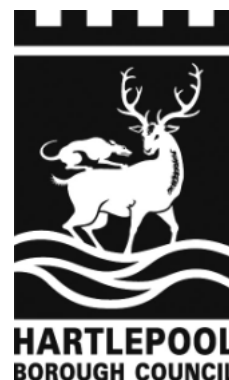


CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE AGENDA



Tuesday 1 October 2013

at 4.00 pm

in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

MEMBERS: CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

Councillors Atkinson, Fleet, Griffin, Hill, James, Lauderdale and Simmons

Co-opted Members: Sacha Paul Bedding and Michael Lee

Six Young People's Representatives

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 3 September 2013 (*previously circulated*).

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS

None.

5. KEY DECISIONS

- 5.1 Savings Proposals For Early Intervention Services – *Assistant Director, Children's Services*



6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 6.1 OFSTED Inspections of Local Authority Arrangements for Supporting School Improvement – *Assistant Director, Education*
- 6.2 Vulnerable Schools and Schools Causing Concern – *Assistant Director, Education*

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 7.1 OFSTED Inspection Outcomes: March-July 2013 – *Senior School Improvement Advisor*
- 7.2 Fostering Service Quarterly Report – *Assistant Director, Children's Services*
- 7.3 Pupil Achievement Summary 2013 (Provisional) – *Assistant Director, Education*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

9. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006

EXEMPT ITEMS

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

Date of next meeting – Tuesday 5 November 2013 at 4.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Hartlepool



CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

01 October 2013



Report of: Assistant Director, Children's Services

Subject: SAVINGS PROPOSALS FOR EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Key decision reference CAS013/13. Tests (i) and (ii) apply

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To identify proposals for the delivery of savings in respect of the Early Intervention Grant for consideration in the context of significant cuts to this grant in 2013/14 and 2014/15.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In December 2011, Cabinet approved the Early Intervention Strategy and the commissioning of services to underpin the delivery of the strategy. The Early Intervention Strategy was developed in response to the creation of a new Early Intervention Grant which provided local authorities with greater flexibility and freedom to respond to local need. The strategy built upon the recommendations of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum investigation into 'Think Family – Preventative and Early Intervention Services' undertaken in 2010 / 2011.
- 3.2 The Strategy introduced a revised model for service delivery developed using information from a needs analysis and consultation to shape services that are accessible to all, community based, flexible, convenient, and long term if needed. The strategy is based upon a commitment to working in partnership with families to identify, at the earliest opportunity, what services and support they require to transform their lives.
- 3.3 Following approval, the strategy and service reorganisation was implemented in the first quarter of 2012/13. Services were realigned to create a First Contact and Support Hub which provided a single point of access to all services for children (and vulnerable adults); a locality based Family Support Service incorporating Children's Centres; an integrated

Youth Support Service incorporating the One Stop Shop in the town centre and a range of universal and targeted support services commissioned from the voluntary and community sector which underpin the delivery of services to children and their families as follows:

- Speech and Language Services – provider North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust;
- Substance Misuse for Young People – provider Hyped;
- Mentoring – provider Headland Future;
- Parenting Services – Lead Provider Action for Children;
- Activities for Children and Young People (5 – 19) – Consortium of local voluntary organisations led by West View Project.
- Domestic Violence Services – Provider Harbour (contribution to corporate contract).

3.4 In September 2012, local authorities were notified of significant cuts to the Early Intervention Grant. For Hartlepool this amounted to £1.52m in the two years 2013/14 and 2014/15. In response to this risk, a careful assessment of commitments was adopted and this delivered an under-spend in 2012/13. The underspend has enabled one off funding to temporarily offset the grant cuts in 2013/14 providing a longer lead in time to assess the implications of reducing early intervention services and make informed decisions about how these cuts will be managed.

3.5 In June 2013, an evaluation of the year one implementation of the strategy was completed and this was reported to the Children's Strategic Partnership and formed the basis of a Member Briefing for members of the Children's Services Committee. The review concluded that that strategy had been fully implemented and the service redesign had been effective in realising the vision of the strategy. Services were more joined up and children, young people and their families were receiving coordinated support services to meet unmet need. However, in terms of seeing an improvement in outcomes for children against the success criteria as set out in the strategy, no impact was noted. This was partly due to the data available being one year behind, for example child poverty and teenage pregnancy data, however what has become apparent is the depth and breadth of needs of children in Hartlepool and the amount of resources required to impact upon these. Graham Allen's Early Intervention Review clearly stated that the impact of early intervention would be seen in 5/10 years, and this long term perspective underpinned the Early Intervention Strategy. It was not possible within the short timescale of one year to measure prevention and determine trends.

3.5 The review also gathered feedback from key partners and there was general support for the changes which had been made with partners highlighting closer working relationships, less duplication, clear access into services and team around the child arrangements as being strengths of the new model. Feedback in relation to areas of development highlighted that the skills of individual workers were critical in improving outcomes for children, there is a need for more support services and some secondary schools preferred the

previous Team Around Secondary School (TASS) arrangements. The findings of the year one evaluation have been incorporated into the proposals within this report.

- 3.6 The current budget to meet the commitments of the 2013/14 delivery of early intervention services is £6.2m. This reflects the removal of the nursery provision of disadvantaged two year olds which is now received via the Dedicated Schools Grant, the central government grant and the agreed reserve for 2013/14 only. Since the division has been aware that significant cuts would be required to the service, it has adopted a prudent approach to management of the budget and services to achieve underspends through robust management actions including:
- Holding posts vacant to reduce the number of compulsory redundancies required to balance to 2014/15 budget;
 - Careful management of budgets to avoid expenditure where this does not have an adverse impact on services; and
 - Achieving planned savings earlier when the opportunity arises.

This budget management approach will mean that the full committed reserve is unlikely to be required in 2013/14.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The extent of the funding cuts to the early intervention grant mean significant reductions will have to be made on the current commitments and some services will have to cease. The proposals detailed in this section of the report will support Members of the Children's Services Committee to make informed decisions on the priorities for early intervention services going forward maximizing the available resources and investing in services that improve the outcomes and life chances for children and young people. A spreadsheet is attached at **Appendix 1** which summarises the current budget commitments, Red/Amber/Green (RAG) rates the proposed savings and underpins the narrative contained in this section of the report.

Statutory Duties and First Contact and Support Hub

First Contact and Support Hub

- 4.2 The Hub was developed bringing together the duty social work team across Child and Adult Services and the Families Information Service Hartlepool (FISH) and provides a single point of access to children's services. The integrated team became fully operational in April 2013 and feedback on the benefits of the Hub has been extremely positive. The Hub fulfils the statutory requirements of the Council under the Children Act 1989 to ensure that a child defined as in need is identified and supported and the Childcare Act 2006 to provide information services to families with children up to the age of 19. The functions of the Hub consist of:

- Access to services and advice, guidance and support for children, people, families and vulnerable adults;
 - Common assessment development;
 - Common assessment individual support;
 - eCAF development and implementation;
 - Performance management for Early Intervention Strategy;
 - Oversight and development of systems to support Early Intervention;
 - Marketing of Early Intervention Services.
- 4.3 Analysis of current activity within the Hub identifies a high level of demand with a significant increase in the number of enquiries being managed by the Hub between June 2012 and June 2013. The service is currently working at full capacity to manage the daily workload safely and meet its statutory requirements. If the number of staff within the unit were to reduce, the Hub would have to reduce the amount of work it could undertake in relation to early intervention and benefit support to focus on work in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults. Parallel to this, Finance and Policy Committee are considering proposals on changes to the way the Council provides Advice and Guidance Services and this may have implications for the work of the Hub.
- 4.4 It is therefore proposed that no savings are realised from the First Contact and Support Hub staffing complement. However there are other non staff budget commitments that have been reviewed and where possible savings identified. There is currently an allocated budget for marketing arising from the work undertaken to meet the requirements under the 2004 Childcare Act. As modern technology has developed it has been possible to maximize resources and opportunities more effectively and it is proposed that this allocated budget be cut from £67,500 to £37,500 providing a saving of £30,000. It is considered that the remaining allocated amount will be sufficient to enable the service to continue to meet its statutory requirement.

Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)

- 4.5 The functions for this area of work currently consist of:
- Support to EYFS providers (schools, private and voluntary childcare settings) to improve quality of early years foundation stage;
 - Advice and guidance to EYFS providers in relation to regulation;
 - Training for early years workers in order to improve the quality of EYFS.

There are currently 15 daycare providers and approximately 60 childminders in Hartlepool. In addition each school offers early years provision.

- 4.6 The requirements for this function of activity are covered within the Childcare Act 2006 and the document "Early education and childcare: Statutory guidance for local authorities." The most recent publication was released in August 2013 to take effect from September 2013. The requirements state that in order to secure quality in EYFS local authorities should:

Base their decision whether to fund a provider to deliver early education places solely on the providers Ofsted inspection judgement, and not undertake a separate assessment of the quality of the provider.

The current legislation (Childcare Act) states that LAs should offer advice, guidance and training to all EYFS providers however, the Department for Education recently published document "More Affordable Childcare" sets out the government's intention for future support for quality childcare as follows:

"We therefore plan to refocus the current duty on local authorities to secure information, advice and training, on meeting the needs of providers who have been rated as "inadequate" or "requires improvement."
(More Affordable Childcare)

- 4.7 In consideration of the proposed changes above, there are currently 74 EYFS settings in Hartlepool excluding schools. Of these, 13 are currently judged to be 'inadequate' or 'requires improvement' which equates to 18%. Therefore under the new requirements there will be a reduction in the amount of support the local authority is required to provide and it is the responsibility of the individual settings to procure support. In these circumstances, it is proposed that Council reduce the number of staff employed to support quality improvement in early years settings and also reduce the financial commitment currently allocated to training. It is proposed that one Early Years and Childcare Officer post be deleted to generate a saving of £34,000. This will leave two Early Years Consultants posts (one funded from Early Intervention Grant, one funded from Dedicated Schools Grant) to deliver the EYFS arrangements in Hartlepool. This proposal has been discussed with the Assistant Director Education who is in agreement that two Early Years Consultants will meet the EYFS requirements in future. It is further proposed that the workforce development hours committed to EYFS are reduced generating a further saving of £9,000 and the EYFS training budget is reduced £10,000 generating a saving of £7,208.

Sponsored Childcare

- 4.8 This funding is used to offer children aged under 3 years old funded childcare sessions in order to:
- Improve social skills;
 - Improve communication skills;
 - Allow parents to access support to enter employment.

The childcare support is offered as part of the whole package of support for a child and family dependent on the needs identified within the common assessment.

- 4.9 The current budget allocated for sponsored child care is £57,291. It is proposed that this funding can be significantly reduced as it is currently under spending against the allocated budget and the introduction of 2 year old funded childcare has reduced the need for additional childcare. On average a childcare session (equivalent of a morning or afternoon) for an under 3 year old costs £18. It is proposed that the budget is reduced to £20,000 therefore offering a saving of £37,291. This would enable the service to continue to offer approximately 1111 childcare sessions across the year.

Short Breaks

- 4.10 Short break funding has been allocated for the past four years to develop local services for disabled children and meet statutory requirements. When the non ring fenced Early Intervention Grant was introduced in 2011, the grant for short breaks was incorporated into the bigger grant. Since that time, the historical amount previously allocated for short breaks has been committed within the early intervention grant and has, for the first time, been fully reviewed in this savings review.
- 4.11 The statutory duties in relation to short breaks are defined in the Breaks for Carers and Disabled Children Regulations 2011 placing upon the local authority a duty to make provision for carers of children with disabilities and prepare, publish and review a Short Break Statement. The functions can be summarised as follows:
- Support the Parent Led Forum;
 - Development and implementation of the Short Break Statement;
 - Commission external and internal services based on need of children with disabilities and their families;
 - Develop training package to support parents and professionals to support children with disabilities and their families.
- 4.12 The Short Breaks and Participation Officer spent some time with the Parent Led Forum to discuss possibilities for savings. The parents agreed that although they did not wish to make any cuts they considered there were certain areas that they felt they needed to be protected which included playschemes; weekend and evening activities and sports development activities. Currently a total of £274k is committed to short breaks, the Parent Led Forum have agreed some proposals for savings to the value of £68,456 which does not cease any of the services currently delivered but reduces some services. It is proposed that these savings are realised through a combination of reducing the operational hours of the Specialist Toy Library, reducing the 1:1 support budget, ceasing delivery of sessions at Catcote (which have not been provided in the last year), reduce number of family overnight stay sessions at Carlton and/or increase parental contribution, reduce short break training programme and cease funding for parent participation (which has not been used in last year).

Small Steps

- 4.13 The Small Steps initiative provides one to one support for children with social and communication difficulties and their families and delivers group activity sessions for children with social and communication difficulties and autistic spectrum disorder. This small project is delivered through dedicated time from the education psychology team and three school assistants who are employed by Springwell School. It is proposed the number of assistants is reduced from three to two generating a saving of £23,000. This will ensure this valuable project can continue to be offered to children with social and communication difficulties and is fully supported by the psychology team. In the light of the proposed reduction of early intervention funding and the fact that some of the work carried out is in response to referrals from schools it may be appropriate to refer the position to the Schools Forum to consider whether funding for this post can be met through the Dedicated Schools Grant. (One post has been previously funded via DSG with the agreement of schools).

Locality Teams including Children's Centres

- 4.14 The locality teams provide family support services to children, young people and their families across the town who have identified unmet needs that cannot be met by universal services alone and require early intervention and support services to prevent their needs from escalating to the level of children in need as defined under the Children Act 1989. There are two locality teams, north and south, that deliver family support services through:
- One to one support in the family home;
 - Group work;
 - Children's Centre services;
 - Edge of care service.
- 4.15 The teams have a skill mix of staff comprised of social workers, family support workers and specialist staff (for example domestic violence worker) managed by a team manager. Each locality team has two Children's Centres providing pre birth to five children's centre services which are regulated by Ofsted and a number of satellite centres linked to the main centre. The service has recently undertaken a significant amount of work with North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust to strengthen the Early Years Pathways for very young children to achieve better aligned services and avoid duplication. This development is in its early stages but will realise significant benefits for children and their families with vulnerable families receiving effective integrated support services from early pregnancy.
- 4.16 A number of options have been considered to realise savings from the locality service including the closure of children's centres and reductions to the number of family support workers in teams. What is known is that demand for services is high and it has become evident that there is an even greater need for services for vulnerable children in Hartlepool than officers anticipated when

writing the strategy. Despite a completely remodeled early intervention strategy and significant investment in services, children vulnerable to poor outcomes are still coming to the attention of the service where there are significant family needs with a number of children across the age range of childhood. It is in this context that a full review of locality services has been undertaken and the proposals outlined below are the recommended savings to be achieved from this service area.

- 4.17 It is not proposed that any of the children's centres or satellite units are closed. Children's centres remain a high priority and the service will be seeking to engage a greater number of families from identified hotspot areas in children's centre activities. The year one evaluation identified that although a high number of families are registered with centres, the children's centres need to become focused and better targeted ensuring that those in most need are able to access services. Children's centres need to extend their reach to engage more families in the services that are provided, particularly hard to reach families and those living in hotspot areas. This will be the priority focus of this service going forward. To achieve this, it is proposed that some changes are made to the staffing structure of the locality teams to create one Children's Centre / Early Years Manager across the town delivering a consistent approach focused on children's centre delivery, strategy and Ofsted inspections. This post will be subject to job evaluation, however it is likely these changes will create a saving of £47,386 by the removal of one Band 13 principal practitioner post.
- 4.18 In addition to changes outlined to children's centres detailed in 4.17 above, review of the current and previous years children's centres non staff budgets has identified some further savings that can be achieved on children's centre operating costs. For the past several years some schools have received a small contribution towards the running costs of a children's centre attached to schools. This is usually between £6,000 and £10,000 per year, however for the past three years, St John Vianney Children's Centre has received a contribution of £62,000 and this is not sustainable. It is proposed that this is reduced by £55,000 to bring it in line with other centres. The Headteacher of St John Vianney has been involved in discussions around this proposal and has been given notice that the local authority will be moving to a rental agreement arrangement. An additional £33,062 has been identified from operating costs and an unused budget for community engagement creating a total saving of £88,062 from children's centre provision.
- 4.19 In relation to the locality teams, over the past year and in the knowledge of the significant cuts to be achieved, any vacant posts or reductions in hours have been held pending this review. A significant amount of budget mapping work has been completed to rationalise the staff group against budget commitments within the locality teams. This work has identified that savings can be realized from the locality teams by cutting unworked hours and vacancies and retaining the current staff complement of 23 family support workers, four family support specialists, a principal practitioner and a team manager. This position achieves a saving of £80,693 in each locality team area making a total of £161,386. Within this there is one post to be removed;

this has been identified via the admin review as being a potential savings from the admin services which support the locality teams. Through the review other admin opportunities have been identified and it is likely that a redeployment opportunity will be available. In addition to savings associated with staffing, it is further proposed that the 'family budget' allocated to each locality team to support families is reduced by £5,000 each bringing these budgets in line with those in the social care teams.

- 4.20 From the historical children's centre arrangements there is one post within the locality structure to promote healthy eating in early years settings. It is proposed that this post is no longer required and could be removed from the structure or further discussions take with the Public Health Department as to whether this is a post they would wish to bring into their team. The Director of Public Health has been made aware of this post and is currently finalising her budget, to date no agreement has been reached on whether Public Health will be willing to fund and or transfer this post. The savings realised by the removal of this post are £34,336.
- 4.21 One final proposed saving from the locality services links to the Rainbow Café which is delivered within Rossmere Children's Centre. The staffing complement of the café has been reviewed and it is proposed that staffing is reduced to one member of staff from two. This member of staff will have a role in providing cookery skills courses through the children's centres. The viability of the café will continue to be under review and it may be that in the future, this will close, however, if delivery can be successfully achieved with one member of staff, this makes the café more financially viable. The proposed savings arising from reducing staffing at the Rainbow Café is £20,240.

Youth Support Service

- 4.22 Following a period of significant re-design, Local Authority Youth Support Services now operate within an integrated framework of service delivery that contributes to the local Early Intervention Strategy, the Crime, Disorder, Substance Misuse and Reducing Re-offending Strategy and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy by ensuring that where possible young people in Hartlepool:
- have access to a range of safe and positive out of school activities and informal learning opportunities through the provision of youth clubs and through the engagement of young people via detached youth workers and the services, such as Mobile Youth Bus, to support their personal and social development.
 - have access to general information advice and support to help them make informed choices about staying on in learning, securing employment and equipping them to make safe and sensible decisions about their health, relationships and any risk taking behaviours to support their requirement to stay on in post 16 learning.

- have access to more personalised, joined up support if they (or their families) are experiencing difficulties; and
- are actively engaged in shaping the services they receive and have a voice in the decisions that effect their lives.

