



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

A Meeting of the **CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in
David Hicks 1 - Civic Offices, Shute End, Wokingham RG40
1BN on **TUESDAY 18 JUNE 2019 AT 7.00 PM**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Susan Parsonage', written in a cursive style.

Susan Parsonage
Chief Executive
Published on 10 June 2019

The role of Overview and Scrutiny is to provide independent “critical friend” challenge and to work with the Council’s Executive and other public service providers for the benefit of the public. The Committee considers submissions from a range of sources and reaches conclusions based on the weight of evidence – not on party political grounds.

This meeting may be filmed for inclusion on the Council’s website.

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WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Our Vision

A great place to live, an even better place to do business

Our Priorities

Improve educational attainment and focus on every child achieving their potential

Invest in regenerating towns and villages, support social and economic prosperity, whilst encouraging business growth

Ensure strong sustainable communities that are vibrant and supported by well designed development

Tackle traffic congestion in specific areas of the Borough

Improve the customer experience when accessing Council services

The Underpinning Principles

Offer excellent value for your Council Tax

Provide affordable homes

Look after the vulnerable

Improve health, wellbeing and quality of life

Maintain and improve the waste collection, recycling and fuel efficiency

Deliver quality in all that we do

Appendix Acronyms

CPD	Continuous Professional Development
EYFS	Early Years Foundations Stage
FGB	Full Governing Body
KS1	Key Stage 1
KS2	Key Stage 2
MAT	Multi Academy Trust
NLE	National Leader of Education
NLG	National Leader of Governance
RI	Requires Improvement
RSC	Regional Schools Commissioner
SDP	School Development Plan
SEF	Self Evaluation Form
SIB	School Improvement Board
SIO	School Improvement Officer
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
TSA	Teaching School Alliance
WLP	Wokingham Learning Partnership

MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillors

Prue Bray
Pauline Helliard-Symons
Andrew Mickleburgh

Jenny Cheng
Graham Howe
Alison Swaddle

Andy Croy
Ken Miall

Substitutes

Shirley Boyt
Emma Hobbs

Carl Doran
Sarah Kerr

David Hare
Barrie Patman

Parent Governor Representatives

Darryl Ward, Parent Governor Representative
Vacancy, Parent Governor Representative

Diocesan Representatives

Vacancy, Roman Catholic Representative
Vacancy, C of E Representative

ITEM NO.	WARD	SUBJECT	PAGE NO.
1.		ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN To elect a Chairman for the 2019/20 municipal year.	
2.		APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN To appoint a Vice-Chairman for the 2019/20 municipal year.	
3.		APOLOGIES To receive any apologies for absence.	
4.		MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING To confirm the Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 March 2019.	7 - 12
5.		DECLARATION OF INTEREST To receive any declarations of interest.	
6.		PUBLIC QUESTION TIME To answer any public questions A period of 30 minutes will be allowed for members of the public to ask questions submitted under notice. The Council welcomes questions from members of the public about the work of this committee. Subject to meeting certain timescales, questions can relate to general issues concerned with the work of the	

Committee or an item which is on the Agenda for this meeting. For full details of the procedure for submitting questions please contact the Democratic Services Section on the numbers given below or go to www.wokingham.gov.uk/publicquestions

7. **MEMBER QUESTION TIME**
To answer any member questions
8. None Specific **CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS** 13 - 18
To receive and consider a report containing the Children's Services Performance Indicators.
9. None Specific **REVIEW OF SEND OFSTED INSPECTION** 19 - 34
To receive a report containing a review of the SEND Ofsted inspection.
10. None Specific **SEND STRATEGY** 35 - 52
To receive and consider a report containing the SEND Strategy.
11. None Specific **SCHOOL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND OFSTED REPORTS** 53 - 66
To receive a report containing the school performance indicators and the most recent school Ofsted reports.
12. None Specific **FORWARD PLAN** 67 - 70
To consider the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Forward Plan and dates of future meetings.
13. **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**
That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act (as amended) as appropriate.
14. None Specific **SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN - PART 2** 71 - 84
A report containing details of schools causing concern will be considered in a part 2 report.

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent

A Supplementary Agenda will be issued by the Chief Executive if there are any other items to consider under this heading

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD ON 25 MARCH 2019 FROM 7.00 AM TO 8.30 PM**

Committee Members Present

Councillors: Ken Miall (Chairman), Prue Bray, Jenny Cheng, Philip Houldsworth and Graham Howe

Other Councillors Present

Councillors: Pauline Helliard-Symonds

Officers Present

Luciane Bowker, Democratic and Electoral Services Specialist
Carol Cammiss, Director of Children's Services
Gillian Cole, Principal Primary Advisor
Sal Thirlway, Service Manager, Disabled Children and Early Help

Others Present

Tom Gregory, Team Leader, Regional Schools Commissioner
Catherine Turton-Ryz, Team Leader, Regional Schools Commissioner

45. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were submitted from Councillor Emma Hobbs and Dame Kate Dethridge.

46. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 22 January 2019 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

47. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

48. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no public questions.

49. MEMBER QUESTION TIME

There were no Member questions.

50. REGIONAL SCHOOLS COMMISSIONER

The Chairman welcomed Catherine Turton-Ryz and Tom Gregory who were representing the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) to answer questions in relation to academy schools in the Borough.

Tom Gregory stated that Martin Post was the RSC for the North West London and South-Central England regions. Catherine Turton-Ryz and Tom Gregory were Team Leaders for the South Region, of which Wokingham was part of.

Tom Gregory stated that the RSC's work involved overseeing the performance of academy schools and promoting better outcomes for children. The RSC worked closely with the Education Funding Agency (EFA).

The Committee was invited to ask questions and during discussions the following comments were made:

- Councillor Howe asked about the structure and powers of the RSC. Tom Gregory stated that there were eight RSC's across England and they were divided in regions. Each region may be structured slightly differently from one another, the South Region was structured with team leaders who were appointed to different areas within the regions. RSC's looked into the academisation process of schools, facilitated changes and monitored the performance of academies. The RSC's powers in relation to maintained schools were limited to when a maintained school was rated 'inadequate' by Ofsted. The RSC in this instance would intervene and direct the school into the academisation process. The RSC worked alongside the EFA, which was the regulatory body;
- In response to a question Tom Gregory stated that the RSC did not dictate the number of pupils for academy schools, but they would look at the financial forecast and potentially suggest different models if they believed that the proposed number was not sustainable;
- In response to a question Catherine Turton-Ryz stated that currently they were working with three to ten academy applications from schools in Wokingham to join academy trusts, they were working with headteachers and trust boards to facilitate this process;
- Councillor Bray asked about the RSC's involvement with the Northern House School. Catherine Turton-Ryz stated that she had met twice with the school to talk about their improvement plan and how they were going to get out of special measures. She was due to have another meeting with the school this week. They were working to support the school and the headteacher to achieve the necessary improvements;
- Catherine Turton-Ryz stated that ultimately, if things did not improve at the Northern House, the RSC would look to transfer the school to another academy trust;
- Councillor Bray pointed out that changing the provider was not necessarily the answer to the problems;
- Tom Gregory stated that it was the trust board that was accountable to the RSC and not schools or headteachers directly;
- In response to a question Catherine Turton-Ryz reiterated that the RSC tended to challenge the trust board in terms of what was being done to improve the school, and not the schools directly. The RSC had the power to go into schools, and they used to send an Education Advisor to schools, but this now happened on a smaller scale. The RSC used Ofsted reports, outcome results and also intelligence from the local authority to monitor the academies' performance;
- Councillor Helliour-Symonds, Executive Member for Children's Services asked if the RSC was aware that some academies were dissuading Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) children from their schools. Tom Gregory stated that any information regarding this be passed to the RSC for further investigation;
- Councillor Helliour-Symonds asked why Wokingham had had its request for a new specialist school turned down. The RSC's representatives were not able to answer this question as this was not within the scope of their team's work;
- Councillors questioned the rise in exclusions in the Borough, in particular at Oakbank. Tom Gregory stated that this issue was raised in conversations with trust boards. He believed that sometimes this was the result of a school trying to resolve behaviour issues quickly;
- In response to a question Catherine Turton-Ryz stated that the RSC met termly with the Northern House headteacher;

- In response to a question Catherine Turton-Ryz stated that the RSC worked closely with the local authority;
- Councillor Bray asked for clarification around the funding agreement and the change in the admissions number for Bohunt School from 180 to 240. Catherine Turton-Ryz stated that Bohunt was operating within its funding agreement. The funding agreement was what was agreed between the Secretary of State and the academy trust, this was signed on 29 February 2016 and stated that the planned capacity for the school was 1200 for 11-16, therefore a Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 240. What she believed happened was that when the school moved to its temporary site in 2016 before moving into its permanent site they admitted 180 for Year 7, and when they moved to the permanent site they admitted 240, as planned on their funding agreement. Going forward, in order for the school to increase from 11-16 to 11-18 the school would have to submit a 'significant change' application, and the RSC would carefully consider this, taking into account the demand for places in the area, the impact on other schools, the subject offer and consultation responses;
- In response to a question Tom Gregory stated that the RSC relied on the local authority's predictions around demand for places. House building for example, was not necessarily an accurate indicator of raise in demand;
- Councillor Howe was interested to know how the RSC made the decision to enforce a change of trust in an underperforming school. Catherine Turton-Ryz stated that they would look for a trust that had the capacity to take on that particular school. If a trust did not want to take on a school, they would look for another trust;
- In response to a question Catherine Turton-Ryz stated that they tried to find a local trust, within no more than 30 minutes' drive from the school if possible;
- Councillor Howe stated that there was a strong sense of community in this area and that it was important that the selected trusts were local;
- Councillor Miall asked what was expected of local authorities in relation to academy schools. Tom Gregory stated that the local authority had a duty in relation to children's safeguarding, and the local authority was also expected to maintain a good working relationship with the RSC;
- In response to a question Catherine Turton-Ryz stated that in the event of a school underperforming the RSC would contact the trust and the local authority because some academies still received support from the local authority;
- Tom Gregory stated that if a school was not supported by the local authority, the RSC would contact whoever provided external support to the school. Ultimately the RSC would speak to the board of trustee's as they were the direct employer and performance managers of the headteacher;
- In response to a question Catherine Turton-Ryz stated that there was no longer an expectation that all schools would become academies;
- Tom Gregory stated that since 2010 many schools had converted to academies, currently approximately 50.8% of all pupils were attending academy schools;
- Councillors asked if there was any concerns over academy schools in Wokingham in general. Catherine Turton-Ryz stated that most schools in Wokingham were good or outstanding, and if compared to other areas there were no major concerns.

The Chairman thanked Tom Gregory and Catherine Turton-Ryz for their attendance at this meeting and they agreed to receive any further questions the Members might have via email.

RESOLVED That: The discussion with the Regional Schools Commissioner's representatives be noted and that any further questions will be asked and responded via email.

51. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE INDICATORS AND OFSTED REPORTS

Gillian Cole, Principal Primary Advisor presented the School Performance Indicators and Ofsted Reports report which was set out in agenda pages 15-22. She stated that the report contained summaries of the most recent Ofsted inspections since the last meeting of the Committee.

Gillian Cole explained the inspection process. Most schools that had a 'Good' rating would receive a 'section A' inspection, this consisted of a one day monitoring visit to check that the school was still 'Good', the section A inspection did not have the power to change the rating of the school. The section A inspection could trigger a 'section 5' inspection which was a two day inspection. A section 5 inspection was recommended when it was believed that a 'Good' school could achieve 'Outstanding' or if it was believed that the school would not sustain a 'Good' rating if subjected to a two-day inspection. This Ofsted inspection format had changed 18 months ago.

Councillor Bray stated that the parents of Bearwood Primary had been informed of the school's recent Ofsted inspection result, even though this information was not yet publicly available. Gillian Cole stated that schools had to follow a process which involved informing the parents of the result before this was made public. However, she was unable to comment as the result had not yet been published on the website, this would be available for the next meeting.

RESOLVED That the report be noted.

52. CHILDREN'S SERVICES PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Sarah Sesay, Performance Manager, Social Care presented the Children's Services Performance Indicators report which was set out in agenda pages 23-33.

Sarah Sesay stated that this was the corporate quarterly report. Concerns had been raised at the last meeting in relation to the fact that the data presented to the Committee was three to four months out of date. The service was currently working on a different template which would enable the production of more timely information.

Sarah Sesay talked in more detail about the some indicators as listed below.

Indicators relating to the percentage of Wokingham Borough state-funded Schools with current Ofsted rating of Good or better.

Sarah Sesay stated that this indicator had improved for primary schools, with Keep Hatch Primary School moving from 'Requires improvement' to 'Good'.

There had been no changes to any of the secondary schools' ratings. Therefore this indicator continued to be amber as not all secondary schools had a rating of 'Good' or better.

The Northern House continued with its rating of 'inadequate', the special schools indicator continued to be red.

EA3: Percentage of Early Years settings in Wokingham Borough with an Ofsted rating of Good or better

Two independent providers were rated 'inadequate' by Ofsted. These independent providers initially refused support from WBC, but were now agreeing to work with WBC staff on improvements.

Percentage of children who entered care in the period and were placed more than 20 miles from their home (excluding unaccompanied asylum seeking children, children placed with parents and children in receipt of short breaks support)

This indicator was improving, and it was important to note that the numbers were very small.

Percentage of all children all children in care at the end of the period who were moved more than 20 miles from their home (excluding unaccompanied asylum seeking children, children placed with parents and children in receipt of short breaks support)

This indicator was improving.

