of 2011/12. Information provided in this report is taken from the Integrated Children's System (ICS), the electronic social care record.
- 2.3 In February 2011, Hartlepool Borough Council Child and Adult Services Department received its annual unannounced safeguarding inspection. The inspection did not identify any areas for priority action and a number of strengths were highlighted. The three yearly announced inspection of safeguarding and services for looked after children took place in June 2010 and both areas of service were judged to be good.
- 2.4 Referrals and Assessments
- 2.4.1 During the first quarter of 2011/12, a total of 228 contacts progressed to referral. This compares with 233 in the same quarter of 2010/11 indicating that the number of referrals remains fairly constant. The average number of contacts progressing to referral is 12.8% compared with an annual average last year of 10.2%. The average number of re-referrals to the service during the quarter was 12.2%. The service is undertaking a themed audit of re-referrals which will report its findings to the Divisional Management Meeting in September. . Themed audits provide a means for the service to drill down into areas of practice and identify any lessons to be learned to improve performance and practice in the future.
- 2.4.2 59% of the referrals received were coded to the Child in Need Category of abuse or neglect. (2010/11 figure for same quarter 47%).

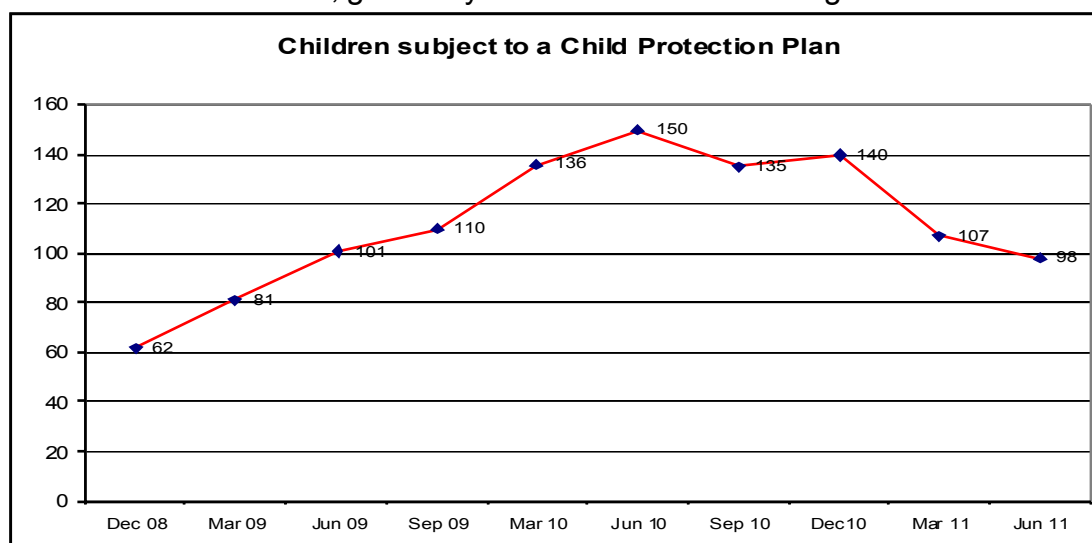
2.4.3 During the quarter, a total of 121 initial assessments were completed; 69% were completed within the timescale of 7 working days, 88% were completed within 10 working days. There is currently a lack of clarity around the national indicator for the completion of initial assessments within timescales. The Children in Need Census has amended the timescale to 10 working days, however the National Indicator Set remains prescriptive at 7 working days. Following the Munro Review of Child Protection, the Government has made a commitment to implement the recommendation to revise the Framework for Assessment for Children in Need and their Families removing the distinction between initial and core assessments and associated timescales by July 2012.

2.4.4 The number of core assessments completed was 84 compared with 57 in the same quarter of 2010/11. Where a referral in respect of a child relates to abuse or neglect and the local authority undertakes enquiries under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, a core assessment must be completed. The increase in the number of core assessments can, in part, be attributed to the increase in the number of children who were referred under the Child in Need category of abuse and neglect.

2.4.5 There were no unallocated cases in the service during the period. Once a referral is received by the Initial Response Team, it is always allocated promptly within 24-48 hours. Similarly when a child is assessed as requiring services and is transferred to the Safeguarding, Assessment and Support Teams, a social worker is identified and the case is allocated without delay. Prompt allocation of cases is an important test of the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements.