- 4.23 The work of the Youth Support Service is underpinned by the 'Youth Offer' which brings together all projects, programmes opportunities' and initiatives that are operational at any given time to provide children and young people with things to do, places to go and people to talk to. The Youth Support Services is only one component part of the Youth Offer, but, as highlighted in the Government's 'Positive for Youth' paper, local authorities have specific strategic responsibility for coordinating the overall local offer and making the best use of public resources.
- 4.24 As part of these savings proposals, a full review has been undertaken of the Youth Support Service and several models of delivery have been considered including the complete outsourcing of youth centres to the community and voluntary and independent sector. However, officers consider that a mixed economy of service delivery, retaining those services where there is high take up and that work well to support young people is essential alongside continuing the activities services currently commissioned from the local voluntary and community sector. The proposals in this report therefore reflect the findings of the review that youth centres delivered by the local authority are effective in setting standards for the delivery of youth provision and are able to offer targeted support to hard to reach young people who do not access other services.
- 4.25 A saving of £28,000 has been identified by reducing expenditure on non pay budgets by driving down management information system fees and further integrating budgets relating to central functions. A further saving has been identified through the success of the Young Inspectors and Participation Team. The Young Inspectors are a highly valued service both by the Council and in wider organisations, to a certain extent they have been a victim of their own success as increasing requests are being received for young people led inspections and as a consequence more inspectors are needed. Currently a nominal fee is charged for each young people's inspection to cover the young people's time and any admin costs arising from the inspection. It is proposed that this fee is increased to more accurately reflect the cost supporting and coordinating the work of this team which is undertaken by the participation team within the Youth Support Service. This will generate income to meet the staffing costs required to support the work of the Young Inspectors team and the wider work of the participation team. A target savings offset against income generation has been identified of £30,000.
- 4.26 The review of the local authority has identified that two of the three youth centres in the town are well used and represent value for money. It is therefore proposed that the Youth Centres at Throston and Rossmere are retained. The added value of this proposal is that continuation of delivery from Rossmere Youth Centre will enable the local authority to continue to

manage the skate park sited next to the building, a managed skate park being the commitment made to local residents when the provision was originally developed. It is however proposed that Brinkburn Youth Centre is closed. This provision has had limited uptake over the past couple of years and a satellite youth centre currently delivered from Burbank Community Centre two nights per week alongside commissioned out of school activities delivered via Belle Vue Youth and Community Centre provide alternative accessible youth services for the young people who currently attend Brinkburn. It is further proposed that the satellite Youth Centre delivered at Jutland Road is discontinued as the Seaton Youth Club will be moving to Golden Flatts School in the coming months and this provision will overlap with the provision at Jutland Road. These two proposals generate a saving of £103,000.

- 4.27 In order to realise additional savings from the Youth Support Service but without having to close Youth Centres, it is proposed that the length of each youth club session delivered by the local authority is reduced by 30 minutes per session. Currently each session is two and half hours in length with each member of staff having 15 minutes either side of the session for preparation and evaluation totaling three hours per session. By reducing the length of the youth club sessions by 30 minutes across all youth sessions to two hours and thirty minutes, this realises a saving of £95,000 without the need for any other youth centre closures.
- 4.28 As the youth support service, along with all other services in the Council have implemented cuts, it has reduced in size and therefore it is appropriate to review the management costs. The Youth Service currently is managed by a Head of Service (who also manages the Youth Offending Service and the One Stop Shop) supported by three managers. It is proposed that this is reduced to two managers who would realign their responsibilities to manage the development and delivery of the Children and Young People's Youth Offer and Entitlement, this would generate a saving of £41,000.
- 4.29 With the introduction of the Early Intervention Grant, the Home Office Youth Crime Action Plan ceased and this element was included in EIG. The Youth Crime Action Plan (YCAP) was an initiative of the previous government aimed at preventing youth crime. Historically, the distribution of the YCAP funding in Hartlepool was between children's services and the community safety team. It primarily funded one prevention worker within the Youth Offending Services (YOS) and an Assertive Outreach Programme targeting hot spot areas for anti social behaviour, seeking to divert young people into positive activities. In addition there were smaller budget commitments to the community alcohol partnership, delivery of restorative practice, healthy relationships in schools, training for teen to parent abuse and mediation. In 2013/14 there is an uncommitted balance of £52k.

- 4.30 It is proposed that the whole of the YCAP element of the Early Intervention Grant is taken as a saving which amounts to £169,814. In relation to the YOS worker funded from this budget, this officer has recently taken on a lead role for Troubled Families and his salary is now being met by the YOS and Troubled Families grant. The other smaller commitments from the historical YCAP funding can also be met by the Troubled Families grant where there is an ongoing funding requirement.
- 4.31 With regard to the Assertive Outreach Programme, there has for some time been concerns around duplication of services as the youth support service also provide a detached and mobile service engaging young people on the streets. However the current two services operate in very different ways with the assertive outreach service taking a more directive approach to dispersing young people and the detached and mobile team engaging young people where they have chosen to be. It is proposed that a single street based service is developed which combines the best elements of both services and is targeted to cover identified hotspots in the town. Further work is required to determine whether this should be delivered in house as with the detached and mobile team or commissioned from the voluntary and community services as with the assertive outreach team, however, the funding for this service will be covered by the current commitments within the budget enabling this element of the grant to be removed.
- 4.32 The final proposal from the Youth Support Service elements of the early intervention grant is to reduce the contribution to the Youth Opportunities Fund. This fund was created to provide grants to young people's groups based upon bids submitted and evaluated by the Young People's 'Grant Givers' group. The current commitment is high and has historically underspent. It is proposed that this grant is reduced to £25,000 providing a saving of £80,000.

Commissioned Services

- 4.33 Through the Strategy, a number of services were commissioned from the statutory, community and voluntary sector to provide a range of support services for children, young people and their families. The following services were commissioned and funded through the Early Intervention Grant:
- Children and Young People's Substance Misuse Services;
 - Parenting Support Services;
 - Targeted Activities for Children and Young People;
 - Mentoring;
 - Speech and Language;
 - Domestic Violence.

- 4.34 Speech and language services are commissioned through the early intervention grant in addition to services currently delivered by North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust. The purpose of this additional service was in recognition of the importance of speech and language to early childhood development and to provide an early intervention service for children with speech and language difficulties who did not yet meet the criteria for health provision. In addition, the intention of commissioning these services was to support the skills development of the family support workers to understand the importance of speech and language, to recognise any problems at the earliest stage and have the skills to promote the speech, language and communication of young children. This workforce development has been implemented over the past 18 months. It is proposed that this contract is not extended beyond March 2014 and that the locality teams work closely with the Foundation Trust to continue to maximise health speech and language services and deliver preventative work through family support workers. Not extending this contract will create a saving of £120,000. If agreed, this decision will need to be referred to the Health and Wellbeing Board for consideration of the impact and how partners can ensure that speech and language provision is maximised including early intervention and prevention work.
- 4.35 With regard to the substance misuse services commissioned from Hyped, discussions have taken place with the Director of Public Health. Currently health contributes approximately a quarter of the contract cost, yet the adults' substance misuse services are fully commissioned and funded through Public Health. The Director of Public Health has indicated that she would be willing and in a position to meet the full costs associated with the young people's substance misuse service from the Public Health grant. This puts the service on the same financial footing as adults' substance misuse services and has the potential to generate further efficiencies given they are both provided by the same umbrella organisation. It is therefore proposed that the responsibility for funding and commissioning arrangements for the young people's substance misuse service transfer to Public Health creating a saving of £122,000.
- 4.36 With regard to the mentoring and activities contracts, meetings have taken place with providers to discuss the options for achieving the required savings under the early intervention grant. It is proposed that these two contracts are reduced by 10% which generates a total saving of £48,000. Although providers feel this will significantly squeeze margins and may require some changes to the delivery of services, providing potentially a more targeted service, this option is preferred to these contracts ending.
- 4.37 The parenting service is currently delivered by Action for Children in partnership with Headland Future. Parenting support is a cornerstone of the Strategy and evidence shows that it is vital in the reduction of children and families needing access to more specialist services, therefore it remains a priority going forward. Analysis of the current arrangements suggests that a proportion of the contract value goes towards management costs. This could

be saved if the service was brought in house and integrated within the Children's Services division. An added benefit would be that the division would be able to redesign and develop the service in response to emerging trends and needs in relation to parenting. It is therefore proposed that the parenting service is brought in house to generate a saving of £105,000. It should be noted that TUPE will apply and will need to be further explored.

Impact

- 4.38 The size of the cuts to the Early Intervention Grant over two years equate to almost 25% of the 2012/13 grant which is huge for a single service area and therefore there are significant risks associated with the proposals and the impact will be significant. The proposals outlined within this report and detailed in the attached spreadsheet at appendix 1 have been RAG rated according to the level of risk. Some savings have been rated as green as these can be realized from non staff costs and general efficiencies delivered throughout the service. However a number of the proposed savings have been rated as amber as there are risks associated with compulsory redundancies, the cessation of certain services or risks in relation to whether they can be fully achieved. The attached spreadsheet also includes details of the services which are not being proposed for cuts and are therefore rated as red, This enables Members to know which services these are and have a full understanding of their costs.
- 4.39 The proposals detailed within this report, in the view of officers, enables the original vision of the early intervention strategy to be adhered to albeit at a scaled back level. Front line services that provide direct support for vulnerable children and their families have been protected wherever possible given the contextual position of continued rising demand for both early intervention and more specialist social work services. It is not possible to make the scale of these cuts without having an impact upon service users and it is likely that services will, in the future, be more targeted towards the more vulnerable. In this context, universal services such as health and education will need to ensure that they are meeting their requirements to provide early intervention services through common assessment.
- 4.40 Delivering the cuts will be a significant challenge for officers and it is important that all changes are carefully planned and adhere to Human Resources and procurement procedures and requirements where applicable.
- 4.40 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed and is attached at **Appendix 2**. The table below summarises the proposed savings as outlined in this section of the report.

Service	Proposed Savings	Staffing Implications
Reduce Marketing budget	£30,000	
Early Years Foundation Stage Quality Improvement	£50,208	1.2 post
Reduce Childcare budget	£37,291	

Short Breaks	£68,456	
Small Steps School Assistant	£23,000	1 post
Remove Band 13 Principal Practitioner post	£47,386	1 post
Reduction in Children's Centre operating costs	£88,062	
Rationalisation of staffing group	£161,386	1 post
Reduce family budgets	£10,000	
Remove Healthy Eating Early Years settings post	£34,366	1 post
Reduce staffing in Rainbow Cafe	£20,240	1 post
Renegotiating IT system fees and reducing central costs	£28,000	
Income generation of participation team	£30,000	
Closure of Brinkburn and Jutland Road Youth Clubs	£103,000	14 staff 3.6 FTE's
Reduction in sessional hours	£95,000	All youth centre workers will have 30 minute reduction in working time.
Reduction of 1 Youth Work Manager post	£41,000	1 post
Remove YCAP element of the grant	£169,814	Further work required re delivered in house or commissioned
Reduce Youth Opportunities Fund	£80,000	
Cease funding additional Speech and Language Services	£120,000	
Transfer substance misuse service to Public Health	£122,000	
Reduce mentoring and activities contract value by 10%	£48,000	
Transfer parenting service in house	£105,000	TUPE will apply
Total Proposed Savings	£1,512,209	

5. OPTION ANALYSIS

5.1 A number of other savings options have been considered in the development of these proposals, however these have been discounted primarily due to the potential impact they have on service delivery and the risks associated with realising the savings. These include:

- Closure of children's centres – there are regulatory requirements around the delivery of children's centres which are subject to Ofsted inspection. Closure of centres would compromise the council's ability to meet the regulatory requirements and there are significant clawback implications in relation to buildings.
- Reduction in numbers of workers in First Contact and Support Hub and locality services – demand for services are increasing and the current teams are operating at capacity. In order to reduce numbers of workers, thresholds would need to rise and the service would have to move away from the principle of early intervention. If capacity were to be stretched further there is a risk that safe practice would be compromised leaving vulnerable children at risk.
- Remove funding to support short breaks – there is a risk that the requirements under the 2011 Regulations would not be met and the needs of vulnerable families with disabled children would be ignored.
- Close or outsource youth services – a recent review of the Hartlepool Youth Offer undertaken by the regional Youth Work Unit identified that the mixed economy of provision in Hartlepool was the best delivery model to support young people, where services are complementary and can be shaped to avoid duplication. The retention of a local authority youth service enables a targeted youth service to be provided which support more specialist services delivered in the division.
- Cease some or all of the commissioned services – the voluntary and community sector provide a range of services that cannot be delivered by the council alone. Those services that are retained under the proposals are effective in supporting vulnerable children and young people and represent best value.

6 RISK IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are a number of risks implicit in the delivery of any package of savings and it is important to recognise these as part of any decision making. A summary of the risks considered as part of the proposals has been identified below:

- A reduced capacity and flexibility to respond to local need and provide high quality family support services to children and their families. The risk here is that some families may not receive early intervention and prevention services and their circumstances deteriorate to the point where they require more specialist services such as social care. The proposed savings within this report seek as far as possible to mitigate this risk by protecting wherever possible front line delivery of services

under the early intervention strategy. Nevertheless there will be no capacity for growth in the context of increasing demand and high levels of need within the town.

- Proposed targets for income generation in relation to the participation team cannot be achieved. This will take some time to be developed and grow and it is proposed that any outstanding reserve from 2013/14 be ringfenced to early intervention services where targets cannot be met.
- Progress made in relation to speech and language development for children is not sustained. It is hoped that through the workforce development family support workers have received, they will be able to promote early speech, language and communication and refer children for health services where appropriate. The integration with health and Early Years Pathway should also help to mitigate this risk.
- A single street based youth provision combining the two existing services cannot be achieved. This development will need significant planning with current stakeholders and the change management process effectively implemented.
- Local authority is unable to deliver parenting provision. These risks will be mitigated by the TUPE of highly skilled specialists currently working within the service who understand the delivery model. There is expertise within the division both in terms of management of effective teams and delivery of parenting programmes. There is however a reputational risk for the council of moving away from the voluntary and community sector.

7. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy approved in February 2012 included a strategy for managing the cut in the Early Intervention Grant over a two year period, with the majority of the cut having to be made in the 2014/15 budget year. This strategy was designed to provide a longer lead time to identify these savings. This was only possible as a result of the careful management of Early Intervention Grant commitments since this funding regime was introduced, which enabled previous years underspends to be carried forward as one-off reserves to temporarily support Early Intervention Grant services in 2013/14 and 2014/15.
- 7.2 This report outlines the proposed savings to achieve the 1.52m cuts that are required in the Early Intervention Grant to be implemented with effect from 1 April 2014. Failure to make savings identified will mean the need to make alternative unplanned cuts and redundancies elsewhere in the Authority to balance next year's budget. Since 1 April 2013, early intervention services have been delivered with the support of a reserve to cover the budget shortfall to enable these proposed cuts to be carefully planned and developed.

- 7.3 There are substantial financial risks associated with the level of savings proposed within this report. Whilst officers have taken every care to validate all of the information and proposals nevertheless, unforeseen changes will impact upon the ability of the service to deliver these cuts by 01/04/14 and some slippage may occur. Due to the careful service and financial management arrangements that have been in place since these cuts were first announced in September 2012, it is anticipated that the full reserve allocated for early intervention services for 2013/14 will not be needed as reported to Cabinet on 4 February 2013. Underspends have been achieved by carrying vacant hours and posts as well as avoiding any unnecessary expenditure. Initial projections indicate that there is likely to be around £350,000 underspend on this years budget. This position is not unexpected and as reported in the Medium Term Financial Strategy in February 2013 the lower use of the reserve in 2013/14 enables the unused reserves to be carried forward to underpin the deliver of these cuts and manage financial risks during 2014/15. It is recommended that this financial risk strategy is referred to the Finance and Policy for approval and inclusion in the final budget proposals to be referred to full Council in February 2014. Commitments against this reserve will be reviewed during 2014/15 as the savings are implement which will then enable a strategy for using any uncommitted balance on this reserve to be developed as part of the 2015/16 budget.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 That Children's Services Committee consider the proposals for savings outlined in this report and approves the savings programme to manage the cuts to the Early Intervention Grant.
- 8.2 That Children's Services Committee refer this report to Finance and Policy Committee with their comments for approval of the savings programme and carry forward of the unused Early Intervention Grant Reserves of £350,000 to manage financial risks of delivering the saving programme in 2014/15, and these issues be referred to full Council in February 2014 as part of the final budget proposals for 2014/15.
- 8.3 That Children's Services Committee ask the Finance and Policy Committee to note that commitments against the £350,000 Early Intervention Grant reserve will be reviewed during 2014/15 as the savings are implement which will then enable a strategy for using any uncommitted balance on this reserve to be developed as part of the 2015/16 budget.
- 8.4 That Children's Services Committee refer the decision on discontinuing the early intervention speech and language contract to the Health and Wellbeing Board for consideration of impact and how this can be mitigated.

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 The report forms part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Early Intervention Strategy December 2011;
Department for Education 'More Affordable Child Care 2013';
Children Act 1989;
Childcare Act 2006;
Positive for Youth;
Youth Service Review.