EA11: 12-Month rolling voluntary turnover of qualified Social Workers within Children's Social Care and Early Intervention Service

The service was aware of the importance of a stable social work workforce and was taking action to address this. A workforce development strategy was being further developed to focus on the retention of the best staff, this was in parallel with an active recruitment drive.

Percentage of referrals in 2018/19 which are repeat referrals within 12 months of the previous referral to Children's Social Care

There was a positive improvement of this indicator and the target was met.

Percentage of children who become subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time within 24 months

There was a positive improvement of this indicator and the target was met.

Percentage of children who became subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time ever

This indicator was more difficult to achieve as a child may have been subject to a Child Protection Plan as a baby and then again at the age of 17, for example. However this indicator was improving and the target was being met.

VP7: Percentage of children leaving care who achieved permanence (adopted, returned home or special guardianship order is granted)

The definition of achieving permanence in this indicator was questionable, for example: an arrangement where a child who turned 18 stayed with his/her foster parents was not considered a permanent placement, however this was a positive arrangement.

This indicator deteriorated from the previous quarter.

The percentage of children leaving care due to being adopted, returning home, or becoming subject to a special guardianship order reduced in quarter 3. Seven children left care in this period because they turned 18 and are therefore not counted in this indicator as achieving permanence. Of those seven young people, one resides with family members, two remain with their former foster carers under a staying put arrangement, three remain in the same supported accommodation placement where they resided before they left care, and one is living in accommodation to support their high needs.

VP8: Percentage of child protection visits due in the period which were completed on time (within 10 days of the previous visit).

There was a slight improvement in performance in Q3 2018-19 and the indication is that there will be subsequent incremental improvements for this indicator as teams have had a particular focus on improving this area of work.

During the discussion of the item the following comments were made:

- In response to a question Sarah Sesay stated that in relation to achieving permanence, some children could be adopted and some may have returned home;
- In response to a question Sarah Sesay stated that the service often discussed how to best provide the information in relation to permanence. There was an ongoing debate to decide if over 18 year olds should be excluded from this figure.

Sarah Sesay stated that it was hoped that the data would be presented in a different format for the next meeting, making it more up to date and relevant.

RESOLVED That the report be noted.

53. FORWARD PLAN

The Committee noted the forward plan and future dates of meetings.

The 'Service Plan' item was renamed 'Continuous Improvement Plan' and it was moved to the 17 September meeting.

Carol Cammiss confirmed that the service was currently developing a new format for the key performance indicators report, aiming to bring more up to date information to the Committee. There would be new information for the June meeting even if the new template was not ready.

In response to a question Carol Cammiss stated that she was unable to disclose the result of the SEND Ofsted inspection as this was not yet in the public domain. She stated that there had been no surprises and that Ofsted recognised that the new leadership structure was moving the service in the right direction.

The Committee asked for a review of the SEND Ofsted to be brought to the next meeting on 18 June.

54. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of the Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act as appropriate.

55. SCHOOLS CAUSING CONCERN - PART 2

The report was discussed in a part 2 session.

Agenda Item 8.

TITLE	Children's Services Performance Indicators
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 June 2019
WARD	(All Wards);
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Children's Services - Carol Cammiss

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Children's Services performance indicators underpin the council's priorities and principles to focus on every child reaching their potential and looking after the vulnerable.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Children's Services performance indicators be noted.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The timing of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee means that the information reported against in each performance indicator relates to the position at the end of April 2019.

Background

Previously, the indicators provided for Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny were the same as those provided to the Corporate Leadership Team and the Executive on a quarterly basis. However, due to the scheduling of Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny, there was often a gap of several months before the quarterly performance was provided to the committee.

The most recent performance information, included as an appendix, deviates from the quarterly indicators that will continue to go to the Corporate Leadership Team and the Executive. It forms a more comprehensive dashboard of performance across Children's Services, and will enable reporting to this committee in a more timely manner.

Analysis of Issues

At the end of April 2019, the Children's Services Dashboard and the underlying indicators have highlighted five areas for improvement. Information on these is given below.

1. Timeliness of Early Help Assessments

In Wokingham Borough we expect our Early Help Assessments to be completed within 30 working days. The target has not been met for 2018-19 with an average completion time of 40 working days. This improved in March 19 when the 30 day target was met. In April 19, however, performance deteriorated to 43 working days. There is no statutory timeframe for completion of Early help assessments the Working Together Guidance 2018 states: The Early Help Plan is a holistic approach to understanding children and families' additional needs and supports decision making about how these needs might best be addressed within a multi-agency context.

The deterioration in performance in April is linked to the Easter holidays affecting both workers' and families' availability. Early Help workers have also been under additional pressure due to the volume of Social Work support activity the service undertakes - such as supporting supervised visits for children who enter care, undertaking parenting assessments, and providing co-working support for children who are subject to Child in Need or Child Protection Plans.

2. Timeliness of Social Worker reports to Child Protection Conferences and Children in Care Reviews

The expectation on Social Workers is that their reports are shared before conferences and reviews to allow families and professionals enough time to fully review them.

Timescales in April have been affected by workers' availability over the Easter holidays. Children subject to 'dual plans' – those who are subject to Child protection Plans as well as being Children in Care – require Social Workers to provide multiple reports for multiple meetings, which has also impacted on timeliness.

3. Timeliness of Return Home Interviews for children who have had a missing episode

When a child is reported missing, a return interview for the child will be considered. If an interview is deemed necessary, it should be completed within 3 working days of the child returning home. Interviews are carried out by a Return Home Interview Coordinator who is based in the Early Help Service.

The percentage of interviews taking place on time deteriorated compared to 2018-19. Although a child may agree to an interview taking place initially, it is often hard to engage them in completing the interview within timescales. This is particularly the case with older children or Children in Care placed outside the Borough. However, it is also recognised that on some occasions our process flow for missing children upon their return has not been as efficient or effective as it could be which has erroneously led to reported delay.

4. Case Supervision

Teams have reported that they are falling behind with their supervision recording, but that supervisions have taken place. A new Assistant Team Manager has been

recruited and supervision is now shared between three managers which is expected to improve performance.

5. Timeliness of Visits to Children subject to Child Protection Plans

In Wokingham Borough we expect children subject to Child Protection Plans to be visited at least every 10 working days. This is currently not being achieved for all children. The proportion of visits taking place within 15 working days has improved, indicating that most visits are within timescale, or only exceeding the expected timescale by a few days. This remains a priority for teams and performance is slowly improving week on week.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	N/A		
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/A		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/A		

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
N/A

Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including properties and priorities?)
N/A

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
N/A

List of Background Papers
N/A

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Children's Services Dashboard

APRIL 2019

KEY: = worse than = better than = greater than = less than = same as

EDUCATION, HEALTH AND CARE PLANS

	2018-19	Current period	Neighbours
Current EHCPs in borough		<u>563</u>	NA
Current EHCPs out of borough		<u>359</u>	NA
EHCPs - new		<u>28</u>	NA

EARLY HELP

	2018-19	Current period	Neighbours
Referrals		<u>199</u>	NA
Early Help Assessments		<u>157</u>	NA

FRONT DOOR

	2018-19	Current period	Neighbours
Referrals		<u>453</u>	
% assessments completed in 45 working days		<u>90%</u>	

CHILDREN IN NEED (CIN)

	2018-19	Current period	Neighbours
Children currently subject to CIN plans		<u>274</u>	NA
New CIN plans		<u>75</u>	NA
New CIN plans - 12 months		<u>474</u>	NA

CHILD PROTECTION (CP)

	2018-19	Current period	Neighbours
Children currently subject to CP plans		<u>119</u>	
% children starting a CP Plan who had a previous one		<u>10%</u>	
Visits on time		<u>74%</u>	NA

CHILDREN IN CARE (CIC)

	2018-19	Current period	Neighbours
Children currently in care		<u>114</u>	
Health assessments on time		<u>96%</u>	
CIC placed 20+ miles from home		<u>23%</u>	
Children entering care		<u>14</u>	NA

CARE LEAVERS

	2018-19	Current month	Neighbours
% 'in touch'		<u>94%</u>	
% NEET		<u>43%</u>	
% Suitable accommodation		<u>92%</u>	

MISSING

	2018-19	Current period	Neighbours
Children missing from home		<u>20</u>	NA
Children missing from care		<u>4</u>	NA
% Return interviews on time		<u>69%</u>	NA
Children currently missing from education		<u>13</u>	NA

YOUTH OFFENDING

	2018-19	Current period	Neighbours
First time offenders		<u>1</u>	
First time offenders - 12 months		<u>12</u>	
Young people reoffending		<u>2</u>	
Young people reoffending - 12 months		<u>17</u>	

PLEASE NOTE: CURRENT PERIOD COVERS A 3 MONTH PERIOD, UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.

Exception Reporting

April 2019

Headlines and Key developments this month

The performance dashboard for Children's Services has been refreshed for 2019-20. The dashboard now includes performance measures for the whole of Children's Services, not only for Social Care. "Current Performance" is the figure achieved for the previous three month period, unless a different timescale is given. Symbols are used to show if the current period is better or worse, greater than, less than or the same as our comparable 2018-19 performance (i.e. comparing the current three month period to an average three month period in 2018-19) and our neighbours' performance, if it is available. Our performance in April 19 is generally good compared to the previous year's and neighbours' performance. Details about areas of good performance and areas requiring improvement are outlined below. The performance measures are discussed with Team and Service Managers and a Performance Improvement Log is populated with actions that are to be undertaken for any areas identified as requiring improvement. There are seven main areas of focus that have been identified for April 19.

Areas of good performance

Child and Family Assessments

Assessments are required to be completed within 45 working days. In April 19, 90.1% of completed assessments were within timescale. This is a significant improvement on our 2018-19 performance and we are also performing well in comparison to our statistical neighbours' performance for 2017-18.

This improvement followed a period of deterioration but performance has remained high since November 18.

Visits to children subject to a Child in Need Plan

In Wokingham Borough, we expect children subject to a Child in Need Plan to be visited by a Social Worker at least every 15 working days. We set a very high expectation that 90% of visits should take place within this timescale, and that visits should not be more than a week late (no longer than 20 working days).

In April 19, 73.3% of visits took place within 15 working days, compared to 64.1% in March 19. We have also seen a significant improvement in the number of visits that are due to take place and are still within timescale, meaning that we expect performance to improve even further.

Children's participation in Child Protection Conferences

100% of younger children (aged 7-11) participated in their conferences in April 19. A child is considered to have participated if the child attends themselves or if their views are conveyed via an advocate. Of the older children (aged 12+) only one child did not participate. This shows that a high proportion of children are sharing their views with the professionals who are making decisions. Incorporating the 'child's voice' into our decision making and planning will always be a key priority for the service.

Health Assessments for Children in Care

We aim to arrange a health assessment for every Child in Care at least once a year.

Of the children who were in care at the end of April 19, 95.5% had a health assessment in the previous year. This is an improvement compared to our 2018-19 performance and better than our statistical neighbours for 2017-18.

Children in Care review timeliness

100% of reviews for Children in Care that took place in April 19 were within timescale.

Visits to Children in Care

87% of visits to Children in Care in April 19 were within the prescribed timescale. This is the highest percentage we have achieved in a single month since October 2017. Visits are expected to take place more frequently when a child first enters care or moves to a new placement, and then become less frequent if it is appropriate for the child.

Care Leavers living in accommodation that is suitable for their needs

We have managed to maintain a high proportion of Care Leavers living in 'suitable' accommodation. 92% were living in suitable accommodation in April 19 and this is an improvement on our 2018-19 performance and is also higher than our statistical neighbours' performance for 2017-18.

First time entrants to the youth justice system

Only one child who is receiving support from the Wokingham Youth Offending Service was counted as a 'first time entrant' (i.e. they committed their first offence) in the last three months. This is improved performance when compared to the 2018-19 quarterly average and is lower than our comparative neighbours' performance.

Areas for improvement

Early Help Assessments

In Wokingham Borough we expect our Early Help Assessments to be completed within 30 working days. The target has not been met for 2018-19 with an average completion time of 40 working days. This improved in March 19 and the 30 day target was met. In April 19, however, performance deteriorated to 43 working days.

The deterioration in performance in April is thought to be linked to the Easter holidays affecting both workers' and families' availability. Another reason for the target not being met is the start date of the assessment being taken from the point a referral is received by Children's Services rather than the point a worker is allocated the case for assessment. Early Help workers have been under additional pressure due to the volume of Social Work support activity the service undertakes (such as supporting supervised visits for children who enter care, undertaking parenting assessments and providing co-working support for children who are subject to Child in Need or Child Protection Plans).

Actions to be undertaken: All out of timescale assessments to be reviewed. Medium Term: Review of structural arrangements to ensure appropriate focus on Early Help and prevention activity and social work support activity.

Social Work reports for Initial, Review Conferences and Reviews for Children in Care

Social Work reports should be shared before meetings to give families and professionals enough time to fully review them. Timescales are not currently being met for each of these three performance measures.

Timescales in April 19 would have been affected by workers' availability over the Easter holidays. Some children are subject to Child Protection Plans and are also in care (this is called 'dual planning') meaning that multiple reports would be required for multiple meetings.

Actions to be undertaken: Review process for children subject to dual plans. Review the processes for Child Protection reporting processes to understand what the barriers are to meeting target timescales.

Return Home Interviews for children who have had a missing episode

When a child is reported missing, a return interview for the child will be considered. If an interview is deemed necessary, it should be completed within 3 working days of the child returning home for Children in Care or children living in the Borough. Interviews are carried out by a Return Home Interview Coordinator who is based in the Early Help Service.