2.5 Child Protection

2.5.1 The number of children who were subject to a child protection plan as at 30 June 2011 is 98. The table below show changing numbers of children subject to protection plans since December 2008. After a significant rise during 2009 and early 2010, the number of children subject to plans has, since June 2010, gradually reduced to the current figure.

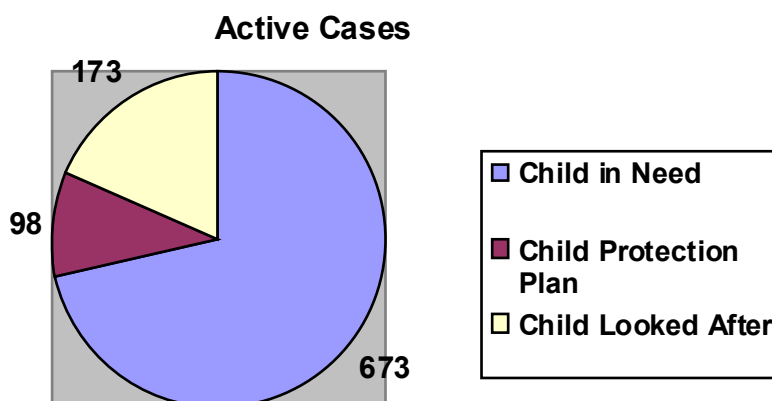


- 2.5.2 With regard to the category of plans for children, as has been the case over recent years, neglect continues to be the highest category accounting for 81% of the plans. At the end of the same quarter in 2010/11 the comparative figure was 78%.
- 2.5.3 The average number of children who became subject to a protection plan for a second or subsequent time during the quarter was 21.4%. The percentage of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time is an important indicator of the effectiveness of previous interventions. None of the children in this quarter became subject to a second plan within a year of the cessation of their previous plan. Hartlepool Safeguarding Children Board Performance and Quality subgroup audit each case where a child becomes subject to plan for a second time to review the effectiveness of intervention and identify any lessons to be learned for multi agency practice.
- 2.5.4 Only 8% of children who ceased to be subject to a plan during the quarter had been on a plan for more than 2 years. Measuring performance in relation to the length of child protection plans, alongside children being subject to a second or subsequent plan, gives an indication of the timeliness and effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements and can highlight where children's circumstances may have drifted without effective intervention to reduce the level of risk.
- 2.6 Looked After Children
- 2.6.1 There are currently 173 looked after children. During the quarter, 19 children became looked after and 13 children ceased to be looked after giving a net increase of 6 children. The month of June saw a high number of children become looked after (15) and this pattern continued into July. These children's cases are being audited to consider whether there are any patterns or reasons for the recent increases. At the end of the same quarter last year, there were 167 looked after children and the figure remained steady at around this level throughout the year.
- 2.6.2 Of the children looked after, 87% are placed in foster care, 8% are placed in residential care and 5% are placed with parents. 70% of the children reside within the local authority boundary. In the year to date, only 2 children have experienced three or more placement moves within the past 12 months. Placement stability is a critical measurement of the quality of looked after services as stability in placement supports education, health and well being and improved long term outcomes for children.
- 2.6.3 As at 30 June 2011, 58% of the children looked after were subject to a legal order, for example interim or full Care Order or Placement Order. The remainder were accommodated under Section 20 of the Children Act 1989 at the request of/with the agreement of their parents. 19 children receive family support via short break care where they receive care as part of a plan, this support is usually provided to disabled children who receive short break care at Exmoor Grove.

- 2.6.4 There are currently 24 cases in public law proceedings. Within the last quarter, the authority has lodged 4 care proceedings applications and 4 applications for placement orders to place children for adoption.