10. CONTACT OFFICER

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Cost Centre	Cost Centre Heading (Optional Detail)	Direct Costs Employees	Direct Costs Other	Support Recharges	Gross Expenditure Budget £	Contrib from Reserves	Income	Income (incl. Cont from Reserves) £	Net 2013/14 Budget £	Multiple Options - Add number for each option	Proposed Saving Brief Description	Proposed Net Saving £	Saving - RAG Rating GREEN	Saving - RAG Rating AMBER	Green & Amber - SUB-TOTAL	Saving - RAG Rating RED
224660000	CC Central 1 - Chatham House		77,096		77,096			0	77,096	1	Close Building - Clawback £99275	77,096				77,096
224670280	CC Central 2 -Comm Involvement		3,062		3,062			0	3,062	1	use for saving	3,062	3,062		3,062	
224650284	CC North 1 - Hindpool Close		74,213	225	74,438		(6,001)	(6,001)	68,437	1	Close Building - Clawback £486,965	66,487				66,487
224680000	CC South - Rift House		32,400		32,400				32,400	1	Close Building	32,400				32,400
224640283	CC South 1 - Leaholme Rd Centr		47,487		47,487			0	47,487	1	Maintain					
224640283	CC South 1 - Leaholme Rd Centr								0	2	Close Building	47,487			0	47,487
224640281	CC South 1 - Rossmere Way		79,422		79,422			0	79,422	1	Maintain					
224640282	CC South 1 - Rossmere Way								0	2	Close Building - Clawback £150,600	79,422			0	79,422
Various	Childrens Centres - General		163,451	116	163,567				163,567	1	Reduction in operating costs	30,000	30,000		30,000	
Various	Childrens Centres - General								0	2	Cease all expenditure	163,576				163,576
126660000	Edge of Care Team		158,000		158,000			0	158,000	1	Cut 50%	79,000			0	79,000
126660000	Edge of Care Team								0	2	Cease Service	158,000			0	158,000
126690000	EIG North Family Support		20,000		20,000			0	20,000	1	saving of 5000	5,000	5,000		5,000	
126690000	EIG North Family Support								0	2	Saving of 10,000	10,000			0	10,000
227340000	EIG North General		17,000		17,000			0	17,000							
227310000	EIG North Locality	897,773	44,144		941,917			0	941,917							
227310000	EIG North Locality								0	1	Rationalisation of staffing group - utilising unworked hours, vacancies, ER/VR	80,693	80,693		80,693	
227310000	EIG North Locality								0	2	1Early Years Principal Practitioner	47,386			0	47,386
227310000	EIG North Locality								0	3	Cease Service	897,773			0	897,773
227350000	EIG South Family Support		20,000		20,000			0	20,000	1	saving of £5000	5,000	5,000		5,000	
227270000	EIG South General		17,000		17,000			0	17,000							
227300000	EIG South Locality	817,975	51,796		869,771			0	869,771	1	Rationalisation of staffing group - utilising unworked hours, vacancies, ER/VR	80,693	80,693		80,693	
227300000	EIG South Locality								0	2	1Early Years Principal Practitioner	47,386		47,386	47,386	
227300000	EIG South Locality								0	3	Cease Service	817,975			0	817,975
224880000	Healthy Eating EY Settings	33,412	924		34,336			0	34,336	1	1 Redundancy	34,366		34,366	34,366	
224640306	Rainbow Cafe	40,480	19,995		60,475		(11,156)	(11,156)	49,319	1	Reduce to one staff member, option to delete both by 15/16	20,240		20,240	20,240	
227260000	Childcare Town Wide		57,291		57,291			0	57,291	1	Reduce budget allocated to childcare £20K	27,291			0	27,291
227260000	Childcare Town Wide								0	2	Reduce budget allocated to childcare £30K	37,291	37,291		37,291	
227280000	EY Statutory Duties & Info Hub	488,710	203,729		692,439			0	692,439	1	Delete EYC post	51,000			0	51,000
227280000	EY Statutory Duties & Info Hub								0	3	Delete Early Years and Childcare Officer	34,000		34,000	34,000	
227280000	EY Statutory Duties & Info Hub								0	4	Reduce hours of Workforce Dev Officer	9,000		9,000	9,000	
227280000	EY Statutory Duties & Info Hub								0	5	Delete WFD officer	24,000			0	24,000
227280000	EY Statutory Duties & Info Hub								0	6	Reduce marketing budget £20K	20,000			0	20,000
227280000	EY Statutory Duties & Info Hub								0	7	Reduce marketing budget £30K	30,000	30,000		30,000	
227280000	EY Statutory Duties & Info Hub								0	8	Delete Business Support Officer	35,000			0	35,000
227250000	School Based Children Centre		117,473		117,473			0	117,473	1	Remove funding to St John Vianney CC	55,000	55,000		55,000	
225560363	Parent Participation		5,000		5,000			0	5,000	9	Delete budget for parent participation	7,500	7,500		7,500	
225560000	Short Break Services	48,847	224,842		273,689			0	273,689	1	Reduce funding for specialist toy library	12,500	12,500		12,500	
225560000	Short Break Services								0	2	Cease delivery of Catcote School sessions	12,500	12,500		12,500	
225560000	Short Break Services								0	3	Reduce 1-1 childcare budget	25,000	25,000		25,000	
225560000	Short Break Services								0	4	Reduce 1-1 childcare budget	30,000			0	30,000
225560000	Short Break Services								0	5	Reduce Exmoor Grove activities budget	1,000			0	1,000
225560000	Short Break Services								0	6	Cease Exmoor Grove activities budget	3,000			0	3,000
225560000	Short Break Services								0	7	Reduce family activities budget	2,000			0	2,000
225560000	Short Break Services								0	8	Cease family activities budget	6,167			0	6,167
225560000	Short Break Services								0	9	Reduce family overnight Carlton Outdoors	3,000	3,000		3,000	
225560000	Short Break Services								0	10	Reduce Short Breaks Training Programme	5,000			0	5,000
225560000	Short Break Services								0	11	Reduce Short Breaks Training Programme	7,956	7,956		7,956	
227230000	Small Steps Team	34,176	132,402		166,578			0	166,578	1	Reduce Ed Psychologist time	32,000			0	32,000
227230000	Small Steps Team								0	2	Delete funding for one school assistant	23,000		23,000	23,000	
227230000	Small Steps Team								0	3	Delete funding of two school assistants	46,000			0	46,000
227240000	Workforce Development EIG	17,208			17,208			0	17,208	1	Reduce Early Years training budget	7,208	7,208		7,208	
227240000	Workforce Development EIG								0	2	Delete Early Years training budget	17,208			0	17,208
222190000	Connexions	59,680	83,564		143,244			0	143,244	1	Reconfiguration of IT systems	28,000	28,000		28,000	
222190319	Connexions-Positive Activities		41,000		41,000			0	41,000			0				
227330000	EIG Contribution to LA Budgets		356,022		356,022			0	356,022	1	Participation Officer - income generation	30,000	30,000		30,000	

Cost Centre	Cost Centre Heading (Optional Detail)	Direct Costs Employees	Direct Costs Other	Support Recharges	Gross Expenditure Budget £	Contrib from Reserves	Income	Income (incl. Cont from Reserves) £	Net 2013/14 Budget £	Multiple Options - Add number for each option	Proposed Saving Brief Description	Proposed Net Saving £	Saving - RAG Rating GREEN	Saving - RAG Rating AMBER	Green & Amber - SUB-TOTAL	Saving - RAG Rating RED
227330000	EIG Contribution to LA Budgets								0	2	Closure of Brinkburn	87,000		87,000	87,000	
227330000	EIG Contribution to LA Budgets								0	3	Closure of Jutland Road	16,000		16,000	16,000	
227330000	EIG Contribution to LA Budgets								0	4	Reduction in Sessional Slots	95,000		95,000	95,000	
227330000	EIG Contribution to LA Budgets								0	5	Reduction Youth Worker Manager	41,000		41,000	41,000	
227320000	EIG Youth Crime Action Plan		169,814		169,814			0	169,814	1	Cease contribtion	169,814	169,814		169,814	
225980000	One Stop Shop	323,366	12,367		335,733			0	335,733			0				
124550000	Youth Opportunities Fund		104,964		104,964			0	104,964	1	Reduce contribution	80,000	80,000		80,000	
226170000	Commissioned Services - EIG	86,573	1,187,061		1,273,634	(26,979)	(55,866)	(82,845)	1,190,789			0				
226170000	Commissioned Services - EIG									1	Speech & Language	120,000		120,000	120,000	
226170000	Commissioned Services - EIG									2	Substance Misuse	122,000	122,000		122,000	
226170000	Commissioned Services - EIG									3	Mentoring - reduction 10%	8,000		8,000	8,000	
226170000	Commissioned Services - EIG									4	Parenting - bring in house	105,000		105,000	105,000	
226170000	Commissioned Services - EIG									5	Activiities - reduction of 10%	40,000		40,000	40,000	
		2,848,200	3,521,519	341	6,370,060	(26,979)	(73,023)	(100,002)	6,270,058				832,217	679,992	1,512,209	2,776,268

5.1 Appendix 2

Department	Division	Section	Owner/Officer
Child and Adult	Children's Services	Across a number of sections all within Children's Services	Sally Robinson,
Function/ Service	<p>In December 2011, Cabinet approved the Early Intervention Strategy and the commissioning of services to underpin the delivery of the strategy.</p> <p>Services were realigned to create a First Contact and Support Hub which provided a single point of access to all services for children (and vulnerable adults); a locality based family support service incorporating children's centres; an integrated Youth Support Service incorporating the One Stop Shop in the town centre and a range of universal and targeted support services commissioned from the voluntary and community sector which underpin the delivery of services to children and their families as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speech and Language Services – provider North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust; • Substance Misuse for Young People – provider Hyped; • Mentoring – provider Headland Future; • Parenting Services – Lead Provider Action for Children; • Activities for Children and Young People (5 – 19) – Consortium of local voluntary organizations led by West View Project. • Domestic Violence Services – Provider Harbour (contribution to corporate contract). <p>In September 2012, local authorities were notified of significant cuts to the Early Intervention Grant. For Hartlepool this amounted to £1.52m in the two years 2013/14 and 2014/15.</p> <p>This impact assessment looks at all savings options and assesses the impact of these savings.</p>		
Information Available	<p>The Early Intervention Strategy has only been in place for just over a year therefore outcome data for this area is limited within such a short timeframe. An evaluation of the first year of the strategy has been carried out which includes information on:</p> <p>Levels of need in each service area;</p> <p>Numbers of children, young people and families being referred to services;</p> <p>Numbers of children, young people and families that have accessed the services across the strategy;</p> <p>Numbers of children, young people and families that complete the programme they accessed;</p> <p>Numbers of children, young people and families that can show they have successfully met their targets/aims;</p> <p>Numbers of children, young people and families who did not engage when offered support;</p> <p>Numbers of children, young people and families that are referred</p>		

5.1 Appendix 2

	to specialist services; Children's centres registration and accessing services data (including postcodes) and whether vulnerable groups Outcomes achieved; Feedback from service users; Consultation with commissioned services providers; Contract monitoring information; Consultation with Parent Led Forum; Consultation with partners – education, health	
Relevance Identify which strands are relevant to the area you are reviewing or changing	Age	✓
	Disability	✓
	Gender Re-assignment	
	Race	✓
	Religion	
	Gender	✓
	Sexual Orientation	✓
	Marriage & Civil Partnership	
	Pregnancy & Maternity	✓
Information Gaps	The information gathered is rigorous although there are some gaps in information which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Being able to track children through early intervention into specialist services (this is being addressed with the introduction of the eCAF system which can track a child's journey from early intervention to social care); ➤ Outcome information due to data sets being a year out of date therefore outcomes data will need to be captured this year to show whether there is impact last year; ➤ One Stop Shop data has only been gathered since Dec 2012 therefore analysis is limited this will need to be analysed at the end of this year when a full years data can be seen; ➤ Commissioned services have been asked to collect their data using postcodes and identifying vulnerable groups, One provider has found this difficult to do and work is ongoing to ensure that this information is provided; ➤ There may be double counting across commissioned services and youth services as the current systems do not share individual children and young people information it just captures numbers (it is proposed that work is carried out with the providers to develop information sharing processes to allow this to happen); ➤ Family support impact information is currently difficult to quantify apart from those that were referred to social care (work is ongoing to explore how this can be achieved) 	

5.1 Appendix 2

What is the Impact	<p>There are no proposals that adversely affect any of the strands highlighted above.</p> <p>The proposals within this savings report focuses on areas that do not have significant affect on direct work with children.</p> <p>The proposals for the reduction of funding Short Breaks have been proposed after consultation with parents of children with disabilities. The proposed changes ensure that direct work with children with disabilities and their families is continued.</p> <p>The proposals for changes within the Youth Support Service will have some impact on young people accessing certain provision but young people will still be able to continue to access youth provision across the town therefore the impact is limited.</p> <p>The proposals highlight the removal of the speech and language contract which potentially may affect younger children as the contract focuses on under 5s. However work has been undertaken over the last year to train all family support workers to understand how to identify speech, language and communication issues and to support children and families when concerns arise. Locality staff continue to work with health services to ensure that children are supported as early as possible.</p> <p>The proposals ensure that all age groups of children continue to have provision which is available across the town.</p>		
Addressing the impact	<p>The outcome of the impact assessment may be one or more of the following four outcomes; You must clearly set out your justification for the outcome/s.</p> <p>1. No Impact- No Major Change</p> <p>This assessment shows that there is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact on any specific group of children, young people and families. All opportunities to promote equality have been taken. Services will continue to be available for children, young people and families who are vulnerable.</p>		
Actions			
It will be useful to record and monitor any actions resulting from your assessment to ensure that they have had the intended effect and that the outcomes have been achieved.			
Action identified	Responsible Officer	By When	How will this be evaluated?
Continue to monitor the needs of children and their families to analyse trends	Danielle Swainston	Quarterly review	Report produced
Monitor the services response to identified need	Danielle Swainston	Quarterly report	Evaluation report produced and shared with Head of service and partners

5.1 Appendix 2

to understand if services are meeting needs of all groups of children and families			
Implement eCAF to ensure that children's progress/outcomes can be tracked across services	Danielle Swainston	Sept 2014	eCAF being used by internal staff eCAF being used by external partners Children's progress being able to be tracked
Develop process for capturing impact of early intervention family support services	John Robinson	April 2014	Able to monitor impact of family support work

Date sent to Equality Rep for publishing	00/00/00
Date Published	00/00/00
Date Assessment Carried out	Sept 2013

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

1st OCTOBER 2013



Report of: Assistant Director, Education

Subject: OFSTED INSPECTIONS OF LOCAL AUTHORITY
ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUPPORTING SCHOOL
IMPROVEMENT

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non-Key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to update Children's Services Committee members on the recently introduced OFSTED inspections of Local Authority arrangements for supporting school improvement and to make members aware of their potential involvement in the inspection.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In June 2013, OFSTED published both the Framework (**Appendix 1**) and the Handbook (**Appendix 2**) for the Inspection of Local Authority Arrangements for Supporting School Improvement under Section 136 (1) (b) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
- 3.2 The aim of the inspection is to '*inspect how well the local authority is fulfilling its general duty to promote high standards and fulfilment by every child of their educational potential as set out in section 13A of the Education Act 1996*'.
- 3.3 Inspection will not be universal. OFSTED will inspect only where concerns about performance are apparent or where requested to do so by the Secretary of State. Given that Hartlepool LA is specifically mentioned in the OFSTED North-East, Yorkshire and Humberside Regional Plan, August 2013 attached as **Appendix 3, This item contains exempt information under Schedule 12A Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006) namely; Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) (para.3)**, it is likely that this local authority will be inspected within the next 18 months.

3.4 OFSTED state that the inspection of a Local Authority will:

- provide parents, elected council members, schools and other providers and those who lead and manage the local authority with an assessment of how well the local authority is performing in supporting and challenging its schools and other providers to improve;
- provide information for the Secretary of State for Education about how well the local authority is performing its role in promoting high standards, ensuring equality of access to opportunity, fulfilling children's potential and providing support to schools causing concern;
- promote improvement in the local authority, its schools, children and young people and the education system more widely;
- require the local authority to consider the actions that it should take in the light of the report and prepare a written statement setting out those actions and the timetable for them.

4. PROPOSALS

4.1 The paragraphs below highlight key details that elected members need to be aware of and, where identifiable, the role of elected members in the inspection process.

- The lead inspector will normally notify the authority up to five days before the start of the inspection;
- The lead inspector's notification call will make arrangements for discussions with key elected members, senior officers and other staff/partners;
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector will request the current local authority strategic plan for education, including details of partnership arrangements, commissioning, brokerage and any evaluation reports and/or reports to elected members;
- Prior to the inspection, the lead inspector will request evidence to demonstrate how the local authority uses any available funding to effect improvement, particularly how it is focused on areas of greatest need;
- Inspectors are highly likely to conduct meetings with elected Members of the Council, particularly those responsible for education.

4.2 In making a judgement about the effectiveness of the local authority's arrangements to support school improvement, OFSTED will take into account the following aspects:

1. **The effectiveness of corporate and strategic leadership of school improvement, including:**
 - Elected members and senior officers have an ambitious vision for improving schools, which is clearly demonstrated in public documents;

- Elected members articulate the local authority's (LAs) strategic role, and enhance schools' ability to self-manage. Accountability is transparent and efficiently monitored in a systematic way. Members' challenge of officers is well informed by high quality information and data;
 - Elected members and senior officers exercise their duties in relation to securing sufficient suitable provision for all 16-19 year olds and in respect of raising the participation age (RPA) requirements;
2. **The clarity and transparency of policy and strategy for supporting schools and other providers' improvement, and how clearly the LA has defined its monitoring, challenge, support and intervention roles, including:**
 - stakeholders have been fully consulted and agree the strategy and priorities for school improvement.
 3. **The extent to which the LA knows its schools and other providers, their performance and the standards they achieve and how effectively support is focused on areas of greatest need.**
 4. **The effectiveness of the LA's identification of, and intervention in, underperforming schools, including the use of formal powers available to the LA, including:**
 - The progress of schools causing concern is kept under continuous review by senior officers and scrutinised by elected members frequently and regularly. Robust action is taken where progress is judged to be insufficient.
 5. **The impact of LA support and challenge over time and the rate at which schools and other providers are improving.**
 6. **The extent to which the LA commissions and brokers support for schools and other providers**
 7. **The effectiveness of strategies to support highly effective leadership and management in schools and other providers, including**
 - The LA provides or secures expert advice and differentiated training for headteachers, governors and middle managers. This support and training is improving the capacity of schools and other providers to develop accurate self-evaluation and secure continuous improvement.
 8. **Support and challenge for school governance, including:**
 - The LA has a successful strategy for managing governor recruitment and retention of high quality governors. The LA has access to experienced governors who are prepared to be deployed to, or support, governing bodies of schools causing concern or those schools not yet good;

- Governors are deployed where they are needed and any weaknesses in governance are being acted on;
- Training programmes for new governors and chairs are of good quality, well attended and highly valued, utilising a range of modes of delivery.

9. The way the LA uses any available funding to effect improvement, including how it is focused on areas of greatest need:

- Resourcing decisions are based on an accurate analysis of the needs of schools;
- The LA undertakes regular and thorough reviews of the cost effectiveness of any resource allocation and acts decisively and effectively on its findings;
- The LA's budget-setting process is based on a thorough and detailed review of spending needs and is both timely and transparent;
- Consultation on the budget ensures that the deployment of LA resources is well understood by schools and other providers;
- The LA rigorously monitors and challenges the sufficiency and use of resources and those delegated to schools;
- In summary, when making a decision on corporate leadership and strategic planning, OFSTED will consider;
- The local authority's vision for better education and how strategic planning has matched the delivery of those changes;
- The quality of its decision making, including the effectiveness of its consultation with schools and other parties;
- The commitment of members and senior officers to school improvement;
- The degree to which schools understand the strategy and the priorities for school improvement.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 It is recommended that Children's Services Committee members note the contents of this report and the attached appendices.
- 5.2 It is also recommended that members highlight areas where they feel that additional information is needed that would prepare them sufficiently for any future meeting with an OFSTED inspection team during Local Authority inspection.

6. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8. CONTACT OFFICER

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The framework for the inspection of local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement

The framework for inspecting local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement responsible for schools and for the wider education of children and young people in England under section 135 and section 136(1)(b) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Age group: 0-19

Published: May 2013



Corporate member of
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Preface

This framework constitutes the basis for the inspections of local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement in schools, and the education of children and young people, from May 2013. These arrangements have not been inspected by Ofsted and other inspectorates since 2004/05, when the former local education authority (LEA) inspections by Ofsted were replaced by joint area reviews.

The reintroduction of inspection aims to assist local authorities in their duty to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential in schools and other education and training providers so that all children and young people benefit from at least a good education.

This new inspection framework will be implemented using Her Majesty's Chief Inspector's (HMCI's) powers to carry out an inspection of the performance of a particular local authority function as set out in section 136(1)(b) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Specifically, HMCI can use this power to inspect how well the local authority is fulfilling its general duty to promote high standards and fulfilment by every child of their educational potential as set out in section 13A of the Education Act 1996.

Reports of the findings of an Ofsted inspection under section 136 may be of assistance to the Secretary of State in the use of powers under part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which enables the Secretary of State to effect swift improvement in the local authority's exercise of its functions and to the improvement of educational performance in the area.

HMCI's Annual Report 2011/12 drew national attention to the marked inequality of access by children and young people to a good education across England. This inequality can limit the life chances of children and young people. This framework acknowledges that the role of local authorities has changed in relation to schools and for those 14-19-year-olds attending a college where these sit outside of local authority control. However, local authorities still have an important statutory duty to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential.

From January 2013, Ofsted has a more focused regional presence. This enables closer scrutiny of local education arrangements and provides greater support for schools and other education providers. This inspection framework will act as a powerful lever for improvement in helping to challenge inconsistencies and will enable Ofsted to report more rigorously on the contribution of local authorities to improving education in England.

Inspection will not be universal. We will inspect only where concerns about performance are apparent or where requested to do so by the Secretary of State. Where inspections are undertaken they will report on the effectiveness, or otherwise, of the local authority functions for promoting improvement in relation to education. We believe this will help local authorities to improve their own performance in

supporting and challenging schools, and other providers as relevant, in order to raise standards for all children and young people.

We will introduce these new inspection arrangements from 1 June 2013.

Sir Michael Wilshaw

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills

Introduction

What is the purpose of inspection?