The percentage of interviews taking place on time deteriorated compared to 2018-19 performance.

Although a child may agree to an interview taking place initially, it is often hard to engage them in completing the interview within timescales. This is particularly the case with older children or Children in Care placed outside the Borough. However, it is also recognised that on some occasions our process flow for missing children upon return has not been as efficient or effective as it could be which has erroneously led to reported delay.

Actions to be undertaken: A full review of the missing child process is planned for the summer period.

Case Supervision

Performance is deteriorating compared to 2018-19. Teams have reported that they are falling behind with their supervision recording, but that supervisions have taken place. A new Assistant Team Manager has been recruited and supervision is now shared between three managers which is expected to improve performance.

Actions to be undertaken: Managers have been given a deadline to ensure all supervisions are recorded.

Visits to children subject to Child Protection Plans

In Wokingham Borough we expect children subject to Child Protection Plans to be visited at least every 10 working days. This is currently not being achieved for all children. The proportion of visits taking place within 15 working days has improved, indicating that most visits are within timescale, or only exceeding the expected timescale by a few days.

Actions to be undertaken: This remains a priority for teams and performance is slowly improving week on week.

Agenda Item 9.

TITLE	Review of SEND Ofsted inspection
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 June 2019
WARD	(All Wards);
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Children's Services - Carol Cammiss

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

To improve the Health, Education and life opportunities for children living in the Wokingham area

RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted

SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report highlighted the recent Ofsted/CQC report into SEND services with Wokingham and outlines the actions Children's Services are undertaking.

Background

1. In March 2019 Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) undertook a detailed inspection of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) services managed and run by Wokingham Borough Council and local Health Services. The purpose of the inspection was to judge and assess the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special educational needs reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. It was a well managed and fair inspection that has provided both Health and the Local Authority good learning from the inspection process.
2. The inspection identified a number of areas needing improvement and have required the Local Authority and the local Clinical Commissioning Group to prepare a written statement of action aimed at addressing identified areas of significant weaknesses. These weaknesses are identified in the attached Ofsted letter.
3. This report highlights the action that the Directorate and the CCG are intending to take to address the deficits identified in the inspectors' letter.

Analysis of Issues

4. The inspection of SEND services is a national Ofsted initiative aimed at raising standards in the provision of services to vulnerable children. In Wokingham there are a number of areas that need to be addressed these include:
 - the lack of a clearly communicated co-produced strategy and accompanying action plans that are shared and understood across education, health and care in the local area and sharply focused on improving the outcomes of children and young people with SEND
 - the timeliness and quality of Education, Health and Care (EHP) plans
 - the lack of co-production at a strategic level to inform effective co-production at all levels
 - the quality of management information to inform accurate evaluation and energise service improvement across the local area
 - the lack of well-coordinated and effectively joined-up work across education, health and social care
 - the underdeveloped pathway to enable young people with SEND to make a successful transition to adulthood.
5. In order to deliver the improvements identified in the letter of required action the Local Authority, CCG, Health Providers and other partners including Reach (now known as SEND voices) will establish a SEND improvement Board to oversee and deliver identified required improvements. This fits to a wider SEND agenda the Council must address. Principally there is insufficient resource available locally to meet current and projected demand. The consequence of which has resulted in a significant over commitment of available education funding

specifically within the High Needs Block. The overspend in this area for 18/19 is £2.1 million.

6. There is in place detailed plans to improve provision. Including:

- The development and implementation of a SEND strategy. This has recently been subject to extensive consultation with partners young people and parents and careers. The outcome of this will form the basis of new arrangements to deliver fit for future purpose SEND provision,
- Detailed discussions are ongoing with schools to amend and augment current resource base provision. It is intended to bring new provision into place over the summer months,
- Agreements have been reach to expand provision and Addington School. Addington is a Wokingham Council maintained school with an outstanding Ofsted judgement. This will allow for an additional xx placements to be made available.
- Discussions are ongoing with other local Councils and the DfE to build a new free school specialising in the provision of SEND places. This will require a new build and as a consequence take some time to deliver.
- Northern House School is a local academy that earlier this year was judged to be inadequate. The Council is working with the school and the associated trust to improve provision. It is an import resource as it current provides a significant number of placements for Wokingham children. It is subject ongoing Ofsted monitoring but has shown a series of recent improvements.
- In addition to the above the Council in setting the budget for this year and beyond has significantly improved provision. This will allow for the appointment of much needed SEN case officers who once in post will substantially improve the level of ongoing support for children and their families.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context

7. There is a significant financial over commitment within the High Needs Block of the schools budget. This has been an ongoing issues for the Council. The implementation of the actions required arising from the inspection report will in the short term be significant. Work is ongoing to identify the extent of this. In the medium term the increase in in-house provision will significantly reduce the need for expensive out of area placements resulting in a reduction in the overspends within the High Needs Block.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)			
Next Financial Year (Year 2)			
Following Financial Year (Year 3)			

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including properties and priorities?)
N/A

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2
N/A

List of Background Papers

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29 April 2019

Ms Carol Cammiss
Director of Children's Services, Wokingham
Shute End
Wokingham
RG40 1BN

Cathy Winfield, Chief Officer, Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group
Jo Jolly, Local Area Nominated Officer, Wokingham Borough Council

Dear Ms Cammiss

Joint local area SEND inspection in Wokingham

Between 11 March 2019 and 15 March 2019, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) conducted a joint inspection of the local area of Wokingham to judge the effectiveness of the area in implementing the disability and special educational needs reforms as set out in the Children and Families Act 2014.

The inspection was led by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors from Ofsted, with a team of inspectors including an Ofsted Inspector and a children's services inspector from the CQC.

Inspectors spoke with children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), parents and carers, local authority and National Health Service (NHS) officers. They visited a range of providers and spoke to leaders, staff and governors about how they were implementing the special educational needs reforms. Inspectors looked at a range of information about the performance of the local area, including the local area's self-evaluation. Inspectors met with leaders from the local area for health, social care and education. They reviewed performance data and evidence about the local offer and joint commissioning.

As a result of the findings of this inspection and in accordance with the Children Act 2004 (Joint Area Reviews) Regulations 2015, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI) has determined that a written statement of action is required because of significant areas of weakness in the local area's practice. HMCI has also determined that the local authority and the area's clinical commissioning group (CCG) are jointly responsible for submitting the written statement of action to Ofsted.

This letter outlines our findings from the inspection, including some areas of strength and areas for further improvement.

Main findings

- Over time strategic leadership of SEND in the local authority has been weak. There have been frequent changes of senior leaders over the last two and a half years. Consequently, the development and delivery of a comprehensive and ambitious strategy to improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND has stalled. New leaders, appointed in the last few months, have made a positive start and are bringing much-needed stability to leadership. Professionals and some parents told inspectors that they have a renewed sense of hope that positive change can now begin to happen. There is a tangible replenished sense of purpose and many new initiatives have begun, but it is too soon to see the sustained impact of this work.
- The designated clinical officer (DCO) has been in post since the reforms were introduced in 2014 and covers Berkshire West CCG. The DCO role is a strength in the local area, providing effective strategic leadership and clear operational oversight to the delivery of the SEND reforms in health.
- Many parents, including those that are part of the local parent carer forum REACH, want to be involved in the development of SEND services and provision. There is a strong willingness to work with new leaders. Several parents commented that their voice is beginning to be heard. However, parents and professionals also described a sense of frustration about the lack of strategic direction for SEND. Previous instability in the senior workforce has damaged confidence in the local area's leadership of SEND. Consequently, parents are not convinced that the reforms have improved services for them or their children in Wokingham.
- The recently relaunched SEND strategy is currently in draft format and being consulted upon. The SEND strategy accurately identifies most of the areas where significant and urgent improvement is needed, particularly in relation to education. However, the strategy and leaders' evaluation of the effectiveness of SEND in the local area are too focused on education and do not consider health and care well enough. As a result, it does not effectively set out a clear enough plan for the improvements needed across education, health and care in a coherent joined-up approach.
- Coordination of services and support across education, health and care is weak. Joint working is not effectively established in systems and processes for children, young people and their parents to be assured of a well-planned and consistent approach to meeting their needs across different services. There is evidence of some individual services and professionals from different backgrounds working well together to support children and young people with SEND. This is because many individual practitioners are dedicated and

proactive in their approach to supporting children with SEND. Nevertheless, there is not a well-connected approach across the local area and as a result, children and young people's experiences are often patchy.

- Co-production is poorly developed. Some services do work well to plan and improve their work jointly with parents. For example, the short breaks statement is being carefully reviewed with parents. Learning from parents' experiences, professionals are making well-judged changes to the short breaks provision. Nonetheless, the routine involvement of parents in the strategic developments of SEND is weak. Parents say they are not included early enough in the design, monitoring and evaluation of services.
- Some children and young people with SEND receive high-quality education, health and care provision in Wokingham. This is because there are many individual professionals who are strongly committed to making a positive difference to the lives of children and young people with SEND. However, this is not consistent across the borough and is too reliant on individuals.
- Too many children and young people have to travel out of the borough to attend a school or college. The proportion of children educated in non-maintained and independent schools is higher than that seen nationally and is increasing. Consequently, there is significant pressure on limited resources within Wokingham. Local authority officers have sensible plans in place to expand the range of specialist provision within the borough, particularly for the growing number of children and young people identified with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).
- Education, health and care (EHC) plans are not of sufficient quality to be used effectively to improve children and young people's outcomes. Due to staff shortages, timeliness in the completion of education, health and care needs assessments has declined. Currently, approximately one third of EHC plans are issued within the statutory timeframe. Additionally, the quality of finalised EHC plans is generally weak. Inspectors saw many examples of EHC plans that included poorly defined outcomes which have not been developed in an appropriately personal way. Some parts of the EHC plan are better than others. For example, most EHC plans reliably include parents' views in the introductory section. Speech and language therapists typically make helpful contributions to the planning process, when they have worked with a child, and in these cases the EHC plan clearly describes the required support for the child.
- Senior leaders in health are making judicious use of management information to inform the evaluation of services and plan future improvements. However, looking more widely across the local area as a whole, the coordination of joint area management information across education, health and care is

underdeveloped. As a result, leaders do not have a comprehensive overview of the effectiveness of services and outcomes to be able to hold leaders to account at all levels.

- High staff turnover has led to instability in the social care workforce. Parents frequently reported several changes of social workers within relatively short timeframes. As a result, the quality of joint planning across education, health and social care for individual children with SEND and their families varies considerably and slows their progress to achieving positive outcomes. Care contributions to EHC plans are often weak.
- A clear pathway for young people to progress through as they prepare for adulthood is still being developed. A legacy of frequent structural and organisational change has hampered progress in establishing the pathway. Senior leaders have rightly identified this area of work as a priority and the local area transitions team is due to be extended imminently. However, the preparation for adulthood work is in its infancy. Consequently, young people's experiences of preparing for work and independent life are too mixed.
- The joint commissioning of services across education, health and care is weak. Until very recently frequent changes of staff at a senior level in education and care have hindered the development of this work. Despite these difficulties, the local area is working well to jointly commission emotional health and well-being services across the local area.
- Neurodevelopmental assessment waiting times are too long and are over 12 months for most families. The impact of these long delays in assessment is that children and young people do not have their needs identified early enough to get the support they need. Leaders are aware of this and have a sensible action plan in place to reduce waiting times. When children do see a professional most parents feel that the support is helpful.

The effectiveness of the local area in identifying children and young people's special educational needs and/or disabilities

Strengths

- Health professionals working in the child development centre collaborate well with those in the acute sector to identify children's needs at the earliest point. Antenatal screening and good multi-disciplinary communication between health practitioners ensures that newborn babies, and children new to the area, have their needs identified quickly.
- Well-trained staff in early years educational settings often work well with health professionals to identify children's SEND swiftly. Useful initial screening

assessments, on entry to settings, enable children's progress and development to be carefully monitored. Referrals for extra help or further assessment are made appropriately when needed.

- Speech and language therapists work effectively to support the early identification of children's special educational needs. Helpful 'drop in' services provide easy access to therapists and additional support. Comprehensive screening assessments help to quickly identify children who may have ASD.
- Young people entering the youth offending service receive helpful assessments to identify their needs. The inclusion of speech and language therapists and child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) specialists in the service enables comprehensive assessments to be carried out so that young people can receive the right support.
- Sensible work in health to join up different information technology systems is enabling information about children and young people to be shared effectively between health professionals. The system is enabling health professionals to gain a quick overview of a child's needs across a range of different health services so that all of their needs can be carefully considered when carrying out assessments.

Areas for development

- Health visiting services offer five mandatory checks for babies and young children. However, due to uptake, some children are not receiving all the routine developmental checks. Consequently, some children slip through the net and do not reliably have their needs identified at the earliest point. Staffing shortages have led to a reliance on temporary staff and delayed a review to improve the delivery of this service.
- The local area does not currently have integrated two- to two-and-a-half-year checks in place across health visitor services and early years settings. Sometimes families have to tell their story to several different professionals. This causes delays in the early identification of some children's needs.
- Many parents and carers described their frustration about inconsistent approaches to the identification of children's SEND in schools. Parents frequently find themselves needing to continually 'chase' professionals to follow up referrals and seek feedback. Several parents portrayed an inequitable system where some access private assessments because of lengthy delays, while others are not able to do this.
- Children looked after, placed out of area, are not consistently having their initial and review health assessments completed within statutory timeframes.

Vulnerable children's health needs are therefore not being identified at the earliest opportunity. School nurses do not reliably have access to children's EHC plans, which means that sometimes assessments are carried out without a full picture of the child's needs.