2.7 Children in need

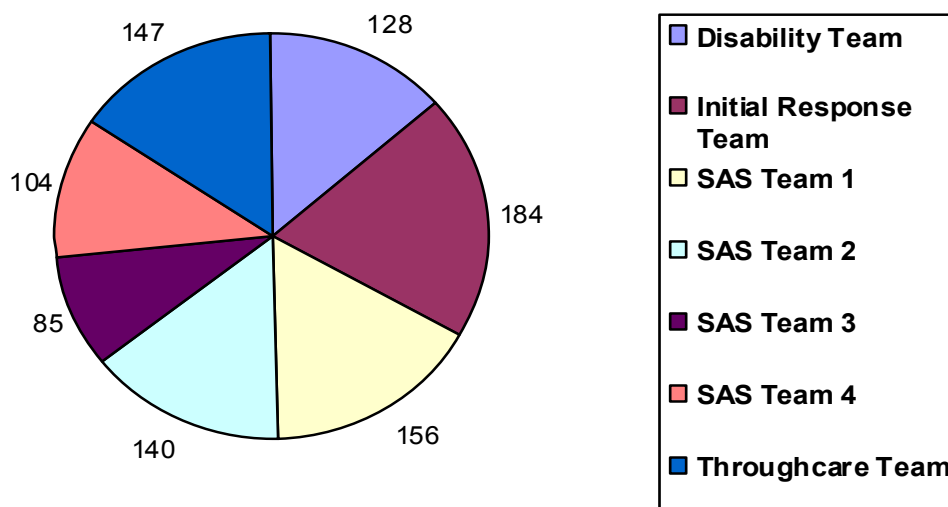
- 2.7.1 The service is working with 673 children in need. This compares with a figure of 537 as at 31/03/10 representing an increase of 20%. At the end of this quarter, there were fewer children subject to a child protection plan, however even taking this into consideration; there are now higher numbers of children receiving services than a year ago.



2.8 Workforce/Workload

- 2.8.1 The service currently employs 44 qualified social workers who provide direct services to children and their families. There are currently no social work posts covered by an agency worker. Over the past year, the service has continued to employ two agency workers over establishment to ensure there was sufficient capacity within the service to effectively support the induction and development of newly qualified social workers. In the coming year, the service is piloting a different recruitment and retention scheme by recruiting two newly qualified social workers over establishment to start their post qualifying working and development who will slot into vacant posts as these arise over the year. This pilot is achievable due to additional Government funding through the Social Work Improvement Fund.
- 2.8.2 All children receiving services are allocated to a qualified social worker. 75% of the social workers are experienced having worked two or more years since qualifying. The average social worker caseload is 21 children although this does fluctuate between workers dependent upon their experience and the demands of the case. The team caseloads are given in the table below.

Cases by Team



- 2.8.3 Over the past year, there has been a 10% increase in the number of children receiving a service. This increase in demand has been absorbed by the service and caseloads remain at a manageable level. From 1 July 2011, the service restructured to create an additional social work team through a reconfiguration of existing resources. The creation of an additional team was to reduce the team size and strengthen management arrangements. It is anticipated that managers will have more time available to support social workers, offer reflective supervision and ensure that appropriate levels of quality assurance are in place. This in turn will raise the standards of social work practice and ensure that children are effectively safeguarded and risks are appropriately managed.
- 2.8.4 There are currently two vacant social worker posts and one vacant principal practitioner post within the service. The social worker posts have been recruited to and will be filled during quarter 2. The principal practitioner post is in the recruitment process and interviews are planned.
- 2.8.5 There is only one member of staff on long term sickness absence. Consecutive periods of short term absence are identified by Human Resources and managed by the team manager in accordance with the Council's Attendance Management Policy.
- 2.9 Comments, Complaints and Compliments
- 2.9.1 Three complaints were received during the 1st quarter of 2011/12. One complaint was resolved at Stage 1 (informal) of the Complaints Procedure, one complaint remains ongoing at Stage 1 and the final complaint, due to its complex nature, progressed directly to Stage 2 (formal) and remains ongoing. Three 'Thanks You' cards were received during the quarter expressing appreciation of the support provided by the service.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Portfolio Holder notes the contents of this report of activity within children's social care.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is part of the Lead Member's leadership role to ensure the effective discharge of the authority's statutory children's services functions. As the Lead Member for Children's Services, the Portfolio Holder has a responsibility to ensure there is a clear focus on safeguarding and that co-ordinated action is in place to safeguard vulnerable children.

5. CONTACT OFFICER

Sally Robinson
Assistant Director
Child and Adult Services
Hartlepool Borough Council
01429 523732

sally.robinson@hartlepool.gov.uk