1. The inspection of a local authority provides an independent external evaluation of how well it carries out its statutory duties in relation to promoting high standards in schools and among other providers so that children and young people achieve well and fulfil their potential as defined by section 13A of the Education Act 1996. This includes support for schools causing concern as set out in Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
2. Ofsted inspections of local authorities perform four essential functions and lead to a published report of findings that:
 - provides parents¹, elected council members, schools and other providers and those who lead and manage the local authority with an assessment of how well the local authority is performing in supporting and challenging its schools and other providers to improve
 - provides information for the Secretary of State for Education about how well the local authority is performing its role in promoting high standards, ensuring equality of access to opportunity, fulfilling children's potential and providing support to schools causing concern²
 - promotes improvement in the local authority, its schools, children and young people and the education system more widely
 - requires the local authority to consider the actions that it should take in the light of the report and prepare a written statement setting out those actions and the timetable for them.

How does inspection promote improvement?

3. Inspection acts in the interests of children, young people, their parents and employers. It encourages high-quality provision and outcomes that meet diverse needs and foster equal opportunities. Ofsted is required to carry out its functions in ways that encourage those it inspects and regulates to improve, be user-focused and be efficient and effective in the use of resources.³ By inspecting and reporting, Ofsted will ensure that the local authority is able to consider the steps that need to be taken to effect improvement and set out formally the actions it intends to take to achieve this.

¹ The term 'parents' refers to mothers, fathers and/or carers.

² Under section 118 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

³ Under sections 117(1) and 119(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

4. Inspection supports improvement by:

- raising expectations about the standards of performance and effectiveness expected of local authorities in supporting and challenging educational provision in a local authority area
- identifying good or better practice so that it can be shared more widely
- providing a sharp challenge and the impetus to act where improvement is needed
- recommending specific priorities for improvement and, when appropriate, checking on subsequent progress
- promoting rigour in the way that local authorities evaluate their own performance, enhancing their capacity to improve their functions.

Local authority inspections will:

- support and promote improvement by:
 - reporting on whether or not local authority strategies, support and challenge for schools and other providers are effective in raising standards
 - identifying the weakest local authorities, providing challenge and support to elected members, senior leaders, school and other provision improvement staff as relevant, and those responsible for supporting governance in schools
 - explaining and discussing inspection findings with those whose work has been inspected
 - identifying precise actions to underpin recommendations
 - adjusting the focus of inspection to have the greatest impact
- be proportionate by:
 - inspecting where concerns are raised through inspection outcomes for individual schools and other providers, or groups of schools and other providers, or through other means
 - adjusting the frequency of inspection, having regard to any previous inspection outcomes and risk assessment
 - deploying resources where improvement is needed, or where inspection can add value
- focus on the needs of children and young people by:
 - drawing on the views of those that lead and manage the schools and other providers, to inform inspectors' judgements and the outcomes of inspection
 - taking account of relevant views expressed by users

- evaluating the extent to which local authorities foster an inclusive and aspirational environment, ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training in schools and other providers that meets the needs of all pupils
- focus on the needs of local authorities by:
 - making use, as far as possible, of the existing data, documentation and systems of a local authority area and avoiding placing unnecessary burdens on them
 - taking account of any self-evaluation by the local authority
- be transparent and consistent by:
 - making clear and transparent judgements based on sound evidence
 - inspecting and reporting with integrity
 - having clear, brief evaluation criteria, procedures and guidance that are well understood by local authorities and other users and that are readily available
- be accountable by:
 - reporting the findings of inspection without fear or favour
 - publishing clear, accurate, timely letters that report independently on the effectiveness of the education functions of the local authority
 - gathering the views of schools and other stakeholders, and those who have a significant interest in the local authority, to inform inspection
- demonstrate value for money by:
 - targeting inspection resources and deploying them effectively and efficiently
 - evaluating the outcomes and processes of inspection and making improvements where necessary.

Inspection policy and principles

What is the statutory basis for the inspection?

5. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 makes provision for the Chief Inspector to inspect the overall performance by any local authority of particular functions that are within the Chief Inspector's remit.
6. This framework applies to all local authorities responsible for schools and other education providers in England who have a legal duty to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential in relation to their relevant education functions under section 136 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The general duty for local authorities to promote high standards of education is set out under section 13A of the Education Act 1996, as follows:

'Duty to promote high standards and fulfilment of potential

(1) A [Local Authority] in England must ensure that their relevant education functions and their relevant training functions are (so far as they are capable of being so exercised) exercised by the authority with a view to—

- (a) promoting high standards,
- (b) ensuring fair access to opportunity for education and training, and
- (c) promoting the fulfilment of learning potential by every person to whom this subsection applies.

(2) Subsection (1) applies to the following—

- (a) persons under the age of 20;
- (b) persons aged 20 or over but under 25 who are subject to learning difficulty assessment.

(5) In this section—

"education" and "training" have the same meanings as in section 15ZA;

"relevant education function", in relation to a [Local Authority] in England, means a function relating to the provision of education for—

- (a) persons of compulsory school age (whether at school or otherwise);
- (b) persons (whether at school or otherwise) who are over compulsory school age and to whom subsection (1) applies;
- (c) persons who are under compulsory school age and are registered as pupils at schools maintained by the authority;

"relevant training function" means a function relating to the provision of training.'

7. HMCI may inspect a local authority's education function at any time under section 136(1)(b) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This may happen, for example, where concerns are identified through the performance of individual schools and other providers or if Ofsted becomes aware of concerns about the standards of education of children and young people.
8. The reported findings of Ofsted's inspection may be of assistance to the Secretary of State in relation to his powers to effect swift improvement in the

local authority's exercise of its functions. The Secretary of State has powers to require HMCI to carry out an inspection of a local authority's education functions under s136(3).

What determines the timing of an inspection?

9. Ofsted does not intend to inspect all local authorities to a regular cycle or interval. Where inspections of schools or other providers, under either section 5 or section 8 of the Education Act 2005, raise concerns about the effectiveness of a local authority's education functions or where Ofsted becomes aware of other concerns, an inspection may be carried out.
10. In practice, this means that some local authorities may not be inspected at all, while others may be inspected more than once over a particular period.
11. HMCI may cause a local authority to be inspected, in relation to its support and challenge for schools and other providers, so that they improve, including where one or more of the following apply:
 - where the proportion of children who attend a good or better school, pupil referral unit and/or alternative provision is lower than that found nationally
 - where there is a higher than average number of schools in an Ofsted formal category of concern and/or there are indicators that progress of such schools is not securing rapid improvement
 - where there is a higher than average proportion of schools that have not been judged to be good by Ofsted
 - where attainment levels across the local authority are lower than that found nationally and/or where the trend of improvement is weak
 - where rates of progress, relative to starting points, are lower than that found nationally and/or where the trend of improvement is weak
 - where the volume of qualifying complaints to Ofsted about schools in a local authority area is a matter of concern
 - where the Secretary of State requires an inspection of local authority school improvement functions.
12. Notice of up to five days will normally be given and the purpose of the inspection, the powers under which it is carried out and the arrangements for reporting on the inspection will be sent in writing to the relevant local authority.

Who carries out the inspection?

13. All inspections will be led by Her Majesty's Inspectors (HMI), employed directly by Ofsted, with at least one other inspector. HMI may be accompanied by other HMI (including Senior HMI) or Additional Inspectors.

14. All inspectors undertake regular training to ensure that they are familiar with changes in inspection frameworks, inspection methodology and developments in educational practice.
15. An inspection team will normally comprise of two HMI irrespective of the size of the local authority. However, where circumstances dictate, the team may be larger although Ofsted will not use any more inspectors than is required and will always seek to minimise disruption to the local authority and stakeholders during inspection.
16. Ofsted will also quality assure inspections by visiting a sample of local authority inspections during fieldwork and reviewing a sample of letters reporting inspection findings.

What will be inspected?

17. Ofsted will inspect the effectiveness of local authority education functions in promoting improvement, high standards and the fulfilment of educational potential of children and young people in schools. Ofsted recognises that the configuration of school improvement functions will be diverse and relevant to local circumstances. Ofsted has no fixed view on the configuration of such functions, but will focus on their impact and effectiveness. In particular, Ofsted will evaluate:
 - the effectiveness of corporate and strategic leadership of school improvement
 - the clarity and transparency of policy and strategy for supporting schools' and other providers' improvement, and how clearly the local authority has defined its monitoring, challenge, support and intervention roles
 - the extent to which the local authority knows schools and other providers, their performance and the standards they achieve and how effectively support is focused on areas of greatest need
 - the effectiveness of the local authority's identification of, and intervention in, underperforming schools, including, where applicable, the use of formal powers available to the local authority
 - the impact of local authority support and challenge over time and the rate at which schools and other providers are improving
 - the extent to which the local authority brokers support for schools and other providers
 - the effectiveness of strategies to support highly effective leadership and management in schools and other providers
 - support and challenge for school governance, where applicable
 - the way the local authority uses any available funding to effect improvement, including how it is focused on areas of greatest need.

What grading will inspectors use when making judgements?

18. Inspections are not universal and are likely to be carried out only where a concern has been identified or where HMCI has received a request to inspect from the Secretary of State. Ofsted will not use the overall effectiveness grade descriptors of outstanding, good, requires improvement or inadequate to evaluate and report the effectiveness of the local authority support and challenge for schools and other providers.
19. In judging the local authority's effectiveness, inspectors will evaluate the effectiveness of arrangements to support school improvement and identify the strengths and weaknesses of support and challenge for schools and other providers. The evaluation will take account of a local authority's statutory duties set out in section 13A of the Education Act 1996 and the key areas of focus as set out in paragraph 17 above, in so far as they are capable of being exercised.
20. In doing this, they consider all the evidence gathered to support the overarching judgement they will make on their effectiveness. Inspectors will consider and report on whether the arrangements are being exercised effectively or not. If it does not meet an acceptable standard, inspectors will consider whether or not the local authority requires re-inspection.

What happens during the inspection?

How many days do inspectors spend in the local authority?

21. Inspections do not normally last longer than five days, which in most cases will be consecutive. In some instances, inspections may be shorter, as concerns leading to the inspection and its circumstances will vary. In other instances, inspections may be extended in order to gather additional evidence.

How do inspectors use their time during the inspection?

22. Inspectors will spend their time gathering robust, first-hand evidence to inform their judgements. This will involve meeting with key leaders and other stakeholders, and scrutinising relevant written documentation and analysis of numerical and other data.

How is evidence recorded?

23. During the inspection, inspectors will gather, analyse and record evidence in an evidence notebook (EN) and note their judgements in a summary notebook (SN). Both notebooks are part of the evidence base for the inspection. The lead inspector is responsible for compiling and assuring the quality of the evidence base.

How are judgements secured?

24. The lead inspector has responsibility for ensuring that judgements about the local authority are collectively agreed by the inspection team and based on the guidance contained in the inspection handbook and that they are supported convincingly by recorded evidence. Inspectors will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the local authority school improvement functions and what it must do to improve. Emerging findings will be discussed with the nominee/senior officers at regular intervals and, where appropriate, other senior staff. The local authority will be given the opportunity to provide evidence, where it is relevant.
25. Final judgements will be made only when all evidence has been collected and considered. These judgements represent the corporate view of the inspection team. They will be subject to quality assurance before the report is published.

How do senior officers and senior staff engage in the inspection?

26. Inspection has the strongest impact on improvement when those inspected understand the evidence and findings that have led to the judgements and what it needs to do to improve. The lead inspector, therefore, will ensure that the senior officers and senior staff:
 - are kept up to date about the inspection
 - understand how the inspection team reaches its judgements
 - have opportunities to clarify how evidence is used to reach judgements
 - are given the opportunity to present evidence.
27. Senior officers will be invited to:
 - support the planning of the inspection
 - attend the formal inspection team meetings during the inspection
 - receive regular updates from the lead inspector
 and, unless there are compelling reasons not to do so,
 - comment on the inspectors' recommendations to ensure that these are understood.
28. Participation in inspection activities, such as attendance at team meetings, will not be mandatory and senior officers/nominee may choose whether or not to accept.
29. The absence of the Director of Children's Services, or their equivalent, will not normally be grounds for the deferral of an inspection.

What is the code of conduct for inspectors?

30. Inspectors are required to uphold the highest professional standards in their work and to ensure that everyone they encounter during inspections is treated fairly and with respect. These standards are assured through a code of conduct, which is set out below.

Inspectors should:

- evaluate objectively, be impartial and inspect without fear or favour
- evaluate provision in line with frameworks, national standards or regulatory requirements
- base all evaluations on clear and robust evidence
- have no connection with the local authority that could undermine their objectivity
- report honestly and clearly, ensuring that judgements are fair and reliable
- carry out their work with integrity, treating all those they meet with courtesy, respect and sensitivity
- endeavour to minimise the stress on those involved in the inspection
- act in the best interests and well-being of service users
- maintain purposeful and productive dialogue with those being inspected, and communicate judgements clearly and frankly
- respect the confidentiality of information, particularly about individuals and their work
- respond appropriately to reasonable requests
- take prompt and appropriate action on any safeguarding or health and safety issues.

31. When inspectors meet senior officers, elected members, school-based staff and governors or other stakeholders, every endeavour will be made to ensure that individuals and individual comments are not identified in the further exploration of issues or in the inspection report. However, there may be circumstances where it will not be possible to guarantee the anonymity of the interviewee, for example where a safeguarding issue is disclosed. Inspectors have a duty to pass on disclosures that raise child protection or safeguarding issues and/or where serious misconduct or potential criminal activity is involved.

How should local authority staff engage with inspectors?

32. To ensure that inspection is productive and beneficial, it is important that inspectors and local authorities establish and maintain an appropriate working relationship based on courtesy and professional behaviour. Ofsted expects senior officers, elected members or other stakeholders to:

- apply their own codes of conduct in their dealings with inspectors
- enable inspectors to conduct their visit in an open and honest way
- enable inspectors to evaluate the local authority objectively against the inspection framework
- provide evidence that will enable the inspectors to report honestly, fairly and reliably about their provision
- work with inspectors to minimise disruption, stress and bureaucracy
- ensure that the health and safety of inspectors is not prejudiced while they are on local authority premises
- maintain a purposeful dialogue with the inspectors
- draw any concerns about the inspection to the attention of inspectors promptly and in a suitable manner
- understand the need for inspectors to secure evidence and talk to staff and stakeholders without the presence of a senior officer.

What feedback do inspectors give to local authority staff during the inspection?

33. Inspectors will offer oral feedback on emerging inspection findings to senior officers and elected members in order to promote improvement. Constructive dialogue is essential between inspectors and local authority staff and particularly between the lead inspector and the Chief Executive or Director of Children's Services and/or her/his representatives.

How is the quality of inspection assured?

34. Ofsted monitors the quality of inspections through a range of formal processes. Some local authorities may be visited by an HMI to check the quality of the inspection. Their assessments are confidential to the inspectors. As part of quality assurance, a sample of inspection evidence bases will be evaluated.
35. In the rare event that an inspection and/or inspection letter report are judged by Ofsted to be seriously flawed, the local authority will be notified that the inspection is incomplete and that a further visit may be necessary, to make sure that enough evidence is gathered to make the inspection judgements secure.

What feedback is provided to the local authority?

36. Before leaving the inspection, the lead inspector must ensure that the local authority is clear:
 - about the relative strengths and weaknesses of functions for supporting and challenging schools and other providers
 - that the main points provided orally in the feedback will be referred to in the text of the report letter subject to quality assurance

- about the procedures leading to the publication of the report letter
 - where relevant, about the implications of the local authority being deemed to require re-inspection
 - about what to do if there are complaints.
37. After the inspection team has reached its conclusions, the draft judgements will be presented and briefly explained to senior representatives of the local authority. In some instances, inspectors may need to return to the local authority to provide oral feedback if there remains a need to consider evidence further. While any oral feedback should be consistent with the inspection findings, all final judgements will be subject to moderation and quality assurance by senior Ofsted staff.

What happens after the inspection?

The written reporting arrangements

38. Ofsted will publish the inspection findings in letter form, setting out briefly the context of the inspection, the evidence gathered, any strengths and weaknesses and areas recommended for improvement. Letters will constitute an inspection report under section 137 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
39. Ofsted will offer local authorities the opportunity to make factual accuracy comments on the report in line with other inspection remit reports.
40. Local authorities will be required to respond with a written statement setting out what action it proposes to take in light of the report of inspectors' findings and setting out a timetable for those actions. The local authority must publish the letter report and action plan.
41. Where there is evidence that the local authority is not exercising its functions effectively, or does not have adequate capacity to support schools and other providers to improve, the inspection findings will report this to the Secretary of State and Ofsted may arrange for a further inspection.

When is the report letter issued?

42. The report is normally sent to a local authority within 20 working days of the end of the inspection, and published on Ofsted's website within 25 working days of the end of the inspection.

43. A copy of the report is sent to:⁴

- the Chief Executive of the local authority
- the Director of Children's Services in the local authority (or their equivalent) and the lead elected member for Children's Services in the local authority
- the Secretary of State
- other prescribed persons.

How do local authorities complain about their inspection or inspection report letter?

44. Any concerns that the local authority has about the inspection should be raised and, where possible, resolved with the lead inspector (and/or visiting inspector who is carrying out a quality assurance visit) during or as soon as possible after the inspection.
45. If it has not been possible to resolve concerns directly, then individuals or local authorities are able to lodge a formal complaint. The complaints procedures are available on Ofsted's website.⁵

Review and evaluation

46. This framework, the accompanying handbook for inspection and other inspection instruments will be evaluated and reviewed at the end of 2013 as set out in Ofsted's consultation report. The instruments will also be reviewed to ensure that the inspection process and methodology are aligned to any wider accountability systems.

⁴ Under sections 14(1) and 14(2) of the Education Act 2005 (as amended).

⁵ Complaints procedure: raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted (130128), Ofsted, 2013; www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/130128.

Handbook for the inspection of local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement

Handbook for inspecting local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement in England under section 136 (1) (b) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 from May 2013

This handbook provides instructions and guidance for inspectors conducting inspections under section 136(1) (b) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. It sets out what inspectors must do and what local authorities can expect, and provides guidance for inspectors on making their judgements.

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Introduction

1. This handbook sets out the main activities undertaken by inspectors conducting inspections of local authority functions in relation to supporting school improvement in England under section 135 and section 136(1)(b) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 from May 2013. It also sets out the judgements that inspectors will make and on which they will report.
2. Local authorities subject to inspection are determined by a data set of key indicators where the inspection of schools or other providers, carried out under section 5 or section 8 of the Education Act 2005, raise concerns about the effectiveness of a local authority's functions to support school improvement or where Ofsted becomes aware of other concerns.
3. The handbook has two parts.
 - Part 1 – How local authorities will be inspected: this contains instructions and guidance for inspectors on the preparation for, and conduct of, local authority inspections.
 - Part 2 – The evaluation schedule: this contains guidance for inspectors on judging the effectiveness of school improvement arrangements in a local authority they inspect, and provides an indication of the main types of evidence they collect and analyse.

Part 1: How local authorities will be inspected

Before the inspection

Introduction

4. Inspectors are likely to encounter many different configurations of the way in which local authorities conduct their statutory functions, including formal contractual partnerships for the delivery of school improvement services. It is important that lead inspectors gain an overview of how arrangements are made as early as possible and work with the approach that the local authority is taking. Ofsted has no pre-conceived view on the different configurations of arrangements but inspectors should evaluate how effective they are and evaluate their impact on improving school performance.