- Children and young people wait too long for an ASD assessment in Wokingham. Some children have been waiting for over a year to see a specialist. Many parents told inspectors about the stress and anxiety that their children experience while waiting to have their needs identified.

The effectiveness of the local area in meeting the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities

Strengths

- The local multi-professional early years support panel helps to coordinate access to support for children with identified needs. Additional funding is made available in a timely manner to provide additional staffing so that children can be included in their early years settings.
- There are several examples of individual schools and special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs) working effectively to include children with SEND in their schools.
- There are some strong partnerships between key professionals across education, health and care that lead to effective support for children with SEND in some Wokingham schools. The local termly school planning meetings provide a helpful opportunity for SENCOs to access professional help and advice to meet children's needs in school.
- School nurses attend the local authority children missing in education meetings to identify children and young people who are not in education, employment or training. This allows for careful consideration of these children and young people's health needs.
- Although children and young people routinely have a lengthy wait for a neurodevelopmental assessment there is some helpful support available while they wait. For example, the local autism spectrum service for information, support and training team are valued by both parents and professionals. This small team, in high demand, offers useful training and advice for parents and professionals as well as running social groups for young people with ASD. Several parents described their support as 'life changing'.
- Across the local area there are several schemes and opportunities run by voluntary organisations to increase the participation of children and young

people with SEND in social and community life. The Wokingham CAN Card provides access to discounts and concessions for a wide range of leisure activities. Some young people with SEND are also well-supported through a buddy-scheme to attend mainstream clubs. Several young people with SEND also participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award programme and, impressively, two of these have successfully achieved their gold award.

- The special educational needs information and advice service is held in high regard. Officers in this small and expanding team work diligently to signpost parents to help them to access provision and additional support. Parents talked positively about the work of this service to help them find their way through the complicated processes involved in SEND.
- The local offer continues to be developed. Helpfully, parents are involved in the redesign and promotion of the local offer. Leaders recognise that not enough parents know about the local offer and many do not find the current format useful. Developments are well underway to improve the presentation and accessibility of the local offer.
- Therapy services in Wokingham work effectively as part of the children and young people's integrated therapy service. Therapists work collaboratively to carry out well-coordinated assessments and develop joint therapy plans to meet children's needs well.

Areas for development

- Over time senior leaders in the local area have not listened carefully enough to the views and experiences of children and young people with SEND and their parents when developing services. Too often, plans have been developed without their involvement right from the start because co-production is not secure. Occasionally, parents have been consulted but then senior leadership has changed, and agreed plans have not been followed through. Consequently, there is an underlying sense of mistrust between parents and senior leaders.
- Many parents report considerable variability in the quality of their children's provision, particularly when they receive special educational needs (SEN) support in a mainstream school. Many parents told inspectors that support for their children was too inconsistent and they lack confidence that many schools are able to successfully meet their children's needs.
- Weak strategic planning for SEND over time has led to insufficient specialist educational provision in Wokingham. The demand for specialist places in the local area is at a critical level and causing severe pressure in the system. Too many children and young people with SEND are travelling out of the borough

to attend an appropriate specialist placement. Newly appointed senior leaders are working with haste to tackle this deficiency and increase the number of specialist places in Wokingham; however, it is too soon to see the impact of this work.

- There is too much variation in practitioners' knowledge of SEND and understanding of their statutory responsibilities to meet children's needs. An underdeveloped training programme for SEND across education, health and social care has led to wide discrepancies in the quality of practice across the local area. There are some examples of helpful professional development available, particularly within health. However, both parents and professionals report that the needs of children and young people with SEND are not being met reliably across a range of settings.
- In the last few years, social care teams have experienced significant churn in leadership and staffing. This has caused substantial strain in the system, for example in the availability of early intervention and parenting programmes. Continuity of care for families has been marred by frequent changes of social work staff, leaving many parents feeling unsupported.
- Despite the range of helpful services made available through the short breaks provision many parents did not know about this support. Inspectors were told that recent changes to short breaks provision have caused some confusion for parents. As a result, the uptake is low.
- The majority of EHC plans are not being produced within the statutory 20-week timeframe. Staff shortages in the SEN team have led to unacceptable delays in the finalisation of EHC plans and also in the turnaround of amendments to EHC plans following an annual review. Inspectors heard of some children's EHC plans having not been amended by the time of the next annual review.
- The quality of EHC plans is poor. Children and young people's views are not consistently included in the plan. Parents' views are more reliably incorporated, but frequently are not being used effectively as a 'golden thread' to influence other sections of the plan. Outcomes are typically ill-defined and have not been developed in an appropriately personal way. In their current form, EHC plans do not provide the quality of information needed to be used readily by practitioners to understand children and young people's needs and plan appropriate support. Useful contributions from health and social care are frequently not included in the plans.
- Children's transition to adult services in education, health and care is too variable. Currently, not enough young people with learning disabilities over the age of 14 receive their annual health assessment, although plans are in

place to improve this. Many do not benefit from a smooth move from children's to adults' services because planning is either too late, or not coordinated well enough. As a result, young people's continued access to ongoing education, health and care is often hampered.

- The vast majority of parents and carers told inspectors that professionals across education, health and care do not work well enough together in a connected, joined-up approach. Consequently, parents often find themselves re-telling the same information to lots of different services. Parents described confusion as they tried to navigate their way through a maze of different services and entry criteria. Several parents explained they feel 'exhausted' from continually battling their way through the system.

The effectiveness of the local area in improving outcomes for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities

Strengths

- Most children with an EHC plan achieve good educational outcomes. In 2018, the proportion of children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of key stage 2 declined, but remained above the national average. The proportion of children achieving good outcomes at the end of key stage 4 also declined, but, again, remained above the national average.
- In Wokingham, young people with SEND rightly have high aspirations for their future and want to live a good life as an adult. They want to work, be independent and make choices about where they live. Sometimes, helpful support from dedicated individuals enables young people to achieve these goals.
- Some services and settings work effectively, in a person-centred way, to improve long term outcomes for young people with SEND. The local supported employment scheme is assisting young people to secure paid employment by providing helpful guidance and onsite job coaching. A local special school is working successfully with local businesses and the council to provide supported internships for young people attending the school. Young people who are part of this scheme proudly told inspectors about their jobs and how this is helping them to feel well prepared for the world of work.
- In the past, too many children with SEND were excluded from school. New leaders in the local authority are now starting to hold schools firmly to account to prevent school exclusion for children and young people with SEND. Leaders have ensured that they now have more reliable information about the pattern of exclusions across the borough and are targeting their

work to prevent exclusions more effectively. Several recent initiatives are starting to have an impact on reducing permanent and fixed-term exclusions for children with EHC plans. Leaders are harnessing their efforts to bring about similar improvements for children identified at SEN support.

- Children and young people who are accessing the in-patient unit receive purposeful educational provision. Dedicated professionals successfully motivate children and young people to continue their learning and achieve recognised qualifications. As a result, children and young people are being well-supported to improve their outcomes.
- The CCG is making productive use of health data and feedback from young people and parents to carefully evaluate the impact of health services. Leaders in health are keeping a sharp focus on using evidence to improve children and young people's health outcomes.

Areas for improvement

- The draft SEND strategy is not focused sharply enough on identifying joint priorities to improve children and young people's outcomes across education, health and care. However, the strategy accurately identifies many of the key priorities for improvement in education.
- Local area leaders do not have high-quality management information to enable them to incisively evaluate the effectiveness of the local area in improving children and young people's outcomes. Leaders do not yet know precisely how well children and young people are doing across education, health and care to know accurately where improvements are needed.
- In 2018, the proportion of children with an EHC plan achieving a good level of development at the end of the early years foundation stage declined and was below that seen nationally.
- Most recent information published in 2017 shows that the proportion of young people with an EHC plan achieving a level 2 qualification with English and mathematics by the age of 19 was below the national average. The proportion of young people achieving a level 3 qualification by the age of 19 was also below the national average and has been declining. Disappointingly, the number of 19-year-olds with an EHC plan who are not in education, employment or training is above the national average and has been increasing.
- Senior leaders do not yet have a comprehensive overview of the educational, health, social and life outcomes achieved by young people in Wokingham. Typically, planning and support for young people as they prepare for

adulthood are weak because there is not a clearly established pathway. This leads to inconsistency as the quality of support is too reliant on individual professionals and not a standardised approach across the local area.

- Overall, the outcomes described in EHC plans are too broad and generalised to ensure that children and young people have all their special educational needs met. Outcomes are often not personalised or sharp enough to enable effective evaluation of the plan. Consequently, EHC plans are not reliably contributing to improving children and young people's outcomes.
- Inspectors were told of many children and young people accessing part-time education for lengthy periods. The local area does not yet have enough information to fully understand the longer-term impact of these arrangements on children and young people's outcomes and bring about improvements.
- Joint commissioning is weak. While the joint commissioning of emotional health and well-being services is positive there is little evidence of many other joint commissioning arrangements in place. Leaders are not working together well enough to identify priorities and combine funding to improve outcomes for children and their families.
- The use of personal budgets, including personal health budgets, is relatively low in Wokingham. Currently, there are no joint personal budgets across education, health and care. Consequently, creative and personalised approaches to improving children and young people's outcomes are not being fully utilised.

The inspection raises significant concerns about the effectiveness of the local area.

The local area is required to produce and submit a written statement of action to Ofsted that explains how the local area will tackle the following areas of significant weakness:

- the lack of a clearly communicated co-produced strategy and accompanying action plans that are shared and understood across education, health and care in the local area and sharply focused on improving the outcomes of children and young people with SEND
- the timeliness and quality of EHC plans
- the lack of co-production at a strategic level to inform effective co-production at all levels
- the quality of management information to inform accurate evaluation and energise service improvement across the local area

- the lack of well-coordinated and effectively joined-up work across education, health and social care
- the underdeveloped pathway to enable young people with SEND to make a successful transition to adulthood.

Yours sincerely

Ofsted	Care Quality Commission
Christopher Russell Regional Director	Ursula Gallagher Deputy Chief Inspector, Primary Medical Services, Children Health and Justice
Claire Prince HMI Lead Inspector	Rebecca Hogan CQC Inspector
Pat Tate Ofsted Inspector	

Cc: Department for Education
 Clinical commissioning group(s)
 Director Public Health for the local area
 Department of Health
 NHS England

TITLE	SEND Strategy
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Overview and Scrutiny Committee 18 June 2019
WARD	None specific
DIRECTOR	Director of Children's Services - Carol Cammiss

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The Council needs to identify and confirm its Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) strategy so as to best meet the needs of children, young people and their families. The attached strategy provides the Council and the local community with a start point for future priorities and arrangements. It has been the subject of consultation with interested parties during the Spring of this year. In addition the Council has received important comments from Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission as part of their recent inspection of local SEND services.

Work is ongoing with partner organisations to implement the outcome of the inspection letter that requires improvement from the Council and Health partners. This will be undertaken by a recently established project board. This coupled with the consultation commentary ensure that the current strategy will be augmented and amended.

In the coming months, in line with the future requirements of Ofsted and our key partners the attached strategy will be further developed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That:

- The attached strategy be approved as the basis for further work with key partners.
- Detailed consideration is given by the newly established SEND improvement board to the advice of Ofsted/CQC regarding the development of the future SEND strategy.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The report highlights the main issues of the Council's recently produced SEND strategy along with the issues identified by consultation arrangements and the recently published Ofsted/CQC SEND inspection report.

Background

1. Following an initial review in the autumn of 2018 of Special Educational Needs and Disability services by the Directorate a number of changes to policy and operational delivery have been planned. Among these has been the development of a SEND strategy aimed at setting the direction for the service over the next 3-5 years. In January 2019 the council set out a new draft strategy based upon the following principles and priorities:

Principles

- Encouraging independence
- Communicating well
- Working in partnership
- Identifying need early
- Ensuring financial sustainability.

Priorities

In terms of priorities for the Council the Strategy proposes to develop and promote 4 main areas of activity to improve:

- data gathering and analysis to support evidence-based approaches to provision;
- engagement and communication;
- transitions at all stages;
- provision and local capacity building.

These are outlined in greater detail in the attached Strategy document.

2. The strategy has been the subject of consultation with our key partners including parents and carers. The main outcomes of this are shown below.
3. A total of eighteen responses were received. Most respondents accepted the need to make changes to the existing strategic direction and overall responded positively to the proposed Strategy. There were however some areas where individual consultees wished to see changes including:
 - That there should be greater involvement in the planning of services by parents/carers and young people. In particular to development of co-production;
 - Further training for all staff working within the SEND service.
 - Development of further respite services;
 - Transitions services that help young people and their families move on to adulthood
 - More resources being made available to provide greater levels of one to one help for young people and their families.

4. In addition to the above, the Ofsted/CQC inspection in March 2019 identified that the service needed to address two specific identified deficits.

Firstly, the strategy needs to give wider consideration to services other than education:

“The recent SEND strategy is currently in draft form and is being consulted upon. The SEND strategy accurately identifies most of the areas where significant and urgent improvement is needed, particularly in relation to education. However, the strategy and leaders’ evaluation of the effectiveness of SEND in the local area are too focussed on education and do not consider health and care well enough. As a result, it does not effectively set out a clear enough plan for the improvements needed across education, health and care in a coherent joined-up approach.”

Secondly, inspectors emphasised the need for greater co-production and engagement with parents/carers and young people. This reinforces views that were expressed by consultees in the earlier service and partner consultation.