Inspectors' planning and preparation

5. The lead inspector must prepare for the inspection by gaining a broad overview of the local authority's recent performance. The outcomes of this preparation must be summarised in the evidence notebook.
6. Inspectors must use all available evidence to develop an initial overview of the local authority's performance as reflected in the local authority dashboard and

local authority RAISEonline. Planning for the inspection should be informed by analysis of:

- data from the local authority RAISEonline
 - the previous inspection report (where LAs may have been subject to a previous inspection)
 - issues raised about, or the findings from, the investigation of any qualifying complaints¹ about schools within the local authority catchment area
 - information from HMI monitoring visits of schools that are in a formal Ofsted category of concern or those schools judged to be requiring improvement
 - information available on the local authority website.
7. The lead inspector should prepare and distribute brief joining instructions to the inspection team. These should include:
- key information about the local authority and the timings for the inspection
 - a brief analysis of the pre-inspection information, including important areas to be followed up
 - an outline of inspection activity, for example planned meetings with elected members, senior officers, school improvement staff, governors, school based staff; this will be finalised once on site.
8. Lead inspectors should deploy their inspection team member as they see fit. All members of the inspection team must contribute to the evaluation of key judgements and come to a collective view about the effectiveness of school improvement arrangements secured by the local authority.
9. The lead inspector should plan sufficient time for holding team meetings and providing feedback to the local authority, where this can be provided during and at the end of the inspection, to ensure that the inspection is concluded on time.

Notification and introduction

10. The lead inspector will normally inform the authority up to five days before the start of the inspection. Lead inspectors should bear in mind that they may not get through to the Director of Children's Services (DCS) (or their equivalent) immediately. They should reserve sufficient time to ensure that they make direct contact.

¹ Ofsted has specific powers (under section 11A-C) of the Education Act 2005 (as amended) to investigate certain complaints known as qualifying complaints. Further guidance is available at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/complaints-ofsted-about-schools-guidance-for-parents>.

11. If the DCS (or their equivalent) is unavailable, the lead inspector should ask to speak to the most senior officer available with responsibility for the improvement of schools. Once the lead inspector has spoken to the local authority and is able to confirm that the inspection will take place, she/he will send formal confirmation to the local authority by email.
12. The purpose of the lead inspector's notification call is to:
 - inform the local authority of the inspection
 - make arrangements for the inspection; this includes an invitation to the DCS (or their equivalent and/or nominee) to participate in main inspection team meetings
 - make arrangements for discussions with key elected members, senior officers and other staff/partners
 - make arrangements for a meeting with the lead elected member for education (or similar) and other officials and/or councillors
 - invite the local authority to share a summary of its self-evaluation (if available) and contextual background on day one of the inspection fieldwork
 - request that relevant documents from the local authority are made available as soon as possible from the start of the inspection
 - provide an opportunity for the local authority to raise any initial questions.
13. The telephone call is an important opportunity to initiate a professional relationship between the lead inspector and the local authority. It should be focused on practical issues. Inspectors should not use this as an opportunity to probe or investigate the local authority's self-evaluation or any other matters.
14. Inspectors should also request that the following information is made available at the start of the inspection:
 - if available, a summary of the local authority's self-evaluation (if not already shared with the lead inspector) regarding arrangements to support school improvement and their impact on improving schools
 - the current local authority strategic plan for education, including details of partnership arrangements, commissioning, brokerage and any evaluation reports and/or reports to elected members
 - documentation about how arrangements for monitoring, challenge, intervention and support are provided, including details of the application of statutory obligations and powers
 - the local authority data sets about school performance and any analysis of it
 - case study material regarding targeted school improvement work and its impact
 - school improvement or similar staff list, where relevant, with roles and responsibilities

- information regarding strategies used to support leadership and management in schools and evidence of its impact
- evidence of the work of governors support services and their impact on improving governance
- evidence to demonstrate how the local authority uses any available funding to effect improvement, particularly how it is focused on areas of greatest need.

Requests for deferral

15. If a local authority requests a deferral of its inspection the lead inspector must notify Ofsted via the appropriate Regional Director as soon as possible. Ofsted will decide whether this request should be granted in accordance with Ofsted's policy on the deferral of inspections. The deferral policy makes clear that the absence of the Chief Executive or DCS (or their equivalent) is not normally a reason for deferring an inspection.

During the inspection

The start of the on-site inspection

16. Inspectors must show their identity badges on arrival and ensure that the Chief Executive and DCS (or equivalent) have been informed of their arrival. Inspectors should ensure that inspection activity starts promptly.
17. The lead inspector should meet briefly with the Chief Executive and/or DCS (or their equivalents or representatives) at the beginning of the inspection to:
 - introduce team inspectors and other attendees
 - make arrangements for a longer meeting on day one to receive the local authority's self-evaluation and contextual briefing and any other relevant matters
 - confirm arrangements for meetings with representatives of the local authority and schools
 - confirm arrangements for providing feedback at the end of each day and at the end of the inspection
 - request information about staff absence and other practical issues
18. A short team meeting should take place to clarify the areas to be explored, inspection activities and individual roles and responsibilities.

Gathering and recording evidence

19. Inspectors must spend as much time as possible gathering and triangulating evidence that will ensure a robust first-hand evidence base against the scope of the inspection in order to arrive at a fair judgement about the effectiveness of the arrangements to support school improvement.

20. Inspectors must record their evidence clearly and legibly in the evidence notebook, ensuring that all relevant sections are completed for all evidence-gathering activities. This includes records of analyses of data and the evidence that underpins key judgements. The notebook should also be used to summarise the main points of discussion when feeding back to senior officers and elected members.
21. Notebooks may be scrutinised for the purposes of retrieval and quality assurance monitoring and in the event of a complaint. It is important that inspectors record accurately the time spent gathering the evidence in the notebook. Inspectors should highlight or identify any information that was provided 'in confidence'.
22. The lead inspector should then coordinate the summary of the evidence and judgements made in the summary notebook. This is used to inform final feedback and the inspection report and is part of the inspection evidence base.

The use of data on inspection

23. Inspectors should use a range of data to inform the evaluation of a local authority's performance, including that found in the local authority RAISEonline, and examination of the local authority's own data sets where available. No single measure or indicator necessarily determines judgements.
24. The data, including that provided by the local authority, should be used to:
 - check the accuracy of the local authority's assessment of school performance, pupils' progress and attainment levels
 - check the robustness and accuracy of the local authority's self-evaluation (where available).

Meetings with elected members, senior and operational staff, school-based staff and governors and other stakeholders

25. It is important that every opportunity must be taken to discuss the arrangements for supporting school improvement and their impact with the full range of senior and operational staff and stakeholders in the local authority.
26. Inspectors are highly likely to conduct meetings with:
 - elected Members of the Council, particularly those responsible for education
 - the Chief Executive
 - The DCS (or their equivalent)
 - the head of school improvement (or their equivalent)
 - local authority staff, or contracted staff who support school improvement
 - school improvement data manager(s)

- chair/vice chair of the schools' forum
 - other agencies involved in school improvement such as National/Local Leaders of Education/training schools and /or other contracted partners
 - post-16 strategic planning representative
 - headteachers of schools subject to intervention or intensive support
 - headteachers of schools subject to light touch monitoring
 - governors as above
 - governor support services (or their equivalent) staff
 - other stakeholders as appropriate.
27. In drawing on evidence from meetings with staff and other stakeholders, every endeavour must be made not to identify individuals. There may, however, be circumstances in which it is not possible to guarantee the anonymity of the interviewee. Inspectors have a duty to pass on disclosures that raise child protection or safeguarding issues and/or where there are concerns about serious misconduct or criminal activity.

How the Director of Children's Services (or their equivalent) or representative is involved in the inspection

28. The lead inspector should meet the DCS (or their equivalent) or their nominee throughout the inspection to:
- provide an update on emerging issues, and enable further evidence to be provided
 - allow the DCS, their equivalent or nominee to raise concerns, including those related to the conduct of the inspection or of individual inspectors
 - alert the DCS to any serious concerns.
29. The outcomes of all meetings with the DCS (or their equivalent) or nominee should be recorded in the evidence notebook.

Team meetings held during the inspection

30. The inspection team should meet briefly at different points during the course of the inspection to reflect on their respective evidence and discuss emerging findings. Where possible, the DCS, their equivalent or nominee should be invited to attend more formal team meetings where emerging and final judgements are discussed. Inspectors should record such meetings in the evidence notebook.
31. If there is evidence that the local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement may be judged 'ineffective' the lead inspector should alert the Chief Executive and the DCS or their equivalent to this possibility. It must be emphasised that final judgements are not made until the final team meeting

towards the end of the inspection week. In some instances, inspectors may need to consider evidence further after the end of the on-site inspection before arriving at their judgements.

Reaching final judgements

32. The team should ensure that time is set aside to prepare for the final team meeting and the final feedback. There should also be sufficient time planned for the team to meet, to consider the evidence available, and make judgements. The judgement should be recorded and key points for feedback should be identified as the meeting progresses. In advance of the final feedback to the local authority, the lead inspector should contact Ofsted's relevant Regional Director to discuss the findings and the overarching judgement.

Providing feedback to the local authority

33. Following the end of the inspection there must be a brief feedback meeting including the DCS or their equivalent, the lead elected member and Chief Executive where possible. It is for the lead inspector to decide, following discussion with the DCS or equivalent, whether other senior staff should be present. If it is appropriate, representatives from contracted partners for school improvement may also be invited by the DCS.
34. The lead inspector should explain to those present that the purpose of the feedback session is to share the main findings of the inspection and how the local authority can improve further. Those present may seek clarification about the judgements, but discussion should not be lengthy. Any feedback or comments should be in the form of professional and objective language and should not include informal remarks that may be personally damaging to the reputation of a member of staff or to the professionalism of the inspectors. Key points raised at the feedback should be summarised and recorded in the evidence notebook.
35. In the event that the DCS (or their equivalent) has declined or has been unable to take up the opportunities to engage with the inspection team, the lead inspector should prepare a more extended formal feedback meeting. In such circumstances, the lead inspector should inform the DCS (or their equivalent) of the main findings in advance of the extended formal feedback meeting.
36. Before leaving, the lead inspector must ensure that the local authority is clear:
 - about the overarching judgement determining whether the local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement are effective or not unless evidence needs further consideration
 - that any judgement may be subject to change as a result of moderation and should, therefore, be treated as confidential until the local authority receives a copy of the final inspection report

- that the strengths and weaknesses and main findings of the inspection and the main points provided orally in the feedback will be referred to in the text of the report subject to quality assurance and moderation
- about the recommendations for improvement
- about the procedures leading to the publication of the report
- about (where relevant) the implications of the local authority being recommended for re-inspection.

Where an LA is judged ineffective in its arrangements for supporting school improvement

37. Inspectors will consider whether or not the local authority requires re-inspection within nine to 12 months.
38. Where an LA inspection of arrangements to support school improvement is judged to be ineffective, the timescale for publication of the report is extended so that the judgements can be moderated and confirmed by HMCI.

After the inspection

Arrangements for publication of the report

39. The report will be forwarded to the DCS (or their equivalent) for a factual accuracy check shortly after the end of the inspection. The local authority will have three working days to respond. The lead inspector will respond to the comments about factual accuracy.
40. Local authorities judged as 'effective' will normally receive an electronic version of the final report within 20 working days of the end of the on-site inspection.
41. Once a local authority has received its final report, it is required to take such steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that stakeholders receive a copy of the report within five working days. After that time, the report will be published on Ofsted's website. Local authorities will be required to respond with a written statement setting out what action it proposes to take in light of the report of inspection findings and setting out a timetable for those actions. The local authority must publish the letter report and action plan.

Quality assurance and complaints

How are inspections quality assured?

42. Responsibility for assuring the quality of the inspection and the subsequent report lies with Ofsted. The lead inspector is expected to set clear expectations for the team and ensure that those expectations are met. The lead inspector must ensure that all judgements are supported by evidence and that the way in which the inspection is conducted meets the expected standard.

43. Some inspections are subject to quality assurance by HMI and/or Senior HMI. When an external quality assurance visit is scheduled, the lead inspector should explain clearly the purpose and likely format of the visit during the initial telephone conversation with the local authority.

What happens if a local authority has a concern or complaint during the inspection?

44. If a local authority raises a concern or complaint during the course of an inspection, the lead inspector should seek to resolve it directly. It is often easier to resolve issues on the spot and this helps to avoid formal complaints later.

Review and evaluation

45. This handbook, the accompanying framework for inspection and other inspection instruments will be evaluated and reviewed at the end of 2013 as set out in Ofsted's consultation report. The instruments will also be reviewed to ensure that the inspection process and methodology are aligned to any wider accountability systems.

Part 2: The evaluation schedule – how local authorities will be judged

46. The evaluation schedule sets out the sources of evidence and grade descriptors that guide inspectors in judging the effectiveness of school improvement arrangements provided by the local authorities they inspect. The schedule is not exhaustive and does not replace the professional judgement of inspectors.
47. The evaluation schedule must be used in conjunction with the guidance set out in Part 1 of this document – How local authorities will be inspected. Inspectors must interpret the effectiveness descriptors in relation to the context of each local authority.

Judging the effectiveness of arrangements to support school improvement

48. Inspectors must judge the extent to which the local authority's arrangements for supporting school improvement are effective or ineffective. This is the overarching judgement.
49. In order to make a judgement about the effectiveness of arrangements to support school improvement, inspectors must take into account the following aspects:
 - the effectiveness of corporate and strategic leadership of school improvement
 - the clarity and transparency of policy and strategy for supporting schools' and other providers' improvement, and how clearly the local authority has defined its monitoring, challenge, support and intervention roles
 - the extent to which the local authority knows schools and other providers, their performance and the standards they achieve and how effectively support is focused on areas of greatest need
 - the effectiveness of the local authority's identification of, and intervention in, underperforming schools, including the use of formal powers available to the local authority
 - the impact of local authority support and challenge over time and the rate at which schools and other providers are improving
 - the extent to which the local authority brokers support for schools and other providers
 - the effectiveness of strategies to support highly effective leadership and management in schools and other providers
 - support and challenge for school governance, where applicable

- the way the local authority uses any available funding to effect improvement, including how it is focused on areas of greatest need.
50. Inspection is primarily about evaluating how well the arrangements for supporting school improvement are working and whether they are having sufficient impact in improving standards, progress and the quality of provision in schools and other providers.
 51. In making their judgements, inspectors draw on the available evidence, use their professional knowledge and consider the guidance in this document and, in particular, the effectiveness descriptors for the aspects of inspection.

Local authorities and academies

Inspectors should note that local authorities have no specific powers of intervention in relation to academy schools. Local authority powers of intervention as set out under part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 **do not** apply to academy schools, which are state-funded independent schools. In terms of standards in academies, and holding sponsors to account for this, the lead responsibility lies with the Department for Education and the Schools Commissioner.

The form of relationship between academies and local authorities is largely for the academies to determine. There is no statutory requirement for them to establish such a relationship beyond that which is required for the delivery of local authority statutory duties, such as the making and reviewing of special educational needs statements, securing sufficient education in an area and provision of home-to-school transport for eligible children.

Despite this, local authorities retain a legal responsibility for performance in the area as a whole, under the 1996 Education Act.² In addition, the Secretary of State has made clear the expectation for local authorities to act as strategic commissioners for **all** schools. Where the local authority has concerns about the performance of an academy, inspectors should explore whether the local authority has, within the confines of its responsibilities, taken reasonable steps to discuss this with the individual establishment, the executive leadership and governance of the chain, and/or the Department for Education, where appropriate.

The effectiveness of arrangements for supporting school improvement

52. When reporting on the effectiveness of arrangements, inspectors must evaluate evidence for each of the nine key aspects above and identify pertinent strengths and weaknesses. Inspectors will then judge the extent to which the

² For further information, see:

www.education.gov.uk/schools/leadership/typesofschools/academies/la/a00205173/local-authorities-faqs#faq6.

arrangements are having sufficient impact and making the important contribution to school improvement. Irrespective of how the arrangements in the local authority are configured, inspectors must consider the impact of the local authority in improving standards and the quality of education in schools.

53. In judging the overall effectiveness of the local authority's arrangements for supporting school improvement, inspectors consider whether:
- the local authority is **effective** in its arrangements to support school improvement
 - the local authority is **ineffective** in its arrangements to support school improvement. A local authority will be ineffective because the arrangements for supporting school improvement are not having the required impact as reflected in the effectiveness descriptors.

Effectiveness descriptors –the arrangements for supporting school improvement

Note: These descriptors should not be used as a checklist. They must be applied adopting a 'best fit' approach which relies on the professional judgement of the inspection team and taking into account the context of the local authority.

Aspect	Descriptors for effective arrangements to support school improvement.
	Corporate leadership and strategic planning
1. The effectiveness of corporate and strategic leadership of school improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Elected members and senior officers have an ambitious vision for improving schools, which is clearly demonstrated in public documents. Elected members articulate the local authority's (LAs) strategic role, and enhance schools' ability to self-manage. Accountability is transparent and efficiently monitored in a systematic way. Members' challenge of officers is well informed by high quality information and data. ■ There is coherent and consistent challenge to schools and other providers to ensure that high proportions of children and young people have access to a good quality education. ■ Communications and consultation are transparent and lead to a shared understanding with schools. Schools respect and trust credible senior officers, who listen and respond to their views and advice. ■ Senior officers ensure that strategies for school improvement are understood clearly by schools, other providers and stakeholders. There is tangible evidence that the strategy is effective in preventing failure, securing higher proportions of schools 'getting to good' and eroding inequality in different areas of the LA. ■ Elected members and senior officers exercise their duties in relation to securing sufficient suitable provision for all 16-19 year olds and in respect of raising the participation age (RPA) requirements.
2. The clarity and transparency of policy and strategy for supporting schools and other providers' improvement, and how clearly the LA has defined its	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Priorities in the LA's plans for school improvement (including commissioning plans) are clearly articulated and reflect both national priorities and local circumstances. ■ Schools and other providers and stakeholders have been fully consulted and agree the strategy and priorities for school improvement. ■ Plans for school improvement demonstrate close

monitoring, challenge, support and intervention roles	<p>integration with the programme for differentiated LA support and intervention.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reliable and valid measures are used to monitor progress of the school improvement strategy. Evaluation of its impact is comprehensive and regular and its effect on standards and effectiveness of schools and other providers is identified. ■ The rationale for support is explicit, flexible, tailored to need and endorsed by schools and other providers. Every effort is made to coordinate partnership arrangements and expertise residing within schools. ■ The LA promotes the effective participation of all 16- and 17-year-olds in education and training and makes arrangements identify young people who are not participating. ■ The LA's definitions, arrangements, procedures and criteria for monitoring, challenge, intervention and support are clear, sharply focused, comprehensive and understood by school leaders and governors.
	Monitoring, challenge, intervention and support
3. The extent to which the LA knows its schools and other providers, their performance and the standards they achieve and how effectively support is focused on areas of greatest need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Senior officers and schools make intelligent use of pertinent performance data and management information to review and/or revise strategies for school improvement. ■ The LA systematically and rigorously uses data and other information effectively to identify schools which are underperforming. It uses this information consistently to channel its support to areas of greatest need, resulting in interventions and challenge that lead to improved outcomes in schools and other providers. ■ The LA provides a comprehensive range of performance data, including data about the local performance of different pupil groups, local benchmarking and post-16 destinations comparative data. Schools and other providers have high regard for this, which is influential in helping them to identify school based performance priorities. ■ School improvement staff are well equipped to use data and to challenge and support schools.
4. The effectiveness of the LA's identification of, and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Where appropriate, the LA deploys its formal powers of intervention promptly and decisively. ■ Weaknesses are typically identified early and