5. With these caveats inspectors were positive about the proposed direction and priorities for the Strategy.
6. Due to the findings of the inspection the Council and its partners are required to produce a “written statement following the outcome of the Ofsted/CQC inspection. This work will be commissioned and overseen by a recently established local SEND improvement Board. In addition to delivering the required operational improvements the Board will be responsible for ensuring changes are made to the current draft strategy. These changes are to reflect the outcomes of the recent consultations along with the recommendations for change made by the Ofsted/CQC inspection report.
7. In order for the above to be progressed it is proposed that the attached draft is confirmed with the understanding that the SEND improvement board will revise based upon the comments and recommendations already received. The final revision will then be submitted to Overview and Scrutiny and the Executive for approval.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	NA	NA	NA
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	NA	NA	NA
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	NA	NA	NA

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

The current provision for children with Special Educational Needs is experiencing significant financial pressures. This position is unlikely to be resolved under current arrangements. The shortfall in available resources is a national issue and will only be resolved by changes to national funding arrangements.

Cross-Council Implications

Providing direction and priority for services that support the most vulnerable within our community will assist the Council in meeting its priorities.

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

N/A

List of Background Papers

SEND Strategy

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Wokingham Borough Council

0-25 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy

2019-2022

Introduction

Wokingham is committed to supporting and improving the life chances of all local children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND), ensuring that all are well prepared for life beyond education and training. The aim of this strategy is to set out the things we want to do over the next three years to work towards achieving our vision, reflecting the changes in the law about how we support children and their families, (through the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND Code of Practice: 0-25 years, the Care Act 2014 and the Equality Act 2010) and achieving the best possible outcomes for all.

The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced the biggest changes to SEND in a generation and we want to meet the requirements of the Act in a way that is inclusive and realistic in a very challenging financial context. Through four high level strategic priorities, this strategy serves to provide a sense of direction and will support future planning in a time of significant change. It seeks to address those issues which are of principal concern at this stage and which, when achieved, will have maximum impact on the delivery of effective and efficient services. It is for children, young people and their families, staff, partners and the wider public.

The strategy seeks to understand the need in Wokingham and then organise our resource to meet that need in the most cost effective way. It is designed to demonstrate our collective responsibility and accountability across all partners, specifically education, social care and health, but also reflect the contribution made by voluntary and community partners. It will support clear pathways for children, young people and their families with a particular emphasis on the transition between services as children and young people get older and the smooth interface between childhood and adulthood. Most importantly of all, it should encourage better outcomes for all children and young people.

We realise there is still much to do, to keep pace with increasing and changing demand, to improve provision and to build local capacity. We must target our resources effectively and achieve value for money while recognising the unprecedented increase in numbers supported by high needs funding and the corresponding increase in pressure on broader health and social care services.

Context

Wokingham is a great place for children and young people with SEND to grow up. The Council has a strong and growing economy, high performing schools and a range of public and privately funded resources for children and young people with SEND and their parents and carers. But like many other local authorities, we face rising demand from a growing and changing demography, at a time of reducing public funds. Achieving our aspirations against a backdrop of increased demand, particularly for children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs and constrained local authority and partner resources will require new ways of working across public agencies and a new relationship with service users.

We want to coordinate the support and services for children and young people with SEND and in this strategy we have developed a set of high level priorities for the improvement of services from birth to age 25, which we believe will support us in realising better outcomes through:

- Improving our data gathering and analysis to support an evidence based approach to provision;
- Improving our communication and engagement practices and developing strong partnerships with schools, families and other partners;
- Supporting children to thrive at times of transition and as they become adults;
- Improving provision and building capacity locally to meet need.

We believe that putting a greater emphasis on supporting children and their families to have an active role in their own care will be critical for improving outcomes. We want to ensure that the voice of children, young people and their families is heard in all aspects of decision making. To that end we have planned opportunities for parents, carers and their children to respond to this strategy and inform its progress.

Wokingham Borough Council is the lead agency for all children and young people's services in Wokingham. This means that the Council brings together all public services and other stakeholders and supports them in working together to help local children and young people to achieve the best possible outcomes. The Council and its public sector partners are responsible for providing additional support to children and young people with SEND and their families. This support includes:

- Involving children and their families in the decisions that the Council may make about their support and services;
- Giving advice and information to parents on what support is available for children and their families locally;
- Agreeing with parents a joined up education, health and care plan (EHCP) that sets out how education services, schools, health services and social services will support each child;
- Commissioning services jointly between the Council and health services for children with SEND;
- Supporting parents by giving advice and information and helping them to care for their children.

We are also committed to working across the area served by the three Berkshire West authorities. Sub-regional health and local authority partnerships are working to create a shared data set and a shared understanding of need, so that where there is a common need for particular provision, we will work together. This may mean sharing resources with a view to creating new provision that will be closer to families and offering better value for money than independent sector provision.

Our work will be set within a strong management framework with clear accountabilities and reporting lines to ensure that service aspirations are delivered with tangible benefits to local communities and that better outcomes for children and young people are achieved. Our governance arrangements will ensure that services are held to account to achieve these aspirations in a timely and efficient manner. These are explained later in the strategy.

Our Vision

Our vision for all children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities in Wokingham is that, with the right support and the right opportunities, they are able to achieve the best possible outcomes and to lead happy and fulfilled lives.

We will improve outcomes by promoting family and community resilience, working with partners to reduce dependence on services throughout children's lives by focusing on what families need to support themselves and empowering them to improve their own situation. Placing a greater emphasis on supporting children and their families to have an active role in their own care will be critical for improving outcomes and ensuring the voice of the children and their families is heard in all stages of decision making. We have consulted widely with partners in the production of this strategy to ensure that it reflects the views of all.

We will also achieve this through access to high quality local early years provision, schools and other education settings. We want to provide a well-planned continuum of provision from birth to early adulthood. We aim to meet need in mainstream and universal settings wherever possible and where specialist help is needed we want to ensure that we can provide it in Wokingham wherever possible. We want children and young people to get the right support, advice and guidance at the right stage depending on their needs, making good educational progress and a broader approach to family and health needs.

Special Educational Needs and Disability in Wokingham.

1. *Who are the children with SEND?*

This strategy is concerned with supporting children and young people with SEND to achieve the best possible outcomes and to help parents and carers to provide the best possible care and support. Children and young people with SEND are defined as follows:

A child or young person has special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. (S 20.1 Children and Families Act 2014)

The term disabilities is used as follows:

If you have a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long term' negative (adverse) effect on your ability to carry out normal day to day activities. (Based on S6.1 Equalities Act 2010)

Wokingham Borough Council has a duty to make suitable arrangements for the education of children and young people aged 0-25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities where needs cannot be met by the schools they attend using their own resources. The needs of individual children and young people may be met within mainstream schools and colleges by providing additional support or through a place being provided within a special school or college. Where a child or young person has not made the expected progress despite the school having taken purposeful and relevant action to identify, assess and meet the needs of the child or young person, the school or parents can consider requesting an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) which will set out the services they will receive and the school, college or other provision they will attend.

2. How many children are there with SEND in Wokingham?

There are approximately 38,000 children and young people under the age of 18 years living in Wokingham. This is 23% of the total population in the area. In September 2018, 914 children and young people had EHCPs maintained by Wokingham Borough Council, with the most significant needs of resident children being:

- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) - 39%
- Social Emotional and Mental Health – 18%
- Learning Disabilities – 24%

The overall number of children and young people with an EHCP and the predecessor statement of especial educational needs, has grown since 2015 from 730 to 914 in 2018.

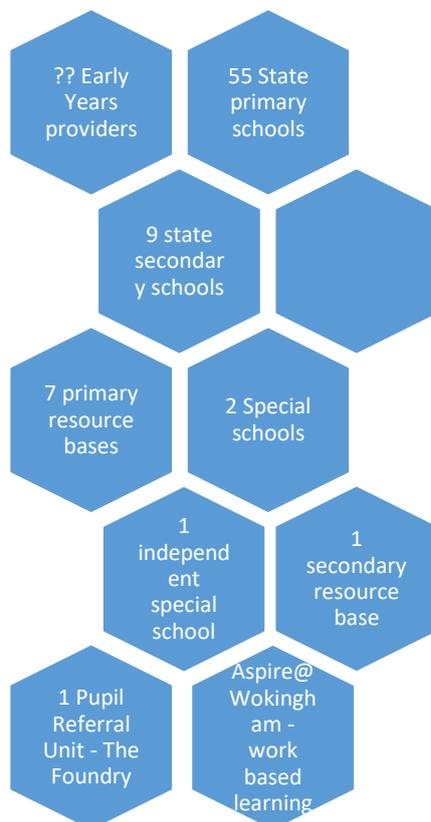
A further 2,799 children were categorised as needing SEN support in Wokingham schools, including independent and non-maintained schools (State-funded – 2166, Independent and non-maintained – 633).

The proportion of children and young people in the borough requiring education in special schools has increased at a rate of 5% per annum since 2015. At the same time, the 0-25 population (and in particular the number of young adolescents of statutory school age) is projected to grow. These two factors will lead to a significant increase in the number of

children needing special school places in the next five years. It is estimated that there will be an additional 125 places required by 2023.

Currently the Council educates 60% of children and young people requiring special school education within borough. However, 133 are educated outside of Wokingham, half of these in expensive independent or non-maintained special schools.

3. SEND Provision in Wokingham



4. Finance

The continued reduction of budgets in successive local government financial settlements means that the Council must:

- Seek the best value for money in all service areas, through efficient organisation, better procurement and partnership working with other councils and health commissioners;
- Focus specialist services on those children, young people and families who have the greatest need and who have statutory entitlement;
- Target Early Help services to prevent needs increasing and avoid higher levels of spend on statutory services;
- Charge for services where lawful and where families have the means to pay;
- Give families and young people greater control in how their financial support is used.

Already stretched High Needs Block funding means that we must target our resources effectively and deliver this strategy in a way that is affordable, recognising the unprecedented increase in pupil numbers supported by High Needs Block funding and the corresponding increase in pressure on the broader health and social care services. Partnership working will become even more important for the future, particularly with schools, where innovative ways to use High Needs Block funding in mainstream schools.

Our Principles

We have developed our principles, priorities and key actions through talking with partners. These principles will be reflected in our support, services and provision in order to improve outcomes for children with SEND. They will be embedded in everything we do.

1. Encouraging independence:

We want children and young people to be resilient and confident, so that they are prepared for independent adulthood. We will ensure that services and provision are proportionate to need and we will provide the tools for individuals and families to do things for themselves. Parents, carers, children and young people will feel empowered through being aware of the support available and better informed to make choices and decisions. Wokingham Borough Council recognises that raising a child with a disability can at times be more challenging or complex than raising a child without a disability. We will therefore provide support ranging from information and sign posting to funding for and direct provision of short breaks. We will also provide courses and direct support from skilled staff with specific issues. As every child and their family is different we will accommodate different levels of support based upon individual needs.

2. Communicating well:

We will be transparent and honest in all communication to support the effective delivery of services. We will be clear, open and honest with all our audiences, and will explain who does what, how it works, what to expect and when, and we will keep each other informed. The views and voice of the child and their family will be at the centre of everything that we do. As a consequence, children and their families will feel listened to and involved in planning for their future.

3. Working in partnership:

We will encourage partnership working to ensure that we use our resource as effectively and efficiently as possible. We will work with statutory health, education and care services, with schools and the voluntary sector, taking collective responsibility to deliver education, health and social care in a coordinated way. We will put children and their families first, to work in partnership to deliver services in line with meeting need and individual choices.

4. Identifying need early:

We aim to improve the long term outcomes for the child and reduce the need for more costly interventions later on. We will identify need as early as possible and work with families and young people to decide how to support that need efficiently. We will treat times of transition with particular importance and ensure that early planning supports and informs the appropriate aspirations of the child and their family.

5. Ensuring financial sustainability:

We will ensure that provision and services are commissioned to ensure clear pathways between services while improving financial sustainability. We will review commissioning arrangements in the context of local partnerships, spend SEND budgets carefully and efficiently and have a clear understanding of what types of investment best benefit our children.

Our Priorities

To realise our vision for children and young people with SEND, with our partners we have identified the following strategic priorities for 2019-2022. Each is supported by a detailed action plan that accompanies this strategy.

Strategic priority 1: Improved data gathering and analysis to support an evidence-based approach to provision.

Through the development of improved data gathering, systems and processes, we will ensure an evidence based approach to the planning and commissioning of support. Working closely with partners, such as health colleagues and those in voluntary and community services we will maximise the opportunities for early identification of changing needs and demands to target support in the most effective way. Utilising good quality information we will ensure a

transparent and fair allocation of existing resources with budgets aligned to our strategic priorities.

Significant amounts of data are available across the Council and its partners in health. Currently a local health data set is being developed by Berkshire Health Foundation Trust (BHFT) to assist with planning across Berkshire. This will be expanded to include the Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust once data is available. We will develop a systematic approach to using existing systems in a smarter way. We will use data to plan strategically for the future. We will establish a general agreement of what data we need to collect and how we use it. We will improve methods of quality assurance to make sure that we are using existing resources in the most efficient and effective way.

To have early sight of changing needs and demands we will develop evidence sources such as:

- Pupils with EHCPs by primary need;
- Current placements by primary need;
- Placement costs by primary need;
- Use of EHCP funding in schools;
- Applications for and use of Exceptional Needs Funding;
- High Needs Block budget monitoring;
- Data and trajectory of children in receipt of early intervention.

As a result of better use and analysis of data we will seek to:

- Reduce the use of independent provision whether in or out of borough;
- Reduce the High Needs Block budget spend;
- Maximize Wokingham's use of its own special school capacity; for example to have early intervention behaviour support available to deliver timely interventions so that mainstream education settings are able to meet children's needs; or a specialist inclusion service for direct support to primary schools;
- Source appropriate specialist provision for all SEND children aged 5-16 and develop partnerships with out of borough specialist providers to meet the needs of children and young people with severe or complex needs and provide good value for money;
- Increase in the percentage of children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan remaining in mainstream settings;
- Reduce the percentage of children who have received early intervention going on to need an Education, Health and Care Plan by providing appropriate, high quality provision within the borough for the majority of Wokingham's children and young people with SEND.

Strategic priority 2: Improved Engagement and Communication

- With and between partners

Working closely with schools, colleges and other providers we will ensure that the commissioning of places is closely aligned with the changing climate of need in Wokingham;

that the commissioning of integrated services ensures a holistic approach and meets the individual needs of children and young people through bespoke packages, from birth to adulthood; and that there is a shared and widely agreed understanding of the role and function for each partner in the delivery of the SEND strategy.

- With and between services

Regular meetings and other channels of communication between the local authority and service providers will ensure that commissioned services continue to meet the needs of children and young people, that there is a clarity of purpose and that any changes of priorities and funding are shared with providers and stakeholders. Communication will focus on meeting the needs of the child and the young person in the context of the finite resources available.

- With and between schools

We will support schools to understand their legal and moral obligations to accommodate all children with SEND through regular sharing of information at SENCO network meetings and Schools Forum. We will ensure that schools are held accountable for the outcomes of pupils on their roll and by making reasonable adjustments, ensure that the gap between pupils with SEND and their mainstream counterparts is narrowing.

- With parents, carers and young people

We will communicate regularly with REACH, SENDIASS and CAN network in order to provide a co-production working model so that there is ownership by all stakeholders and that the voice of the child and the parents is heard. Collectively we will manage parental expectations to ensure that the needs of the child are met within a framework of understanding about national and local funding constraints.

Strategic Priority 3: Improved Transition at All Stages

- Transitions within Education

We recognise how important successful transition procedures are to all children but especially for those with additional needs. Transition for a child with SEND requires some additional planning to ensure that it is smooth and successful.

We will ensure effective transitions at all stages of education by working with early years providers to develop communication links between other local settings and primary schools, and supporting effective relationships between primary and secondary schools and post 16 provision. This will ensure greater continuity for children in their movement from home to setting and from school to school. Transition from one setting to another should be seen as a seamless journey.

Planning for transition should take place the term before the child is due to start in their new setting, to enable sufficient time for any plans or support to be put into place. Parents and

any professionals involved with the child should be invited to the transition meeting. This ensures parents can make informed decisions for their children.

- Transitions into adulthood

We will establish a clear pathway across the partnership which allows for 'Preparing for Adulthood' (PfA) arrangements to begin at 14 years. This includes defined roles and responsibility within the Local Authority both strategically and operationally. Children's and Adult's Services will work in partnership with other agencies, the child and young person and their family to develop effective person centred preparation for adulthood.

The PfA Pathway will deliver the following;

- Emphasis on a planning process to support children and young people with SEND to make positive transitions into adulthood in all aspects of their life including:
 - ✓ Employment;
 - ✓ Good adult health;
 - ✓ Independent living;
 - ✓ Participating in society and/ or the local community.
- Establishment of a new Preparing for Adulthood and Transition Team between Children's and Adult's services to embed and co-ordinate a preparing for adulthood pathway.
- Development of a workforce training programme to embed the principles of Preparing for Adulthood, in line with legislative duties and Children's and Adult's Services approaches.
- Development of advice, information and signposting for young people, parents and carers and professionals through the Local Offer.
- Development of the market place to ensure that there is suitable post 18 provision in place to support young people's aspiration and life choices through to adulthood, including employment and accommodation.
- Development of a mental health protocol which specifies how young people with SEND and mental health problems are prepared for adulthood and transition to adult mental health services, where appropriate.
- Early information and advice for young people and their parents and carers in respect of where their needs or their children's needs do not meet the thresholds for Adult's Services provision.

Strategic Priority 4: Improved provision and local capacity building

The increase of children and young people requiring education in special schools and colleges in Wokingham and the projected growth of the 0-25 population will lead to a significant increase in the number of children needing special school places in the next five years (an additional 125 place growth requirement by 2023).

We know that we need additional capacity to support growth, specifically to include the ASD and SEMH needs which demands further investigation, expertise and understanding to ensure provision is effective and appropriate.

Insufficient local capacity and the consequent use of high cost out of borough provision, has led to a High Needs Block projected deficit. This overspend will potentially increase in 2019/20 as the numbers of children requiring an SEN placement is set to rise.

There will be an additional pressure for 190 places for children with SEND will be required by 2023, to mitigate growth (125 places) and provide a local alternative to high cost, out of borough provision (65 places).

There are two state funded special schools within Wokingham Borough, Addington School, Woodley and Northern House School Wokingham in Wokingham Town. Addington School provides services for up to 206 children, focusing on Autism and Learning Disabilities. Currently over 80% of the places are taken by children and young people from Wokingham. Northern House provides services for up to 72 children with a focus on Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties. Currently around 50% of the places are taken by children and young people from Wokingham.

Seven primary schools and one secondary school have designated Resource Bases for children and young people with SEND. The Resource Bases provide support within mainstream schools, so allowing a child to continue to be educated within this environment rather than within a special school. Resources Bases currently cover the following areas (number of schools in brackets):

- Hearing Impairment (1 infant, 1 junior);
- Autism Spectrum Disorders (1 infant, 1 junior, 1 secondary);
- Physical Disabilities (2 primary);
- Speech Language and Communication Needs (1 primary).

The cost of supporting all current children and young people in Wokingham Borough with SEND is £18 million per year. Over recent years, the pressure on the High Needs Block has increased. This reflects the increased size of the cohort and the number of children placed in special schools (particularly independent and non-maintained special schools). These placements are often outside of the borough, and the council is required to meet the home to school transport costs. Transport costs of children with SEND are higher than for children in mainstream schools, reflecting the longer journeys and lower vehicle occupancy rates.

There are various options that the Council could take to address this deficit and these will all be investigated as part of this strategy. They include:

- Increasing inclusion (education in mainstream schools), through improved provision of specialist support;
- Providing local high quality but better value facilities to replace high cost placements;

- Building a new school through a free school application;
- Expanding existing special school provision;
- Developing Satellite Provision linked to an existing school;
- Reviewing the provision of the Resources Bases;
- Providing additional support for mainstream schools;
- Improving purchasing frameworks for independent provision.

Enablers

To achieve our vision and deliver on our strategic priorities, there are some key enablers which will support this strategy:

- Appoint to substantive posts to ensure continuity and consistency;
- Continue to develop a permanent skilled workforce that delivers high quality and effective interventions;
- Promote and support an inclusive culture across and within all our schools;
- Continue to develop the range and quality of information through our SEND local offer;
- Develop a set of comprehensive action plans that detail the activities, measures of success and timescales for achieving our strategic priorities.

Governance of the strategy:

In order to manage, monitor and evaluate progress effectively it will be vital that there is robust governance of this strategy. This will be undertaken at two levels. Operational scrutiny will be undertaken by the owners of the attached action plans. The purpose of this group is to ensure that action plans are delivered on time and on budget, and where this is not happening, to report obstacles and concerns to the strategic group.

Strategic scrutiny will be undertaken by the SEND Partnership Board, a multi-agency and multi-service group, to be chaired by the Director for Children's Services. The delivery of this strategy is not the responsibility of a single agency. It requires a partnership approach, owned by all who work with children, young people and their families. The purpose of the group is to support the shared vision, judge progress against the stated strategic priorities and provide scrutiny and challenge to the delivery of the SEND strategy through the operational group.

The SEND Partnership Board will provide the strategic drive, coordination and oversight by receiving regular reports on performance and outcomes against the strategic priorities and supporting action plans and consider a range of data, information and soft intelligence from a variety of sources. In considering these data sources the Board will evaluate the progress made by the Partnership in delivering key improvements for children and young people with

SEND and their families. The Partnership will also consider key risks to the successful delivery of the strategy and mitigate/remove any blockages to improving outcomes for this group of children and young people.

Consultation

This draft strategy details the overarching vision and direction for children and young people with SEND in Wokingham for the next three years. Faced with radical legislative overhaul through the Children and Families Act 2014, continuing financial pressures and increasing demand, we need to think differently about the way that we plan and deliver SEND support in Wokingham.

Wokingham Borough Council is seeking views on our draft strategy for supporting children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The strategy has been produced by officers, partners and schools in the first instance, but must reflect the views of parents, carers and young people from Wokingham as well as wider partners in the voluntary sector. It sets out how the local area will work to support children, young people and their families with SEND in future. It is built upon a shared belief that considering and providing for the needs of children and young people with SEND should be 'everyone's business', with the aim of providing effective services which will enable children and young people to thrive.

Timescale:

January 2019 – all partners to meet to agree on final draft strategy

March 2019 – final draft out for consultation

May 2019 – final strategy published.

Jim Leivers

Assistant Director

Learning, Achievement and Partnerships

May 2019

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TITLE	School Performance Indicators and Ofsted reports
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 18 June 2019
WARD	(All Wards);
LEAD OFFICER	Director of Children's Services - Carol Cammiss

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Clear understanding of schools' performance in order to recognise and promote success and ensure robust challenge and support continues to deliver improvement

RECOMMENDATION

Note the outcomes of relevant Ofsted reports

SUMMARY OF REPORT

Bearwood Primary School

March 2019

S5 GOOD previously RI

<https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50065413>

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Senior leaders and governors have taken a wide range of decisive and sustained actions to tackle weaknesses. Consequently, Bearwood Primary School is now a good school.
- Senior and middle leaders ensure that the quality of learning in mathematics and English is consistently strong across year groups and classes.
- Due to improvements, pupils now achieve outcomes in line with other pupils nationally in key stages 1 and 2 national tests.
- Disadvantaged pupils receive targeted support. Consequently, they make progress in line with other pupils nationally in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Effective teaching enables pupils to deepen their thinking and explain it clearly, especially in mathematics.
- Pupils collaborate effectively, using discussion to share and develop their ideas. They take pride in their work. Presentation in books is almost always of a high standard.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and engages pupils well. The curriculum in art is particularly strong.
- All members of staff prioritise pupils' safety. As a result, pupils feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe outside school.

- Behaviour throughout the school is typically of a high standard. It is particularly impressive at breaktimes, when pupils of all ages play happily together.
- Relationships are strong and nurturing. Older pupils act as helpful learning mentors for their younger classmates.
- Provision in early years is consistently strong. Children learn and develop their social skills well.
- Subject leaders have improved the quality of teaching, learning and the curriculum in English and mathematics well.
- Despite some improvements, pupils do not develop skills, knowledge and understanding in subjects in the wider curriculum consistently well.
- Leaders and governors have established effective systems to monitor and review the quality of teaching and learning. However, their analysis of information from checks on teaching does not focus sharply enough on the progress made by different groups across all subjects.
- Although leaders have successfully improved pupils' attendance, it remains below the national average. The attendance of disadvantaged pupils is also below the national average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - strengthening the impact of subject leadership in the wider curriculum so that curriculum improvements are consistently embedded and pupils acquire secure knowledge, skills and understanding in a range of subjects
 - sharpening the analysis of information gathered from the school's checks on teaching, so that it is more focused on the progress made across all subjects by disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).
- Improve attendance so that it is at least in line with national averages and reduce absence rates for disadvantaged pupils.

St Nicholas Hurst CE Primary School

April 2019

S8 GOOD

<https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50077582>

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Staff morale is high. All staff who responded to the confidential staff questionnaire agreed that the school is well led and managed. The determined leadership that you, your senior leaders and governors provide ensures that the school continues to strengthen. You lead by example and are very proud and committed to the school. The school is a positive and welcoming place. Pupils are polite, well-mannered and show respect for each other and for adults. Pupils work well together in lessons. I witnessed many examples of collaborative work. For example, in one mathematics lesson, pupils were developing their understanding of positive and negative numbers while solving problems. This enabled them to identify where they had made mistakes and learn from each other.

Pupils are happy to come to school and their attendance is higher than the national averages. They describe their school as 'amazing', 'great' and 'caring'. They are clearly proud of their school and enjoy the range of experiences that staff provide.

Staff, parents and carers are extremely enthusiastic about all aspects of the school's work. One parent said, 'The school is so nurturing, has a lovely community feel and has a wonderful ethos. The teachers really care about the children and always put in 110%.' You have built on the strengths of the school and tackled the areas that needed to improve. At the last inspection, the school was asked to improve pupils' achievement at the end of Reception and in the Year 1 phonics screening check.

School records and 2018 outcomes indicate that your work in these areas has had an impact with the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard being well above the national averages.

You and your leaders are good at identifying how to improve pupils' progress. Pupils make better progress in reading and writing than they do in mathematics. There are some inconsistencies in the quality of the teaching of mathematics in some classes.

You have identified this as a priority in your development plans and recognise that mathematics needs to be more challenging, particularly for the girls, to enable them to make greater progress.

Safeguarding is effective.

You and your governors have ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose and that records are detailed and of high quality. Your checks on the suitability of staff to work with children are thorough. Training for staff is up to date and in line with the latest statutory guidance. There is a strong culture of promoting pupils' well-being and safety in the school. One pupil said, 'It is a great community and everyone helps each other.'