<p>intervention in, underperforming schools, including the use of formal powers available to the LA</p>	<p>tackled promptly and incisively. Headteachers, staff and governors in all schools causing concern to Ofsted and the LA, and those schools requiring improvement to become good, receive well planned, co-ordinated support, differentiated according to their needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The LA engages systems leaders to support and challenge those in need and actively promotes sector led improvement. ■ Progress of schools and other providers is monitored regularly and to a planned programme. Reports to headteachers and governing bodies are fit for purpose. The work of the LA with its underperforming schools and providers results in sustained improvements in standards and provision. ■ The progress of schools causing concern is kept under continuous review by senior officers and scrutinised by elected members frequently and regularly. Robust action is taken where progress is judged to be insufficient.
<p>5. The impact of LA support and challenge over time and the rate at which schools and other providers are improving</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Timely, differentiated intervention and coordinated strategies to support school leadership contribute to the improvement of school performance. All services recognise and actively support the autonomy of schools. ■ Support services, either provided or procured, are well coordinated and accurately focused to make a sustainable improvement to overall educational standards and performance. ■ The number of schools on the LA's own list of schools causing concern is reducing rapidly. Inequalities in the quality of education in schools and other providers in different areas of the LA are minimal and reducing. ■ The support and challenge of the LA to its providers is rigorous, sharply focused on areas of greatest need, and results in sustained improvements in standards and provision. ■ With very few exceptions, schools are either at least good or improving rapidly.
<p>6. The extent to which the LA commissions and brokers support for schools and other providers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Schools and other providers are clear about what is provided by the LA or brokered or commissioned from other sources. Support brokered (and monitored) by the LA leads to sustained improvement. ■ The LA has comprehensive knowledge of best practice within and beyond the LA that is drawn from wide sources of information and routinely

	shared with schools. Local networks and collaborative work between schools are well established and linked to an identified strategy, with evidence of sustained improvement. There are well developed links with partners, including further education, vocational providers and higher education.
	Support and challenge for leadership and management (including governance)
7. The effectiveness of strategies to support highly effective leadership and management in schools and other providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The LA provides or secures expert advice and differentiated training for headteachers, governors and middle managers. This support and training is improving the capacity of schools and other providers to develop accurate self-evaluation and secure continuous improvement. ■ The LA identifies accurately all schools that need support or intervention for leadership and management and governance, including the prompt application of statutory powers when necessary. ■ The LA brokers or commissions effective school-to-school or other support for leadership and management in weaker schools.
8. Support and challenge for school governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Where school performance and effectiveness is a cause for concern, the LA acts promptly to remedy concerns, including applying its powers of intervention, with demonstrable evidence of rapid and sustained improvement. ■ The LA has a successful strategy for managing governor recruitment and retention of high quality governors. The LA has access to experienced governors who are prepared to be deployed to, or support, governing bodies of schools causing concern or those schools not yet good. ■ Governors are deployed where they are needed and any weaknesses in governance are being acted on. ■ Training programmes for new governors and chairs are of good quality, well attended and highly valued, utilising a range of modes of delivery.
	Use of resources
9. The way the LA uses any available funding to effect improvement, including how it is	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Resourcing decisions are based on an accurate analysis of the needs of schools. ■ The LA undertakes regular and thorough reviews of the cost-effectiveness of any resource allocation and acts decisively and

focused on areas of greatest need	<p>effectively on its findings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The LA's budget-setting process is based on a thorough and detailed review of spending needs and is both timely and transparent. Consultation on the budget ensures that the deployment of LA resources are well understood by schools and other providers. ■ The LA rigorously monitors and challenges the sufficiency and use of resources and those delegated to schools.
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Guidance for inspectors

All nine key aspects of a local authority's arrangements for supporting school improvement should be evaluated. For reporting purposes, the nine aspects have been aligned into four reporting areas, as follows:

- corporate leadership and strategic planning
- monitoring, challenge, intervention and support
- support and challenge for leadership and management (including governance)
- use of resources

As previously stated, inspectors are likely to encounter significant diversity in the way in which local authorities configure their arrangements for supporting school improvement. Professional judgement should be applied at all times when evaluating the effectiveness and impact of the arrangements on school improvement.

Inspectors should note that the framework for inspection is focused on school improvement and what the local authority does to effect improvement. It is very likely that other important services have a part to play in supporting school improvement, such as human resources, early years services, admissions and school place planning, pupil and student services for those with additional needs. Inspectors should take care to ensure that these services, where encountered, are not inspected discretely, as they fall beyond the remit of this inspection framework. However, where such services are making a significant contribution to coordinated strategies for improvement, or otherwise, reference may be made to this when evaluating the strengths and weaknesses and arriving at the overarching judgement about effectiveness.

Corporate leadership and strategic planning

Inspection must examine the impact of corporate and operational leadership and evaluate how efficiently and effectively the local authority school improvement arrangements are led and managed.

Inspectors should consider:

- the local authority's vision for better education and how strategic planning has matched the delivery of those changes
- the quality of its decision making, including the effectiveness of its consultation with schools and other parties
- the commitment of members and senior officers to school improvement
- the degree to which schools understand the strategy and the priorities for school improvement.

Monitoring, challenge, intervention and support

Inspection must examine the impact of the arrangements for monitoring, challenge, intervention and support.

Inspectors should consider:

- how effectively, or otherwise, the local authority uses pertinent data and management information to inform actions within the area
- the effectiveness and responsiveness of its monitoring of schools
- the form, nature and particularly the impact of its challenge to schools
- how swiftly, robustly and effectively the local authority has intervened, particularly in schools causing concern
- the quality of the support that the local authority has led, brokered and commissioned (and monitored) to enable schools to improve standards and outcomes for children and young people
- the use and effectiveness of formal powers of intervention
- how effectively the local authority engages systems leaders, National and Local Leaders of Education or training schools in promoting sector-led improvement
- the extent to which any significant regional variation in school performance in the local authority area has been tackled successfully.

Support and challenge for leadership and management (including governance)

Inspection must examine how effectively the local authority arrangements promote and support highly effectively leadership, management and governance in schools.

Inspectors should consider:

- the effectiveness of the local authority's support for senior and middle managers across its schools, from those graded outstanding to those in categories of concern

- the precision with which support or intervention is identified, including the prompt application of statutory powers where appropriate
- strategies for the recruitment and training of senior managers and governors
- how effectively the local authority arrangements are promoting autonomy and utilising systems and sector-led resources
- the support and challenge of the local authority for governing bodies; this should take account of the effectiveness of any brokered or in-house training aimed at improving governors' ability to challenge the senior leadership team and to interrogate and question schools on their data and information. Lead inspectors should also take account of any training the local authority has sponsored on the use of such aspects as the School data dashboard.

Use of resources

Inspection must examine how any available funding/resources are deployed to effect improvement.

Inspectors should consider:

- how well the local authority has used any resources (such as staffing, local authority's training courses, funding) and their sufficiency to support schools to achieve best value for money
- how resourcing decisions are made and understood by schools
- how delegated resources to schools are monitored and challenged where appropriate.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

1st October 2013



Report of: Assistant Director, Education

Subject: VULNERABLE SCHOOLS AND SCHOOLS
CAUSING CONCERN

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non-key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to present the updated 'Schools Causing Concern: Support and Challenge Protocol' (**Appendix 1**) originally adopted by the Children and Community Services Portfolio on 23rd October 2012.
- 2.2 The 'Schools Causing Concern: Support and Challenge Protocol' details the procedures that the Local Authority will follow for:
- (a) identifying a school judged to be temporarily vulnerable or, over time, causing concern;
 - (b) supporting and challenging the school to bring about improvement;
 - (c) monitoring the school's self-evaluation of its improvement.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The provisions in Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as updated by September 2012 Advice to Local Authorities) relating to schools causing concern place a responsibility upon a Local Authority to identify any of its schools that are causing concern and to act accordingly to bring about improvement in order to "... ensure that every pupil is provided with the education and opportunities they deserve".
- 3.2 To address this issue, to further develop an understanding of the overall performance of all of its schools and to identify any specific school(s) causing concern, the '*Schools Causing Concern: Support and Challenge Protocol*' has been updated. This will ensure that schools and the Local Authority work together to address identified areas of concern promptly and

effectively. The overriding priority is to support the school to provide the best possible environment to help children and young people maximize their potential and make the progress they deserve.

- 3.3 The updated '*Schools Causing Concern: Support and Challenge Protocol*' now reflects the requirements of the OFSTED 'Framework for the Inspection of Local Authority Arrangements for Supporting School Improvement', introduced in May 2013.

4. PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The updated '*Schools Causing Concern: Support and Challenge Protocol*' will be introduced in the Autumn term 2013. It will be used to inform judgments made at the December 2013 'School Review Meeting'.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 To note the contents of this report and agree to the implementation of the updated processes for supporting and challenging Hartlepool schools to further improve.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Children and Community Services Portfolio Decision Record 23rd October 2012;

OFSTED Framework for the Inspection of Local Authority Support for School Improvement ref: OFSTED 130040

7. CONTACT OFFICER

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HARTLEPOOL LA SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE PROTOCOL: SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN

September 2013

Introduction

Hartlepool Local Authority has a duty to promote high standards of education in its schools, to monitor the performance of schools and to support and challenge them in their efforts to improve.

This document outlines the strategic approach that Hartlepool Local Authority will take to support school improvement, target setting and school self-evaluation. A key principle underpinning this document is to ensure that all schools and stakeholders are clear about the strategy and procedures that the Local Authority will follow for supporting and challenging school improvement and monitoring school self-evaluation.

Support and Challenge

Context

Hartlepool LA has a higher than average number of good and outstanding schools with several appearing in the HMCI annual reports for good and outstanding schools over the last few years. The majority of Hartlepool schools are judged by OFSTED to be good.

Partnership and collaboration are key factors in the authority's strategy for support and challenge. There is a good level of collaboration amongst both the primary and secondary headteachers with several successful initiatives, such as the Hartlepool Teaching School Alliance, resulting in strong partnerships among our schools.

Hartlepool LA seeks to support schools in becoming more autonomous and successful. To achieve this, and for the purposes of monitoring the performance of schools, great emphasis is placed upon the accuracy and effectiveness of schools' own self-evaluation processes, their school improvement planning and the impact this has upon learning.

The School Improvement Partner (SIP) is crucial to this process. On behalf of the LA, the SIP conducts the 'Single Conversation' with the school about statutory targets, the process and outcomes of self-evaluation, priorities for development and any support required from the LA and the Hartlepool Teaching School Alliance. Schools determine the external support they need in order to achieve improvement priorities and targets. The local authority can offer / commission support for schools through:

- Service Level Agreements
- Hartlepool Teaching School Alliance
- Assisted School Reviews
- Consultant / Advisory Teacher Support
- Leadership Development Programmes

- Specialist teams such as Educational Psychology, Early Years and Inclusion
- Specialist Leaders in Education
- Local Leaders in Education
- National Leaders in Education
- National Support Schools

Visits from the School Improvement Partner

In order to establish a shared understanding and consistency around what is expected of schools, the SIP will make use of the criteria provided by OFSTED to determine judgements about standards and achievement, leadership and management, the effectiveness of teaching and learning and any safeguarding issues that are apparent. These criteria, together with discussion with the headteacher, will be used to make judgements about the school's performance. In addition, the SIP will be reporting on the school's self-evaluation systems and its capacity to sustain improvement.

Supporting Schools to Set Challenging Targets

The role of the SIP is to support schools in setting and achieving ambitious target. This will be done by guiding the review of data, taking into account national data sets and the current DfE floor standards, challenging where the target indicates low expectations of progress or outcomes and ensuring that additional support is available, if needed, to improve teaching and learning. The SIP will focus on pupil achievement across the ability range, including the achievement of identified vulnerable groups.

NOTE: Those schools that do not buy back the SIP programme from the Local Authority are supported through the 'Supporting Non-SIP Schools' protocol (Appendix 1).

CATEGORISATION OF SCHOOLS AND THE PROTOCOL FOR INTENSIVE SUPPORT AND CHALLENGE

The purpose of categorisation and this protocol is to help schools and the Local Authority work together to address identified areas of concern promptly and effectively. The overriding priority is to support the school to provide the best possible environment to help children and young people maximize their potential and make the progress they are capable of.

The protocol is based upon the guidance contained in Part 4 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006: the provisions relating to schools causing concern. The statutory guidance for Local Authorities on *Schools Causing Concern* (DfE 2012) gives the legal duties and contextual circumstances under which the provisions of the Act can be utilised. Part 4 of the Act builds on existing statutory powers and good practice that exist to “... ensure that every pupil is provided with the education and opportunities they deserve”. It does this by:

- **Promoting early action to tackle school underperformance** defined as:
 - *‘where standards are unacceptably low and are likely to remain so*
 - *where there has been a serious breakdown in the way the school is managed or governed which is prejudicing standards of performance*
 - *the safety of staff or pupils is threatened*
- **Ensuring that effective support and challenge is provided immediately** when an unacceptable standard of education is identified so that improvements can be made quickly;
- **Securing decisive action if a school requiring Significant Improvement or Special Measures (OFSTED Grade 4 Inadequate) fails to make sufficient improvements**, so that the education and life chances of pupils are safeguarded”

(DfE - Statutory Guidance on Schools Causing Concern October 2012)

At the termly School Review Meeting, every school will be RAG-rated by the Local Authority, using a range of evidence, according to the attached criteria (Appendix 2).

Following this termly RAG-rating categorisation of all schools, any school judged to be amber or red/amber will be deemed as potentially vulnerable and any school judged to be red will be a school causing concern. The categorisation process is based upon a comprehensive set of quantitative and qualitative indicators that are individually and collectively RAG rated. These indicators encompass the key national indicators that are used to underpin OFSTED inspection and other external judgements, along with a number that are locally determined. The indicators are specified in the attached Appendix 2.

The school's rating will be shared with the Headteacher as soon as possible following the termly School Review Meeting. It is the responsibility of the Headteacher to share this rating with the school's Governing Body.

Where a school has been identified as being in either the red or amber category, the Local Authority will notify the school in writing of its concerns and the agreed support plan.

The ratings will be notified to the Director of Child and Adult Services and the Chair of the Children's Services Committee termly.

The Support and Challenge Continuum

There are three levels of support and challenge for vulnerable schools:

Low Level LA Intervention



Level 1

Targeted support from teams within the education department

Level 2

Local Authority Focus Group – see attached Appendix 3

Level 3

Local Authority Officer Group – see attached Appendix 3

High Level LA Intervention

If it is clear that the school is not going to make, or has not made, sufficient progress following high level Local Authority intervention, the Local Authority will consider issuing a Warning Notice to the school.

The issuing of the Warning Notice will be in line with the statutory guidance provided by the Department for Education (September 2012) in accordance with Section 60 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Appendix 1: Supporting Non-SIP Schools 2013-14

Protocol for gathering information by the Local Authority in order to support schools not in the SIP programme

The Local Authority's *School Improvement Partner (SIP) Programme* is the preferred method of providing appropriately trained, moderated and quality-assured professional support and challenge to Headteachers, senior leaders and governors in Hartlepool schools. However, some schools choose to take this support and challenge from sources other than the LA programme.

In order to gather information efficiently from schools that are not in the Local Authority *SIP Programme 2013-14*, it is proposed that the Headteacher and Chair of Governors (or equivalent) of such schools meet with the Assistant Director or the Senior School Improvement Officer in the second half of each term on an agreed date. This information will be used to:

- inform the regular dialogue between senior LA officers and Ofsted/DfE;
- identify good and outstanding practice that may be shared across the Hartlepool Teaching School Alliance (TSA) of schools;
- provide LA and TSA support in order to improve school performance, where this is appropriate.

The anticipated outcomes from each termly meeting will be:

- a review of 'headline' pupil outcomes, i.e. the updating of a **scorecard**;
- to receive an updated **summary SEF** from the school;
- a discussion around current school improvement priorities and barriers;
- to agree any Local Authority and school actions to sustain or improve performance.

The information gathered from these discussions will be held securely and confidentially.

Scorecard

This is a simple but effective sheet that summarises past performance of the school and national benchmarks in key indicators of pupil achievement, attendance and exclusions, and provides indicative data for the current academic year. Examples of the primary phase and secondary phase scorecards are available.

Summary SEF

A summary SEF should have:

- a maximum of 6 sides of A4 – one A4 side each on school context, Achievement, Quality of Teaching, Behaviour & Safety, Leadership & Management, Overall Effectiveness;
- clear judgements for each of the five Ofsted categories, with no split grades, but the best fit judgement based on the published Ofsted criteria;
- strengths and areas for improvement in each of the five Ofsted categories;
- a clear indication of why the judgement is not yet the 'next one up'.

Appendix 2: RAG-rating Criteria

These criteria are intended for use as part of Hartlepool's *School Support and Challenge Protocol*. These criteria should be read and used in the context of that document.

Vulnerability rating	Criteria likely to indicate a school's vulnerability
RED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School is in an Ofsted category There are serious concerns around learners' achievement, including groups of learners There are serious concerns around safeguarding There are serious concerns around leadership and management, including governance, and capacity to support improvement is weak or non-existent School is judged to be making inadequate progress as an outcome from a monitoring visit, or the pace of progress is too slow (as indicated by 'satisfactory' outcomes from two successive monitoring visits) LA intervention is very frequent and is lead by senior officers An Officer Group will be in place
AMBER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School judged satisfactory or requires improvement at its last inspection There are some concerns around learners' achievement, including groups of learners School may be placed into an Ofsted category or Require Improvement if inspected in the next term or two School is making at least satisfactory progress as an outcome from a monitoring visit Leadership and management, including governance, has the capacity to improve the school with external support School has had a significant change in leadership, either permanent (e.g. new Headteacher) or temporary (e.g. Headteacher absence) LA support and challenge likely to be frequent; a Focus or Officer group is likely to be in place
GREEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School judged good or better at its last inspection School is making good or better progress as an outcome from a monitoring visit Ongoing risk assessment by LA indicates no significant change likely in the next year 'Light touch' LA support and challenge likely to be required

The criteria above are intended as a guide and not a tick list.

RED/AMBER and **AMBER/RED**, along with **GREEN/AMBER** and **AMBER/GREEN** ratings indicate a possible transition between the 3 categories above in the next term or two, and will reflect the improvement journey of the school.

Appendix 3: LA Support and Challenge Groups

The Remit and Constitution of each Group

Context

As part of Hartlepool's *School Support and Challenge Protocol* senior officers in the Education Division may convene one of two types of 'group'. These are broadly outlined below for consideration and discussion, along with potential names (for consistency of communication).