You and your team have created a strong sense of community, based on Christian values. Pupils say they feel safe and enjoy their learning. Pupils I spoke with confidently described the range of strategies they used to stay safe. For example, they knew how to stay safe when using the internet. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent. The vast majority of parents who completed the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, stated that pupils are safe and well looked after at this school. One parent commented, 'St Nicholas is a lovely, warm and caring school.'

Inspection findings

At the start of the inspection, we agreed to look at the effectiveness of safeguarding, how effectively you have improved the teaching of writing, the progress of pupils, including girls, in mathematics and the progress of the most able pupils at key stage 1 in writing. In 2018, the proportion of girls that made good progress in mathematics was lower than that of other girls nationally with similar starting points. You and your team identified weaknesses in pupils' understanding in mathematics and, as a result, you have revised the curriculum to meet the needs of the pupils, particularly the girls. Regular problem-solving activities now form a part of the mathematics work to help pupils apply their understanding to real-life contexts.

You and your team have identified that further work is needed to challenge girls in mathematics and to enable them to develop a deep understanding and reach the higher standards.

The previous inspection report asked that you stretch pupils further in lessons, including the most able, so that they make better progress. In 2018 at key stage 2, more pupils reached the higher standard in writing than previously. The school's reorganised curriculum enables teachers to focus on improving the range of writing that pupils have to experience.

Pupils told me that they enjoy the writing topics. You introduced a more creative approach to writing using good-quality texts to engage pupils. Work in books and current assessment information show that the topics are having a positive effect on writing

outcomes. Writing in pupils' books confirms that pupils are becoming increasingly skilled at editing and improving their writing. Pupils take pride in their work and present it neatly. The curriculum has been well designed so that pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in a wide range of subjects. Right from the start, pupils are given the chance to explore the world around them. Pupils enjoy a wide range of educational visits and told me how much they enjoy learning in different situations. These experiences help to improve their reading, writing and mathematical skills. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of extracurricular activities on offer including judo, science and football. These contribute to pupils' well-rounded and enjoyable education.

Senior leaders work collaboratively as an effective team. They lead by example and keep a careful check on the quality of teaching and pupils' work in books.

There is some variability in the accuracy of teachers' assessments and these do not always reflect the good progress seen in pupils' work. The Headteacher accepts that there are some weaknesses in the school's development plans for improving teaching and learning. For example, they do not include clear measurable milestones or targets to enable leaders and governors to evaluate the impact of their planned actions.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils' rates of progress in mathematics continue to improve, particularly for the most able girls
- they refine their development plans to include clear milestones and targets to enable leaders and governors to evaluate the impact of these plans.

St Dominic Savio Primary School

May 2019

S8 GOOD –recommendation for S5 to investigate outstanding

<https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50077985>

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Based on the evidence gathered during this short inspection, I am of the opinion that the school has demonstrated strong practice and marked improvement in specific areas. This may indicate that the school has improved significantly overall.

Therefore, I am recommending that the school's next inspection be a section 5 inspection.

You have successfully built a cohesive leadership team which is fully committed to your research-based approach to school improvement. Leaders at all levels hold recognised positions of expertise, including in phonics, religious education, writing and special educational needs. Through this, they share their knowledge and understanding, both within school and across other schools, particularly within the diocese cluster of schools and the local authority.

Middle leaders share senior leaders' passion for improvement. Middle leaders lead strongly through example and a secure knowledge of how to ensure progress in their subject for all pupils. They monitor the progress that pupils are making in all subjects and coach teachers to help ensure that all pupils continue to make strong progress.

The regular checks that senior leaders carry out on pupils' progress have ensured that all groups make very strong progress from their different starting points. This includes the large number of pupils on roll who speak English as an additional language, as well as pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or who are disadvantaged.

Your determination to provide the best for every pupil is palpable. Parents and carers are almost unanimous in their view that their children are well taught. One comment, typical of the views of many parents, was: 'The school has a very caring atmosphere: each individual pupil is well known both personally and academically, and in our experience, learning is highly personalised.' Staff who responded to the online survey are unanimously proud to work at the school and feel that leaders 'genuinely care' about their well-being.

Pupils' attainment in phonics is strong over time. The proportion of pupils who meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check and the Year 2 check is consistently above the national average. Pupils' attainment in key stage 1 is also strong. In 2017 and 2018, attainment of pupils at the expected standard and at greater depth in reading, writing and mathematics was above that seen nationally.

Pupils continue to make good overall progress across key stage 2, making progress well above the national average in reading and mathematics. Consequently, in 2017 and 2018, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected and the higher standards in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of key stage 2 was above the national average.

Work in pupils' books shows that current pupils continue to make strong progress across the school, meeting the very high standards that teachers set. Work in subjects other than English show the same high writing standards in presentation and attention to spelling, grammar and punctuation.

Leaders are in the process of redesigning the curriculum, planning it carefully to ensure that pupils' skills and knowledge are built progressively over time. Assessment systems have also been developed to enable teachers to identify what pupils know and can do so that they can build on this learning. Some subjects have already changed to this knowledge-based curriculum, particularly science and religious education, with others planned to change at the start of the next academic year. Senior leaders recognise the importance of ensuring that progress in each subject, across time, is carefully monitored while these changes take place.

Areas for improvement from the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. You have introduced a new feedback policy aimed at helping pupils to make strong progress while conscientiously managing teacher workload. Provision in the Reception classes, both indoors and outdoors, has been improved and now contributes well to children improving their reading, writing and number skills.

Governors are committed to the values and ethos of the school. Governors know the school well and are clear about the school's strengths and weaknesses. They provide a good level of challenge and support for leaders.

The local authority provides effective support and training, which contribute well to school improvement.

Safeguarding is effective.

The leadership team has ensured that all safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. In your role as designated safeguarding lead, you monitor policy and procedures regularly and ensure that practice meets current requirements. All records are detailed, regularly updated and kept securely. The investment in an online system has increased communication between all key adults and your safeguarding team. It allows the team to look for patterns and identify whether a child is vulnerable and may benefit from time in the nurture facility you have set up. You regularly refresh staff training to ensure that they are knowledgeable about the signs of abuse.

Behaviour in lessons and around the school is exemplary. Pupils enjoy opportunities to work in partnership with other pupils. They are considerate of the views of others and listen with interest. Pupils were respectful towards each other and adults, while being

extremely confident and articulate. During a conversation I held with a group of pupils, they were clear about the difference between falling out and bullying, and they were also adamant that there was not any bullying in school. They have confidence in the staff and peer mediators to resolve any issues. Pupils are given good guidance on how to keep themselves safe through a structured curriculum that includes information about cyber safety and knowing how to seek help. The many responses on Parent View confirmed that almost all parents feel that their children are safe in school and would recommend the school to another family.

Inspection findings

The first key line of enquiry that we agreed to look at was the strength of teaching, learning and assessment in all subject areas across the school.

Knowledge, skills and understanding in all curriculum areas are of a very high standard, for example in projects from the science fair, artwork in Year 6 and design work in Year 4. Pupils say they enjoy their learning and that lessons are fun. Learning behaviour in all lessons is exemplary.

Leaders have designed the physical education curriculum to be fully inclusive and pupils enjoy a vast range of sporting activities that include lacrosse, Gaelic football and ballroom dance. As a result of consulting pupils, in particular older girls who disliked physical education, the school introduced cheerleading, and many pupils now continue to enjoy success both in and out of school in this discipline.

Next, we looked at pupil premium funding. In particular, we looked at how governors hold leaders to account for its effective use and the impact it has on the progress of disadvantaged pupils.

Leaders, including governors, carefully monitor the use of the pupil premium funding to ensure that it is being effectively used. As a result, disadvantaged pupils make particularly strong progress which is at least in line with that of their peers and stronger than the national average.

Finally, we looked at provision in the early years setting and the impact that improvements have had on children's and pupils' progress.

Children enter the early years provision from many different nurseries. Assessments carried out on entry show that a significant proportion, around one third, have below expected levels in reading and writing. In addition, around one quarter enter below expected levels in mathematics. In 2018, children made strong progress and the number leaving the early years with a good level of development continued to be above the national average.

You have ensured that there has been specific training in phonics teaching for all members of staff. A large number of support staff work alongside teachers from the Reception Year and Year 1 to deliver phonics teaching to 11 different ability groups. This is overseen by the specialist leader of education in phonics, who models exemplary practice to enhance teaching and learning. Consequently, the strong outcomes in the Year 1 and Year 2 phonics screening checks have been sustained and pupils in the early years have a strong understanding of phonics to ensure that they make rapid gains on entry to key stage 1.

Parents have many opportunities to be involved in their child's learning in the early years, for example through contributing to the online learning journal or through weekly reading sessions offered to all parents.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that: the school's new curriculum continues to evolve and become embedded so that rates of strong progress and high standards are maintained across all subjects.

Beechwood Primary School

April 2019

S8 Monitoring visit- appropriate action and satisfactory progress

<https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50078643>

Serious weaknesses first monitoring inspection of Beechwood Primary School

The inspection was the first monitoring inspection since the school was judged to have serious weaknesses in May 2018. It was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005.

Evidence

During this inspection, meetings were held with the headteacher, interim executive board members, and representatives from the supporting multi-academy trust and the local authority. I observed learning in five lessons and met with teachers and pupils. I considered the views of parents by reviewing Ofsted's online survey, Parent View. I scrutinised a range of documentation, including minutes of meetings held by governors, school assessment information and reports from external agencies, including a review of the use of pupil premium funding. The school's statement of action and improvement plans were evaluated.

Context

Since the previous inspection, many teaching staff have left the school. The acting headteacher left her post and you have been appointed as the new acting headteacher. The school has received formal support from a multi-academy trust. The interim executive board (IEB) has remained in place.

The quality of leadership and management at the school

Since the previous inspection, senior leaders, the supporting academy trust, the IEB and local authority have acted in unison to provide pupils with a better quality of education. They have taken time to consider the challenges the school faces and develop focused plans which are followed closely and reviewed regularly. This is an improving school. At the time of the last inspection, the quality of teaching was judged inadequate. Staff are motivated and keen to improve outcomes for pupils. They appreciate, and put to good use, the support they have had to develop their teaching. For example, following a useful pupil premium review, staff received training to improve the support they provide for disadvantaged pupils. As a result of what teachers learned and successfully applied, the progress of these pupils is beginning to strengthen. Teachers receive regular feedback on their work and appreciate the useful guidance on offer to them. For example, staff in Years 4 and 5 worked with a local school to develop the quality of their English teaching. This was typified in a series of lessons where pupils worked collaboratively to gather and use vocabulary to describe a dragon's eyes. Nevertheless, systems for tracking the performance of individual teachers require further refinement to ensure that the quality of teaching strengthens further. Leaders' efforts to address high levels of pupil absence have been hampered in the past by the instability of leadership. Recently, changes to systems and processes have ensured that staff at all levels are charged with supporting and challenging parents to raise their child's attendance. While there is some evidence of improved attendance, the full impact of these changes is yet to be seen. Staff have received useful training to help raise their expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage challenging behaviour successfully in class. Pupils assert that classes are now more peaceful and purposeful environments which allow them to focus and concentrate on their work. As a result, pupils are increasingly productive and enthusiastic about their learning. Progress in mathematics is improving because pupils have developed their understanding of calculation, which they now present in a more refined and logical manner. They practise these skills often and are becoming more fluent as their understanding grows. In most year groups, pupils are tackling challenging problems and can explain

their thinking. Increasing proportions of pupils are attaining at age-related expectations in mathematics. Pupils' writing is improving because they are increasingly able to write for a specific audience or purpose. For example, pupils wrote accounts to share an experience they had during their Easter break. However, standards of punctuation and spelling remain weak, particularly in key stage 2, meaning that these pupils are not writing at the expected standard for their age. Topic books show that pupils learn about religious education, the arts, geography and history. For example, pupils in Year 3 learned about the Ten Commandments and used their learning to produce posters to encourage others to follow these rules. However, these subjects are often taught in isolation and do not allow pupils enough opportunity to build on their prior knowledge and understanding. As a result, pupils' progress in these lessons is weak.

In reception, staff have worked with external providers to improve their recording and sharing of assessment information. The effect of this work is twofold. Firstly, staff now have a more accurate understanding of children's progress because the information they hold is of higher quality. Secondly, this information is available for parents to view, which has helped to improve communication between the school and home. Members of the IEB are experienced, knowledgeable and well placed to secure further improvement. They utilise their skills well to challenge leaders to improve outcomes for pupils. For example, having reviewed the systems for collecting and analysing assessment information, they developed new systems which are more efficient and accurate. The new approach offers the board a more accurate picture of pupils' progress, including those who are disadvantaged. Board members work efficiently with leaders and external agencies to gather an accurate and unbiased view of the school. Officers from the multi-academy trust have worked closely with the school, taking time to understand the uniqueness of the setting and supporting staff to improve their teaching. For example, staff have received useful training to help them to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities better. As a result, these pupils now attend class more regularly and make better progress. The local authority has supported the school well. Officers identified the weaknesses in the school prior to the previous inspection and put in place appropriate plans and an IEB to oversee the necessary improvements. They have successfully brokered useful support from a range of schools and a multi-academy trust to help leaders to evaluate the school effectively and drive improvements. Regular monitoring of the school's progress has helped leaders to refine their actions and identify any strategies that are not having the desired impact.

Following the monitoring inspection, the following judgements were made:

Leaders and managers are taking effective actions towards the removal of the 'serious weaknesses' designation.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

The local authority's statement of action is fit for purpose.

Northern House Academy

April 2019

S8 Monitoring visit

<https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50066584>

Special measures monitoring inspection of Northern House School (Wokingham)

Special Academy

Having considered all the evidence I am of the opinion that at this time:

Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures.