These 'groups' are part of a continuum of support, challenge and intervention provided to all schools and academies as part of the Local Authority's statutory role and responsibility to "promote high standards of education" as set out under section 13A of the Education Act 1996. This continuum is described and explained fully in Hartlepool's *School Support and Challenge Protocol*, which also draws on the Local Authority's statutory duty to identify and support schools causing concern, as set out in Part 5 (sect 118) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Focus Group

- Led, convened and chaired by a senior LA officer
- Members = LA chair; Headteacher; other senior leader; Chair of Governors; Diocesan rep
- Optional members = other LA and/or school staff, as appropriate; external school improvement partner
- Meets at the school
- Frequency of meetings = very frequently initially (e.g. weekly or fortnightly), then monthly, then half-termly
- **Remit** – to support the school to a clearly indicated outcome. Commonest remit in Hartlepool is the Post Inspection Focus Group with a remit to support a school judged to require improvement at inspection on its journey of 'getting to good'.
- **RAG rating of school = AMBER** (the school is vulnerable and may be placed into an Ofsted category)

Officer Group

- Led, convened and chaired by the Assistant Director (Education)
- Members = LA chair, Headteacher; other senior leader; Chair of Governors; Diocesan rep; other LA officers with linked teams working with the school (typically Psychology, Attendance, HR, Finance)
- Optional members = other LA and/or school staff, as required; external school improvement partner
- Meets at LA offices
- Frequency of meetings = half-termly
- Fortnightly KIT (keeping in touch) meetings with a senior LA officer in order to maintain the pace of improvement
- **Remit** – to support the school more intensively following Focus Group intervention or to support the school intensively following an acute decline in outcomes, performance or capacity.
- **RAG rating of school = AMBER/RED or RED** (the school is very vulnerable and is very likely to be placed into an Ofsted category)

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

1st October 2013



Report of: Senior School Improvement Advisor

Subject: OFSTED INSPECTION OUTCOMES:
MARCH-JULY 2013

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

For information

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To provide a summary of the outcomes of Ofsted inspections of Hartlepool schools in the period March-July 2013.
- 2.2 To provide a summary of the proportion of good and outstanding schools in Hartlepool at the end of the academic year 2012-13.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The report follows on from the summary provided in the Report to Cabinet in April 2013.
- 3.2 Ofsted introduced a revised school inspection framework in September 2012. The aim of the revised schedule was to ensure that all schools in England are judged to be Outstanding (Grade 1) or Good (Grade 2). Any school judged to 'Require Improvement' (Grade 3) will be 'supported' by Ofsted to improve quickly. Schools judged to be 'Inadequate' (Grade 4) will be monitored by Ofsted half-termly.
- 3.3 Other features of the revised framework included
 - a focus on pupil progress from different starting points;
 - outstanding schools must have outstanding teaching;
 - an emphasis on the effectiveness of the Governing Body in supporting and challenging the school to improve;
 - scrutiny of the Local Authority's involvement with the school on a proportionate basis;

- reduce notice of inspection to midday on the day before the inspection is to begin;
- Grade 3 'Satisfactory' changed to Grade 3 'Requires Improvement' to mark the expectation that every school will be at least a 'good' school.

4. OUTCOMES SUMMARY

4.1 Catcote Special School, March 2013, judged GOOD overall

What the school does well:

- The headteacher, senior leaders and governors provide a clear and purposeful sense of direction. This is in their drive to improve the quality of teaching and students' achievement. Additionally, all the areas for improvement set at the last inspection are securely met.
- Overall the school has improved well since the last inspection. In some areas this is significantly so.
- Students of all ages and abilities make good progress from their starting points. Some students make outstanding progress. This is in reading, writing, mathematics and communication.
- Parents are happy with the provision and outcomes for their children and are supportive of staff.
- Outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is provided by the school. Carefully crafted experiences to participate in a variety of activities promote cultural knowledge and acceptance of difference.
- A variety of detailed and carefully planned curriculum routes meet students' needs exceptionally well.
- The quality of education provided in the 'sixth form' is good. Students participate in varied, interesting and relevant activities and support them well for life after school.
- Behaviour and safety are good. Students say they feel safe and that staff are 'awesome'.

Areas for improvement:

- Improve attendance further and reduce the proportion of BESD students who persistently do not attend school by:
 - ensuring greater liaison with students' previous school to gain knowledge on their pattern of attendance and strategies already used
 - working in partnership with families, especially those who are more hard to reach.
- Ensure teaching is more consistently outstanding in order to accelerate students' progress, especially those with BESD, by:
 - ensuring that all support staff are deployed well in lessons
 - ensuring all support staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to develop students' learning.

4.2 **Greatham Primary School, March 2013, judged GOOD overall**

What the school does well:

- Pupils make good progress and reach standards that are above average by Year 6. All pupils achieve well because their progress is carefully track3ed and those requiring support receive help that is precisely tailored to their needs.
- Leaders rigorously monitor the work of the school and take decisive action when improvements are needed. As a result, standards are rising at the end of Year 2 and the teaching of aspects of mathematics has strengthened.
- Learning in lessons is good. Staff plan interesting activities which inspire and motivate learners. Work is carefully marked and provides pupils with helpful prompts for improvement.
- Well trained support staff make a good contribution to learning in lessons.
- Pupils' excellent behaviour makes a strong contribution to their learning and positive relationships promote a friendly and welcoming atmosphere in school.
- Staff and governors share a common purpose and have high aspirations for pupils. Consequently, pupils try hard in lessons and make a strong contribution to the life of the school.
- Visits, visitors and links with the local and global community contribute exceptionally well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Parents appreciate the care that staff provide and value the support that their children receive with their learning.

Areas for improvement:

- Further improve pupils' progress by extending the best practice of the most effective teachers to all classes so that:-
 - tasks are consistently tailored precisely to the learning needs of differing groups.
 - instructions are clear so that all pupils know what they are learning and what is expected of them.
 - time is managed well so that all lessons progress at a brisk pace.
- Embed the newly established approaches to assessment in the Early Years Foundation Stage and use the information to:-
 - precisely identify children's next steps in learning.
 - consistently plan activities that are tailored to children's differing learning needs.

4.3 **Owton Manor Primary School, March 2013, judged GOOD overall**

What the school does well:

- Most children start school with skills that are well below those typically expected of their age and make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
- Achievement is good as pupils make good and sometimes outstanding progress through the school. As a result, most pupils reach standards in line with the national average by the time they leave in Year 6.
- Pupils enjoy reading. Most read a variety of texts fluently and talk confidently about their favourite authors. Less-able readers are supported well and make good progress.
- Disabled pupils, those who have special educational needs and those in the Resource Unit make good and sometimes better progress due to high-quality intervention and support.
- Teaching is good overall and some is outstanding due to the school's commitment to improving teaching.
- Pupils behave well and have a good understanding of how to keep safe.
- Attendance has improved and is now above average.
- The executive headteacher and acting headteacher provide purposeful and astute leadership which has improved both the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement.

Areas for improvement:

- Increase the proportion of pupils exceeding the level expected for their age in mathematics by the end of Year 6 by:
 - ensuring that information gathered from assessments is always used to pitch learning at appropriate levels, particularly for the more-able pupils.
 - giving pupils more problems to solve that extend their thinking.
 - moving pupils on more quickly when they have made progress in lessons.
- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by:
 - making sure that pupils know exactly what they are learning and what they need to achieve by the end of each lesson.
 - ensuring all pupils receive clear guidance on what they need to do to improve their work and that they are given the time to make the improvements needed.
 - providing opportunities for teachers to share the very best Practice within the school and in other schools.

4.4 St Teresa's RC Primary School, April 2013, judged **GOOD** overall

What the school does well:

- Children make good progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage because teachers are adept at acting upon the assessments of progress made during lessons.
- Good teaching and effective assessment procedures enable pupils to make good progress in all subjects in Years 1 to 6.
- Standards in English, both reading and writing, are significantly above average and are rising year on year. Pupils make outstanding progress in these subjects from their starting points.
- There are consistently high standards in the presentation of pupils' work across the whole school. Pupils are keen to read and to act upon the comments that teachers make about their work.
- Pupils are proud to attend St. Teresa's. They feel safe and behave well in school; they are polite, courteous and welcoming.
- Parents are happy with the information they receive about their children's progress.
- The newly appointed headteacher has effectively raised the quality of teaching and acted swiftly and successfully to address previous underachievement in mathematics. Pupils are now making good progress in this subject. After a recent dip in standards in mathematics, the school is now improving.
- There is a rich and broadly balanced curriculum in which the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- The governing body is tenacious in securing the best possible outcomes for pupils.

Areas for improvement:

- Raise achievement in mathematics by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use their skills in number to solve real-life and practical investigations and problems.
 - enabling pupils to independently choose the methods and resources required to undertake mathematical investigations.
- Further improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good and a greater proportion is outstanding by:
 - ensuring teachers have consistently high expectations of the more-able pupils.
 - planning activities which enable pupils of all abilities to make rapid progress in their learning.
 - creating wide-ranging opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills.
- Further strengthen the impact of leadership and management by:
 - developing a sharper overview of achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage.
 - ensuring the school improvement plan contains sharply focused targets to help leaders measure success.

4.5 Kingsley Primary School, May 2013, judged GOOD overall

What the school does well:

- Pupils throughout the school make good progress from their starting points and by the end of Year 6 standards are consistently above average in both English and mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make exceptional progress. This is because of the outstanding individual support they receive. Leadership of the resource-based provision is excellent.
- Pupils eligible for the pupil premium achieve well.
- Teaching is good overall and sometimes outstanding. Lessons are well prepared and very enjoyable. Pupils work hard.
- There is a strong focus on literacy and mathematics and pupils are given very good opportunities to improve their skills by practicing them in different subjects.
- This is a highly caring school where all children matter. The family centre offers a wide range of support and activities that are valued by everyone involved in the school.
- Pupils' courtesy and respect for each other shine through and underpin their outstanding behaviour. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding.
- Leaders and managers including governors share a strong belief in a school that meets the needs of all pupils and their families. As a result, they are committed to improving teaching and achievement.
- The leadership team has a very good understanding of the school and what is needed to improve achievement. After a dip in the number of pupils reaching higher levels in Year 6 national tests last year actions to address this were quickly put into place. These are having a positive effect on raising standards.

Areas for improvement:

- Improve teaching to be consistently good or better and hence accelerate progress by making sure:
 - work is carefully matched to pupils' individual abilities in all lessons.
 - there are enough opportunities in lessons for pupils to find things out for themselves.
 - that best practice in teaching is shared across the school.

4.6 Grange Primary School, May 2013, judged to REQUIRE IMPROVEMENT

The school has the following strengths:

- The behaviour of pupils is good and they have positive attitudes to learning. Pupils feel safe in school and are well looked after. They aspire to the school's motto, 'Be the best you can be'.
- Children make good progress in Early Years Foundation Stage.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is well supported by the school's curriculum and the range of activities it offers.
- The school is strongly committed to supporting pupils with a wide range of special educational needs.

Areas for improvement:

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is at least consistently good and results in pupils making faster progress by:
 - making sure that teachers set personalized targets for pupils that are linked to the activities they are currently working on so that they are able to identify more clearly what they must do to improve their work, particularly in mathematics.
 - ensuring that teachers' use of questioning to assess and extend learning during lessons provides greater challenge to pupils.
 - sharing the best practice in the use of additional teaching assistant support to ensure maximum benefit from this valuable resource.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - senior leaders and governors make sure that middle leaders, especially those new to role, have opportunities to refine and develop their leadership skills so that they have a positive impact on improving teaching in their areas of responsibility.
- Raise attainment in writing by:
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to write at length in a range of contexts and to practice their skills in different subjects.

4.7 Rossmere Primary School, May 2013, judged GOOD overall

What the school does well:

- Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well from their individual starting points.
- They make good progress overall in literacy and mathematics.
- Pupils write well. Their attainment in writing is above average.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in Year 6 because teaching is outstanding in those classes.
- Pupils are taught well, especially in literacy. Pupils say, 'the work is just about right, we have challenges and fun activities'.
- Behaviour is good. Pupils are happy, polite and chatty. They are clearly very proud of their school and keen to do well.
- Pupils feel safe. They say that adults in school look after them well and there is always someone to help them if they need it.

- The school is well led and managed. Teachers have a share in leadership and management and so the school is improving at a good rate.
- The leadership of teaching is a strength. As a result, teaching is now good and pupils' achievement improves each year.
- Governors give good support to the school and help it to improve further.

Areas for improvement:

- In order to improve so that it is outstanding, the school should:
 - give excellent practitioners the opportunity to work alongside colleagues so they can share very effective ways of teaching.
 - ensure that teachers ask questions that make pupils think for themselves and give them the chance to ask questions and find things out for themselves.
 - make sure that marking points out to pupils what they need to do to improve their work and teachers give pupils time to act on these suggestions so that they learn from their mistakes.

4.8 **West Park Primary School, June 2013, judged GOOD overall**

What the school does well:

- Pupils make good progress from their respective starting points, reaching high standards in reading, writing and mathematics by Year 6.
- The progress of individual pupils is carefully tracked so that those needing extra help receive the support that they need. As a result, all groups of pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Children make a good start to their learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage where strong relationships ensure children quickly grow in confidence and independence.
- Teachers plan interesting lessons that promote pupils' good learning over time.
- Parents and pupils are confident that behaviour is good. Pupils say that they are very happy in school because staff look after them well.
- Pupils demonstrate their initiative and responsibility in the significant contributions that they make to the life of the school.
- Leaders and governors monitor the work of the school in order to accurately identify areas for improvement. Action taken has been successful in maintaining high standards in reading and further raising standards in writing and mathematics.
- The rich and varied curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well.

Areas for improvement:

- Further improve teaching by extending the most effective approaches, already used by some teachers in school, to all classes by ensuring in particular that all teachers consistently:
 - use questioning that challenges pupils' thinking and deepens their understanding.
 - match activities precisely to pupils' next steps in learning.
 - make regular checks during lessons to identify and address misconceptions.
 - ensure that pupils respond to marking to improve their work.
- Further improve progress by ensuring that managers with responsibility for subjects make greater use of information from the analysis of assessment data and work in pupils' books to that any decline in progress is accurately and swiftly identified and addressed.

4.9 **St. Peter's CE Primary School, Elwick, June 2013, judged to REQUIRE IMPROVEMENT**

The school has the following strengths:

- The new executive headteacher has taken effective action to improve the quality of teaching through the provision of detailed feedback to teachers on how to improve the impact of their practice.
- Behaviour is good because the school succeeds in encouraging pupils to behave consistently well. Pupils have a thorough understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- Attendance is above average.
- The Leadership and provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensures children get off to a good start.
- The executive headteacher has a very clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses; together with the governing body and local authority, she is taking action to tackle underperformance and ensure that the school is beginning to improve.

Areas for improvement:

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning so that it is consistently good or better to further increase the attainment and progress of all pupils and in all subjects by:
 - ensuring that activities offer clear opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in all areas of learning, especially in writing and mathematics.
 - using the school's information about how well pupils are working to set tasks which are hard enough for all pupils and which get harder as pupils grow older.
 - embedding recent improvements to marking and target-setting so teachers help pupils understand how to do better next time and allow pupils time to act upon that advice.
 - refining the curriculum so that it offers pupils more exciting and stimulating learning experiences and more time for pupils to explore their own interests, both independently and with their classmates.

- improving the way teachers help pupils to develop the presentation of their writing.
- offering pupils more opportunities to improve their mathematics skills in real-life, problem solving situations.
- Embed the initiatives and changes introduced by the executive headteacher in leadership and management by:
 - providing high-quality continuing professional development to develop the skills of middle leaders in planning, monitoring and evaluating those strategies that are designed to improve teaching and raise attainment.
 - ensuring that the recent introduction of performance management is managed rigorously enough to ensure that pupils make at least good progress.

4.10 Proportions of schools* in each Ofsted category at the end of 2012-13

Ofsted category	Primary	Secondary	Overall
Outstanding	16%	17%	16%
Good	66%	33%	61%
Good or better	81%	50%	76%
Requires Improvement	19%	50%	24%
Inadequate	0%	0%	0%

* including special schools, but not PRU

Schools judged to Require Improvement under the revised September 2012 framework are supported by Local Authority officer-led Focus Groups, as well as by a nominated HMI (Her Majesty's Inspector).

Schools judged Good or better are supported through the School Improvement Partner (SIP) Programme, or equivalent.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Committee to note the contents of this summary report.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 None

7. CONTACT OFFICER

- 7.1 Mark Patton, Senior School Improvement Advisor, 01429 523932

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

1 October 2013



Report of: Assistant Director, Children's Services

Subject: FOSTERING SERVICE QUARTERLY REPORT

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

None key

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Children Service's Committee with information relating to the activity of the Fostering Service for the first quarter of 2013/14. The fostering service is a regulated service and as such there is a requirement to provide the executive side of the Council with performance information on a quarterly basis.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The work of the Fostering Services is subject to National Minimum Standards applicable to the provision of foster care for children looked after. The National Minimum Standards together with regulations for both Fostering and the Placement of Children Looked After form the basis of the regulatory framework under the Care Standards Act 2000 for the conduct of fostering agencies.
- 3.2 The Quarterly Report provides details of the staffing arrangements in the service, training received by both staff and foster carers, the constitution of the Fostering and Adoption Panel, activity in relation to the recruitment, preparation and assessment of prospective foster carers and progress against the priorities set out in the Fostering Annual Report.

- 3.3 The Fostering Services Minimum Standard 25.7 requires fostering services to ensure the executive side of the local authority:
- Receives a written report on the management, outcomes and financial state of the agency once every 3 months;
 - Monitor the management and outcomes of the service in order to satisfy themselves that the agency is effective and achieving good outcomes for children;
 - Satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of the registration.

4. FOSTERING ACTIVITY

Staffing

- 4.1 The fostering team consists of a team manager (who has management responsibility for both the fostering and adoption service), a principal practitioner and 6 social workers. In the first quarter of 2013/14, there have been some significant changes in relation to staffing. The team has had 2 vacancies following Christine Croft's appointment to the team manager post and one supervising social worker being seconded to a family finding role supporting the work of the team in relation to the adoption reforms. In order to support the team in the management of the vacancies, an agency worker has been employed by the service throughout this time. It is pleasing to report that the recruitment process to these two posts has now been completed and two new workers started at the beginning of September.
- 4.2 The team has worked hard to negate any detrimental impact from the staff vacancies. With the team now up to full strength again, there will be a renewed focus on recruitment, enhancing support to foster carers and managing the increasing numbers of Connected Person's Assessments.

Recruitment and Retention

- 4.3 There are currently 93 foster carers who are providing placements for 156 children, this is a net decrease of 3 foster carers and further details are included in section 4.6.2.
- 4.4 Of the 91 approved foster care households, 3 are currently on unavailable/on hold due to the individual circumstances of the foster carers. The table below provides details of the recruitment activity which has taken place in the first quarter of 2013/14 and potential interest this has generated.

Initial Enquiries (Including survey of where did people hear about the service)	Initial Enquiries 13 Source: Council Email 1 Hartlepool Mail 1 Internet 0 Recommendation from carers 2 Evening Gazette 0 Primary Times 0 Own volition 9
Information pack sent out between 01/04/13 and 30/06/13	13
Initial Visits Of these how many proceeded	10 9
Preparation Group – July 2013	8 fostering families attended the preparation group and are currently in the process of undertaking their assessments.
How many prospective carers are waiting for a group?	4 (Planned for October)

4.5 Training and Post Approval Support

Training

- 4.5.1 As part of their development and progression, all new carers are expected to complete the Children's Workforce Development Council Standards for Foster Carers Portfolio within the 6 months of approval. Support to complete the portfolio is available from both the Supervising Social Workers and other foster carers who provide mentoring and support as part of their own development to achieve progression to Band 4 approved carers.
- 4.5.2 As detailed in the Annual Fostering Report, a survey was completed with foster carers to identify their priorities for training and development which has been used to inform the 2013/14 foster carer training programme. All carers have been provided with the 'Foster Carers Learning and Development Programme' 2013/14 and this is actively reviewed by carers and supervising social workers during supervision sessions to identify learning needs for foster carers across the year. The training programme is comprehensive and over the course of the year provides foster carers with training in relation to:

- **Attachment and child development**
- **Safeguarding Children and Child Protection**
- Autism
- Communicating with Teenagers;
- Drug Awareness;
- Emergency First Aid;
- **Life Story Work;**
- Personal Education Plans and promoting the education of looked after children;
- Learning Difficulties Awareness Raising;
- The Emotional Impact of Trauma on Children;
- Managing Strong Emotions
- Vulnerable Brains and Complex Difficulties;
- Young Carers Awareness.

4.5.3 Those courses highlighted in bold have been delivered in the first quarter of the year. In addition to the above, 4 new mandatory training sessions have been introduced for carers as follows:

- Managing Disclosures;
- Sexual Abuse / Caring for Children who have been sexually abused;
- Managing Behaviours / Emotional Outbursts;
- Data Protection and Information Governance.

Support

- 4.5.4 Foster Carers support groups have continued to take place on a monthly basis with a break over the long school holiday period. Groups are usually attended by 20 + foster carers and offer an element of training, usually provided by a Guest Speaker delivering information which is of interest to carers, and an informal support group discussion session. During the first quarter, the following Guest Speaker sessions have been delivered:
- April – Adult Education
 - May – Participation
 - June – Animal Welfare, the role that pets can play for children delivered by the RSPCA.
- 4.5.5 The Support Groups are arranged and facilitated by at least two members of the fostering team who are available to discuss any issues raised by individual carers or the group as a whole.
- 4.5.6 In addition to facilitating the foster carer support groups, the local authority provides financial support to the HBC Foster Carers Association who have arranged several events and activities particularly over the summer holiday period. These include a 5 day holiday to Pontins which was enjoyed by 12 foster families, Day trips to Flamingoland, Forbidden Corner and a Teddy Bears Picnic. The Foster Carers Association continues to meet monthly to plan a programme of activities over the course of the year. A member of the fostering team attends these meetings to offer support and advice.

- 4.5.7 All foster carers received individual supervision and support from their Supervising Social Worker who visits on a minimum of a 6 weekly basis and completes formal supervision a minimum of 3 monthly. The Fostering Team runs a duty arrangement so that, if a foster carer is unable to get hold of their own worker, they have immediate access to advice and support from another worker. Out of hours and on a weekend, foster carers have access to a telephone support service which is provided by the service managers employed within children's social care.

4.6 Panel Activity

- 4.6.1 The Family Placement Panel has continued to be held on a fortnightly basis and agenda items include both fostering and adoption matters. Recently three panel members have resigned or been put on hold and activity is underway to recruit new people to the pool of training Panel Members. Interviews are planned for September and October 2013 and all new Panel Members will receive a full induction. A Panel Training Day is planned to take place on 12 September 2013.

- 4.6.2 In the months April to June 2013, the Panel met on 6 occasions and made recommendations to the Agency Decision Maker on the following:

- 2 foster carer approvals;
- 2 children considered and approved as needing a long term foster placement;
- The matches of 6 children with long term foster carers;
- 1 connected person approval;
- 4 Foster Carer resignation arising from 1 transferring to their home local authority, 1 transferring to an agency and two retirement.

- 4.6.3 There are effective processes in place for the recommendations made by Panel to be considered by the Agency Decision Maker supported by the minutes of the Panel meeting and the timescale for this is within less than 10 working days of the panel meeting taking place.

4.7 Family Finding

- 4.7.1 The Fostering Team are seeing significant developments in practice as a result of Family Finding Post which was created through one year funding provided to local authorities to deliver the Adoption reforms. The Family Finding Social Worker has monthly Family Finding Meetings for those children needing long term foster placements, involving both the child's social worker and the Supervising Social Worker and this has already shown an impact in reducing the levels of drift and securing permanent placement for children more swiftly.

- 4.7.2 The Family Finding Worker has also been instrumental in working positively with social workers to improve the quality of matching assessments, reducing the risk of disruption and improving the quality of the reports presented to Family Placement Panel.

4.8 Child Appreciation Days

- 4.8.1 It is very pleasing to report that the service has successfully held a Child Appreciation Day for 3 children whose background history has been complex. Child Appreciation Days are a tool to enable professionals to help 'bring a child to life' for prospective permanent carers. They are a means of sharing a great deal of information in a relatively short space of time and are probably best described as a 'guided journey through a child's life, which must always be mindful of how the child sees it' (Argent [2006] 'Dealing with Disruption').
- 4.8.2 The Day was attended by a large number of professionals and significant people who will be involved in the children's future care resulting in the prospective foster carers having a better understanding of the children's background history preparing them for any challenges they may experience in their caring role.
- 4.8.3 Following this successful pilot, the service aims to ensure that all children moving to permanent placements in the future will have a Child Appreciation Day facilitated to ensure their new carers either foster carers or adopters have a thorough understanding of the experience and the needs of the children.

4.9 Edge of Care Support

- 4.9.1 There are currently two approved Support Care Foster Carers. One member of the team is responsible for supporting carers approved as part of the edge of care initiative and this entails attending meetings with the Edge of Care team to become acquainted with the needs of children and young people who are being suitable by this project and matching their needs with available support carers.
- 4.9.2 The impact of the Edge of Care Scheme has clearly been felt by the Placement Team, There has be a noticeable decrease in the number of new referrals for children aged 11+ years.

4.10 Progress against Priorities for 2013 – 2014

- 4.10.1 Attached at **Appendix 1** to this report is a table detailing the priorities for the year 2013/14 and the progress achieved in the first quarter.

5. SUMMARY

- 5.1 Due to the vacancies within the team, the first quarter of the year was a challenging period for the fostering team. However there has been positive and productive team work ensuring that foster carers continue to be supported to a high level and the duty system has remained fully staffed. This has ensured that all referrals for placement are responded to, appropriate placement matches are made and any enquiries from prospective carers receive a prompt response.
- 5.3 The recently appointed workers to the vacant posts in the fostering team will be embedded within their new roles over the forthcoming weeks. This will allow the team time to focus on the overall development of the service and prepare for any forthcoming inspections. The service will continue to prioritise the recruitment, training and assessment of prospective foster carers to meet the needs of and demand for children needing placements with particular emphasis on placements for young people and those needing short break care.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Children's Service Committee is asked to note the report in relation to the work of the Fostering Service in the first quarter of 2013/14.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Fostering Service is required to fulfill its statutory responsibilities to children looked after by the local authority and provide regular reports to the Children Service Committee to enable the Committee to satisfy themselves that the agency is complying with the conditions of the registration.

Children's Services Committee has an important role in scrutinising the activities of the fostering services to ensure performance in this area is robust.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Fostering National Minimum Standards Services 2011
Fostering Regulations 2011
Fostering Annual Report 2012/2013
Argent (2006) 'Dealing with Disruption'

9. CONTACT OFFICER

Christine Croft, Team Manager, 8 Church Street
Telephone – 01429 287216



Fostering Service Action Plan

Priority	Progress Achieved Quarter 1	Lead Officer	Target Date
Promote support care with current and prospective carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information has been included in relation to the scheme in preparation training Information has been provided to all carers relating to support care scheme 	Julie Levitt Christine Croft	January 2014
Targeted recruitment for foster carers able to care for teenagers and sibling groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment strategy in place Specific adverts relating to teenagers are planned 	Jacqui Dixon Christine Croft	April 2014
Continue current performance of foster carers achieving CWDC's Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 85% of carers completed Standards Support groups and mentoring in place for those yet to complete 	Supervising Social Workers Christine Croft	April 2014
Embed the foster carer support group for male carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support group established held on a monthly basis 	Keith Munro	April 2014
Continue to strive to support carers to engender stability within placements for looked after children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly support groups Annual training programme Monthly supervision Placement Support Team providing direct support where needed 	Christine Croft Margaret Hennessey	April 2014

7.2 Appendix 1

Develop new family finding post enabling children and young people to have 'permanency' in their lives as early as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Finding Worker in post • New processes established 	Emma Howarth Christine Croft	April 2014
Continue to demonstrate our appreciation of the commitment provided by our foster carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual celebration event planned • Continue to provide social work support to the foster care support group • Funding provided to the Foster Carer Association 	Christine Croft Supervising Social Worker	April 2014
Consult foster carers in relation to the performance of the Local Authority in relation to support, training and retention of foster carers and to use this information to develop future priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual survey of training priorities for foster carers completed for 2013/14 	Supervising Social workers Christine Croft	April 2014
Continue to facilitate sons and daughters group for children of foster carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular meetings and activities have taken place • Specific training planned for children and young people 	Placement Support Team Christine Croft	April 2014
To further improve the quality of the care provided to children and young people to ensure better outcomes are achieved for children and young people in all aspects of their lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Majority of foster carers have received attachment training • Family Finding role ensuring appropriate matches of carers to children • Child Appreciation days are planned for all permanent placements 	Christine Croft Emma Howarth Therapeutic Service	April 2014

CHILDREN'S SERVICES COMMITTEE

1st October 2013



Report of: Assistant Director, Education

Subject: PUPIL ACHIEVEMENT SUMMARY 2013
(PROVISIONAL)

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

For information

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To provide summary of pupil achievement outcomes from public examinations 2012-13, and to indicate any significant trends. Graphical and tabulated data will be presented alongside this report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Children and young people in Hartlepool undertake formal assessments of their attainment and progress throughout each academic year. These assessments are a mixture of teacher assessments, which are moderated and standardised, and tests or examinations that are set nationally. Formal national testing and examinations usually happen in the summer term each year, although some 'early entry' public examinations are taken by Year 10 and Year 11 students at other times throughout Key Stage 4.
- 3.2 There are nationally benchmarked outcomes for children and young people at the end of:
- **Reception** – children are now (from the summer of 2013) expected to reach a 'good level of development' (GLD);
 - **Year 1** – children undergo a Phonics Screening Check and either achieve the required standard or not;
 - **Year 2** – on average, children are expected to attain Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics at this age;
 - **Year 6** – on average, children are expected to attain Level 4 in reading, writing and mathematics at this age, and to have made two Levels of progress between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. There are national

Floor Standards of attainment and progress for maintained schools to reach at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6).

- **Year 11** – young people are expected to make 3 Levels of progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4. The key measure of attainment for young people at the end of Key Stage 4 continues to be 5 GCSE passes at grades A*-C, including English and mathematics. There are national Floor standards of attainment and progress for maintained schools to reach at the end of Key Stage 4 (Year 11).

- 3.3 National figures presented in this report are very early figures, taken from a (large) sub-set of all schools, and should be considered as indicative only at this stage. Firmer figures will be published by the Department for Education in late October/early November. For some measures there is no early national figure at all at the time of writing. Where this is the case, the confirmed national baseline for 2012 has been used as a comparison.

4. OUTCOMES SUMMARY

4.1 Early Years Foundation Stage

This summer marked the first year that the new Foundation Stage Profile was assessed. Girls outperformed boys in every area of learning of the new Profile. A good level of development (GLD) was achieved by 56% of girls, but only 39% of boys achieved this standard. The overall figure for the achievement of GLD in Hartlepool was 48%. At the time of writing there are no national data to compare these data with. However, the Profile was tested nationally with a sample of schools last year and the average percentage of pupils attaining a GLD was 41% in this sample.

4.2 Key Stage 1

Children in Year 1 complete the national Phonics Screening Check. In 2013, 75% achieved the required standard. This is an increase from 62% in 2012. The national benchmark in 2012 was 58%. Girls outperformed boys again in 2013 with the gender gap widening from 9% in 2012 to 10% in 2013. Those children entitled to free school meals (FSM) did not perform as well as their non-FSM peers. This gap narrowed in 2013 from a gap of 14% points in 2012 to 9% points in 2013.

Children in Year 2 who did not achieve the required standard in the Phonics Screening Check in Year 1 have the opportunity to do so again. In 2013, 80% of those eligible to take the Screening Check again achieved the required standard. It is unclear at this stage whether those children that have still not achieved the standard at the end of Year 2 will continued to be tested.

Standards at Level 2+ in reading, writing and mathematics all rose by 4% points in 2013 compared to 2012. Provisional national data indicates that Hartlepool children perform as well as children nationally in this measure. Girls outperformed boys once again this year, however the gender gap narrowed by 7% points in reading, 4% points in writing and 5% in

mathematics. In fact, the gender gap in mathematics is now almost negligible. FSM children continue to underachieve relative to their non-FSM peers in Hartlepool with the largest gap of 10% points being in writing. However, these attainment gaps have narrowed for the third consecutive year.

Overall standards in the more challenging Level 3+ indicator for reading, writing and mathematics all rose in 2013 compared to 2012. The largest improvement was in reading which increased by 4% this year. No national benchmarks for 2013 are available yet for this more challenging standard.

4.3 **Key Stage 2 (national figures are very early, indicative ones at present)**

Standards at Level 4+ all remain above national benchmarks. Reading remained at 88% in 2013 which is above the national average of 86%. Standards in writing increased by 1% this year to 85% against a national figure of 83%. Mathematics remains the strongest subject with a rise of 4% points to 89% in 2013 compared with a national average of 85%. Girls outperformed boys once again this year. The gender gap narrowed this year to 4% in reading (down 1% point) but rose to 10% in writing (up 6% points). The gender gap in mathematics remains almost negligible at 1% point. FSM children continue to underachieve relative to their non-FSM peers in Hartlepool with the largest gap of 20% points being in writing. This 'writing gap' is twice the gap for reading and for mathematics.

Overall standards in the more challenging Level 5+ indicator for reading, fell by 3% points to 47% this year, whilst writing improved by 1% point to 30%. In mathematics standards rose for the third consecutive year to 41%. Boys outperformed girls again this year for the third year in a row: the only indicator where this 'positive' gender gap exists in Hartlepool. No national benchmarks for 2013 are available yet for this more challenging standard.

In 2013, children took an examination in Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG). In Hartlepool, 76% attained at Level 4+ whilst 44% attained at the more challenging Level 5+. Girls performed better than boys (81% compared with 70% for boys), and FSM performed less well than their non-FSM peers (64% compared with 83% for non-FSM). There are no national comparators for this test at the time of writing.

The proportion of children making the expected progress in reading from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 fell slightly this year to 90%, the same as last year's national average. For writing, the proportion of children making expected progress rose to 95%. It is anticipated that this will be above the national average once again this year. The proportion of children making the expected progress in mathematics rose for the third year in a row to 93%. It is anticipated that this will be above the national average once again this year.

The proportions of children making more than the expected progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 in 2013 were 32% in reading, 30% in writing and 32% in mathematics. These compare favourably with last year's national averages.

For the second year in a row no Hartlepool primary school is currently below the Floor Standard.

4.4 **Key Stage 4**

Girls in Hartlepool continue to perform generally better than boys at the end of Key Stage 4. This GCSE gender gap in 5A*-C passes has widened steadily for the last four years from a gap of 4% points in 2010 to 11% points in 2013. Over this time, the gender gap nationally has remained fairly stable at around 7%. The key indicator for 5+ A*-C passes including English and mathematics jumped up from last year's figure of 49% to 58% in 2013. This is the highest figure ever reached by young people in Hartlepool. The national figure is not available at the time of writing, but is anticipated to fall from last year's 59%. This would mean that Hartlepool is at the national average in this key attainment figure. The gender gap for 5+A*-C including English and mathematics closed from last year's 16% points to 11% points this year. The national gender gap for this measure was 10% last year. FSM comparative data not yet available.

The proportion of students making the expected progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 in English is 64%, compared with a national figure of 67% last year. In mathematics, 65% made the expected progress compared with 68% nationally in 2012.

The proportion of students making more than the expected progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 in English is 26%, compared with a national figure of 28% last year. In mathematics, 21% made more than the expected progress compared with 31% nationally in 2012.

For the fourth year in a row no secondary school in Hartlepool is currently below the Floor Standard. However, there is a very wide variation in standards across the secondary school estate. For example, the key attainment indicator of 5+A*-C including English and mathematics varies from 83% to 41% (just above the current Floor Standard). Similarly, rates of progress across secondary schools vary too widely.

4.5 **Key Stage 5**

English Martyr's School is the only maintained school with post-16 provision in Hartlepool. At A2 (Year 13), 8% students gained an A* grade matching the national average; 54% gained an A or B compared with 53% nationally; 79% achieved an A-C grade which compares with a national figure of 77%; and 98.4% gained an A2 pass grade (grade A-E) compared with 98.1% nationally.

At AS (Year 12) the picture is less strong, typical of most school sixth forms nationally. The proportion of students that gained a grade A was 13% compared with 20% nationally; 34% gained an A or B grade compared with 40% nationally; 56% students gained an A-C grade which compares with 61% nationally; and 87.8% students gained an AS pass grade (grade A-E) compared with 88.3% nationally. [National figures are provisional.]

In terms of higher education destinations, 77% English Martyr's students secured places at university. This compares with 69% students in England last year. The proportion of all students that have gone on to Russell Group universities increased this year to 21% (England average for 2012 was 8%), whilst 1.1% of all students secured an Oxbridge university place this year compared with 1.0% in England last year.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Committee to note the contents of this summary report and its associated presentation.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 None

8. CONTACT OFFICER

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October 2013

Direction under section 7A of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 – flexible assessment processes

I am pleased that Hartlepool has agreed to be involved in the testing of more flexible assessment processes, with the aim of delivering improved outcomes and focused interventions for children and young people. Hartlepool has now agreed to operate a trial that will require certain elements of statutory guidance, *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2013 to be temporarily suspended*.

I make this direction on behalf of the Secretary of State under section 7A of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970. This direction requires Hartlepool Borough Council to operate the scheme specified in the Annex to this direction for the next seven months, until 14 April 2013, after which Hartlepool will revert to acting under the guidance set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2013* in its entirety. While the scheme is in force, Hartlepool will continue to act under that guidance as normal except where the requirements of the scheme conflict with the requirements in the guidance. During the trial Hartlepool is required to provide information and evaluation reports and has confirmed local political sign-off for the scheme. This direction is being given to allow Hartlepool to test a more flexible assessment process.

This direction is issued on the understanding that Hartlepool Borough Council will operate the scheme as specified in the attached Annex and agree to the conditions set out in this direction letter.

The Secretary of State has the power to amend or revoke this direction at any time.

In particular, you will appreciate that non-compliance with the scheme or with the conditions to which Hartlepool has agreed may result in the directions being revoked. Similarly, if any concerns arise about the safety of vulnerable children in this trial area then the directions may be revoked.

I would be grateful if you would continue to work closely with officials throughout the period of this trial.

Edward Timpson MP
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families

Annex

Scheme for undertaking assessments and determining the timing of initial child protection conferences and first core group meetings for the purposes of Chapter 1 of *Working Together to Safeguard Children*

This scheme applies to timing of assessments of children in need for the purposes of Chapter 1 of *Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2013* (*Working Together*). It also applies to the timing of initial child protection conferences and first core group meetings under that Chapter.

Lead social worker

In respect of each referral which is dealt with under this scheme, Hartlepool will nominate a qualified and experienced social worker to act as the lead social worker for the purposes of this scheme and for the purposes of Chapter 1 of *Working Together*.

Timescales for the assessment

Where a decision is taken under paragraph 37 of *Working Together* to undertake an assessment, the assessment should be carried out according to the guidance provided in *Working Together*, with the exception that the lead social worker should determine the timescale to which the assessment should be carried out.

Progress of the case

The lead social worker will keep the progress of the assessment under review, and expedite the assessment or move straight to action, if it becomes apparent that the child may be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

Timing of the initial child protection conference

Where a decision is taken at a strategy discussion to initiate enquiries under section 47 of Children Act 1989, the social work manager should determine the date on which the initial child protection conference is to be held.

Decision-making

The lead social worker should make the decisions set out above on the basis of their professional judgement and with a view to ensuring the safety and welfare of the child, minimising delays and providing timely interventions and services that can best meet the child's needs.

All decisions relating to timescales and dates should be recorded, with a note made of who made the decision, and the reason for the decision. These decisions should be reviewed weekly and revised as appropriate; immediate action should be taken if necessary. All decisions will be supported by

sufficient supervision and oversight as is necessary to ensure the safety and welfare of the child.