The trust's statement of action is fit for purpose.

The school's improvement plan is fit for purpose.

Having considered all the evidence I strongly recommend that the school does not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.

Context

At all levels, there have been some changes to staffing arrangements. In December 2018, three teachers left, one with responsibility for humanities and Year 7, one for design and technology and computing and one for the primary phase. By January 2019, three new teachers joined, one as an English and humanities teacher, one as a Year 7 teacher and one with responsibility for primary-phase pupils. To cover teaching arrangements, some staff are teaching subjects that they have not had specialist training in. This includes computing and design and technology. The headteacher, who joined the school in September 2018, now also teaches Year 11 science.

The senior leadership team has been restructured. From October 2018, two members of staff have become assistant headteachers. An interim deputy headteacher joined in January 2019 to take on responsibility for public examinations, attendance and alternative provision. One of the school's deputy headteachers with responsibility for the secondary provision and teaching and learning has been absent since September 2018. The headteacher has assumed responsibility for teaching and learning, in the absence of this deputy headteacher. The other deputy headteacher now oversees admissions, special educational needs, acts as deputy designated safeguarding lead and is in charge of the primary department. Following the inspection, the school's business manager resigned and left. A new business manager took up post in December 2018.

The teaching assistant team has been restructured. Some teaching assistants have left. A senior member of staff, with responsibility for behaviour, attendance and the school's use of alternative provision, joined in February 2019. A new teacher with responsibility for Year 6 and Year 7 transition has been appointed and will start in April 2019.

The school's governance structure has changed. Following the last inspection, the trust decided to disband the local governing body, at which point most governors resigned. In January 2019, the trust set up an IEB. Alongside the IEB, a tier of associate governors has also been appointed. Two governors, who were previously on the local governing body, have transferred to the IEB.

The effectiveness of leadership and management

Senior leaders and trustees accepted the inspection judgement and acknowledge that the school needs to improve. You reviewed the school's provision prior to taking up the post of headteacher. You note that the inspection judgement matched closely your own evaluation of the school's effectiveness. Consequently, you introduced a detailed and thorough improvement plan. This plan also serves as the trust's action plan and sets a strong steer for improvement. The school's plan covers all of the essential areas for improvement identified at the previous inspection. However, it would benefit from modification. The plan is too lengthy and, as a result, some of its precision is lost, particularly around the priorities for improvement. Nevertheless, you continue to work effectively to begin to bring about the necessary changes.

At the time of the last inspection, it was reported that pupils were at risk of harm because of their unsafe behaviour. You have worked intelligently, and pupils' behaviour is now managed more effectively. You are beginning to reduce the number of serious incidents. By making changes to the school's timetable, lessons now start and finish across the school at the same time. This means that pupils' transitions from learning tasks to social activities are in unison. This is helpful, as different groups do not come and go at variable times, which previously disrupted learning sessions. In addition, this has enabled you to sensibly increase the level of supervision. More adults are now available to manage pupils more effectively during social times. Furthermore, you have made sure that senior

staff are always on hand during breaktimes. Other physical changes, including the installation and/or adjustment of security fencing in key areas, have made a positive difference. As a result, pupils are not able to easily access rooftop areas, making it more difficult for pupils to become unsafe. At face value, the school is now under better control than it was previously.

You know that other aspects of the school's safeguarding procedures remain ineffective. However, you have already begun to strengthen some of these processes. For instance, the recording of concerns is now much clearer. Staff regularly report concerns using the school's 'pink form' system. However, together, we noted that some records lack the detail needed, such as dates and times. You have also made sure that concerns are at the forefront of everyone's minds by reporting the necessary detail in the morning and afternoon briefing sessions for staff. However, when we sampled a number of concerns together, we noted that some, which met thresholds, had not been referred on in a timely manner to the appropriate agencies, such as children's social care. During the inspection, you were quick to take appropriate action on two such cases, reporting them to the relevant authorities.

Despite governors' regular checks on the school's recruitment processes, the single central record (SCR) is inaccurate. Although the SCR contains the necessary headings, some information, such as that relating to whether staff are prohibited from teaching, is not recorded. In addition, there are some missing entries for some staff as well as some that have been renewed after employment has started. Also, new governors, including those who serve as part of the school's IEB, have not received a sufficient level of check. You are beginning to shape the school's curriculum so that it is more effective for pupils. New ways of working are supporting pupils to extend their engagement in learning and, in turn, their enjoyment. However, you know that some staff are struggling to implement new ways of working consistently. When tasks are extended for too long, pupils' behaviour often deteriorates. Furthermore, leaders' oversight of curriculum material, including in the primary department, needs to intensify. During the inspection, you and I agreed that some video content shown to primary-aged children about weaponry was inappropriate and not sufficiently explained or contextualised.

The quality of governance, including at trust level, is not improving. Despite the structural changes to the school's governance arrangements, members of the IEB do not demonstrate the necessary expertise to offer robust challenge to school leaders. For example, despite regular checks on the school's SCR, governors have not identified the non-compliance issues for themselves. Governors are too accepting of the information they receive from staff and leaders receive too little challenge. This is because governors do not have the depth of understanding needed to ensure effective oversight. A review of governance did not take place in the autumn term. Despite the changes made, it is my strong recommendation that the review of governance is actioned urgently.

Trustees have supported you in improving the physical fabric of the building by ensuring that finances are readily available. New fencing and door locks have contributed well to providing a safer environment for pupils. Pupils are no longer able to access the roof or leave the site so freely. Redecoration has also improved the entrance area, making it more welcoming. Nevertheless, trustees, members of the board and associate governors are not holding leaders to account with a secure understanding of the issues faced. For instance, they have not ensured that statutory policies are in place, such as those relating to special educational needs, exclusion or attendance. This is hampering the effectiveness of adults within the school as there is no clear guidance on what is expected.

Your leadership is starting to effect positive change, but you are very much working in isolation. At this point in time, the school's improvement is overly reliant on one person's

influence. Despite your best efforts to generate a more distributed leadership structure, this is not yet evidenced in practice.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

In some classes, teachers are developing their skills effectively. In such instances, adults are more alert to ensuring that pupils move more quickly from one task to the next so that they retain their interest and focus. However, this is not consistently the case and, consequently, the quality of teaching remains highly variable. During the inspection, in some classes, teachers still struggled to manage the behaviour of some pupils. Where behaviour management strategies are less effective, situations sometimes escalate unchallenged. For instance, during a science lesson, it was necessary for you to intervene to stop two older pupils fighting. Nevertheless, such events are becoming less common.

Some interventions, which are particularly aimed at addressing pupils' individual needs, are increasingly effective. This is because sessions are well planned, and teachers have the skills necessary to manage pupils' social and emotional needs adeptly. For instance, pupils in a personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education session were able to articulate their opinions and debate with one another. In activities such as these, staff skilfully challenge pupils' stereotypical views and deepen their understanding of the associated issues. As a result, pupils listen well and are respectful of each other's views. In some subjects, teachers have high expectations and manage pupils' needs effectively. You know that the quality of teaching in some subjects is less secure. Where you have identified this, you are tackling the issues raised and bolstering the quality of learning personally. This is particularly the case for Year 11 pupils. By taking on the responsibility of teaching science in this year group, you are modelling your own high expectations to staff and pupils. Some other subjects have also begun to improve. For instance, all pupils are now gaining a richer experience of computing, through the purchase of new laptops, although this is at a very early stage. However, you know that because of difficulties recruiting new staff there are still some gaps in the school's curriculum, particularly for secondary-aged pupils.

Some pupils are educated off site and attend a whole host of alternative providers. Some do not attend the school for any of their education. You know that some pupils are in receipt of an alternative offer because the school is unable to meet their social and emotional needs well enough. You and I agree that too many pupils are subject to these arrangements. With the support of key personnel, including the local authority's officers, you rightly plan to review this aspect urgently and ensure that the educational offer for each pupil is linked more strongly to the targets in their education, health and care (EHC) plans.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

The school's new behaviour policy has been agreed and introduced to all staff. The policy is fit for purpose. Although you have set out your expectations clearly you concur that success has been mixed. During the inspection, you and I agreed that there were still stark examples where pupils' use of derogatory language went unchallenged.

Nevertheless, you have set out your stall clearly, modelling and expecting higher standards of conduct. For example, in most classes, pupils now greet staff more formally rather than communicating on first name terms. Pupils are still getting to grips with these higher expectations.

It appears that fewer days are now lost due to fixed-term exclusion. Some pupils are placed on reintegration packages and gradually building up their participation in full-time schooling. However, leaders' use of exclusion is inconsistent as key stakeholders have not reviewed the school's policies and procedures against current statutory guidance for some time. The school's approach to managing the most disruptive of behaviours is still unclear. This means that patterns and trends are unreliable. Leaders and governors are

not clear on their legal responsibilities in this aspect. Some pupils are not allowed to attend but have not been formally excluded.

You have wisely ensured that staff's training has strengthened. Staff are now all trained in appropriate de-escalation techniques. However, at the point of crisis, some staff struggle to implement what they have learned. Some are far more effective at defusing situations than others. Some staff use distraction or time out strategies well because they understand pupils' triggers and emotional states. Other staff fail to follow the school's systems and processes, resulting in pupils continuing to readily disengage from the learning in hand.

Parents and carers talk positively about the school's provision. They say that their children's engagement with schooling has improved since joining Northern House. They say that their children are far more interested in school than they used to be. Many join the school after having missed significant periods of schooling in their previous placements. However, for many pupils, attendance remains low and absence is too high. For some pupils, in recent times, their engagement and attendance at school have steadily improved on a month-by-month basis. However, overall attendance figures remain lower than last year.

Outcomes for pupils

The school's use of assessment information is at a very early stage. You are determined to refine and improve on the existing systems so that they become fit for purpose.

Systems to measure pupils' progress against their EHC plan targets are being constructed but are not yet in full use.

The school's assessment information shows that pupils are underachieving significantly in some subjects and some age groups. Leaders' analysis of information is at a very early stage. It is too soon to evaluate if pupils' rates of progress are beginning to strengthen.

You are also just beginning to compare how well particular groups of learners are progressing.

Teachers' subject knowledge is variable. In some subjects, adults scaffold pupils' learning well so that they make good gains in their understanding. However, this is inconsistent across the school.

External support

External support for the school has not been forthcoming. Although the school has made attempts to seek outside support, there is very little in place. Furthermore, although internal support through the trust is an option, there is very little evidence to demonstrate that this has intensified since the last full inspection. Currently, the school is solely reliant on the headteacher's expertise to effect positive change.

Some pupils are not in receipt of an education that meets their needs. Some pupils have not attended for some time. However, despite requests to the placing local authorities, these have not been acted on. Some pupils are still waiting for a suitable placement to be allocated. In the meanwhile, this group of pupils are not receiving their entitlement to a full-time education.

Background

Analysis of Issues

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)			
Next Financial Year (Year 2)			
Following Financial Year (Year 3)			

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

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Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including properties and priorities?)

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Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

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List of Background Papers

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2019/ 2020 WORK PROGRAMME

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
18 June 2019	School Performance Indicators and Ofsted Reports	To receive information on schools' performance, and to review recent Ofsted Reports	Standing item	Jim Leivers
	Children's Services Performance Indicators	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing item	Carol Cammiss
	Review of SEND Ofsted Inspection	To inform the Committee on the outcome of the recent SEND inspection	Information report	Carol Cammiss
	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Forward Programme	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services / Luciane Bowker
	Schools Causing Concern – Part 2	To receive information about any school(s) causing concern	Standing item	Jim Leivers

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Agenda Item 12.

DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
17 September 2019	Children's Services Performance Indicators	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing item	Children's Services / Carol Cammiss
	Schools Performance Indicators and Ofsted Reports	To receive information on schools' performance and to review recent Ofsted reports	Standing item	Jim Leivers
	Continuous Improvement Plan	To receive an update on the service's continuous improvement plan	Update report	Children's Services/ Carol Cammiss
	CSO&S Forward Plan	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services / Luciane Bowker
	Schools Causing Concern – Part 2	To receive information about any school(s) causing concern	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers
DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
19 November 2019	Children's Services Performance Indicators	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing item	Children's Services / Carol Cammiss
	Schools Performance Indicators and Ofsted Reports	To receive information on schools' performance and to review recent Ofsted reports	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers

	CSO&S Forward Plan	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services / Luciane Bowker
	Schools Causing Concern – Part 2	To receive information about any school(s) causing concern	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers
DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
21 January 2020	Children's Services Performance Indicators	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing item	Children's Services / Carol Cammiss
	School Performance Indicators and Ofsted Reports	To receive information on schools' performance, and to review recent Ofsted Reports.	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers
	CSO&S Forward Plan	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services / Luciane Bowker
	Schools Causing Concern – Part 2	To receive information about any school(s) causing concern	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers
DATE OF MEETING	ITEM	PURPOSE OF REPORT	REASON FOR CONSIDERATION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER / CONTACT OFFICER
17 March 2020	Children's Services Performance Indicators	To receive an update and monitor Children's Services performance measured by local indicators	Standing item	Children's Services / Carol Cammiss

	School Performance Indicators and Ofsted Reports	To receive information on schools' performance, and to review recent Ofsted Reports	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers
	CSO&S Forward Programme	To consider the forward programme of the Committee	Standing item	Democratic Services / Luciane Bowker
	Schools Causing Concern – Part 2	To receive information about any school(s) causing concern	Standing item	Children's Services / Jim Leivers

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

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