



Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Tuesday, 14 September 2010
Time:	6.00 pm
Venue:	Committee Room 1 - Wallasey Town Hall

Contact Officer: Andrew Mossop
Tel: 0151 691 8501
e-mail: andrewmossop@wirral.gov.uk
Website: <http://www.wirral.gov.uk>

AGENDA

1. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / PARTY WHIP

Members are asked to consider whether they have personal or prejudicial interests in connection with any item(s) on this agenda and, if so, to declare them and state what they are.

Members are reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they are subject to a party whip in connection with any item(s) to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

2. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 8)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 2 June, 2010.

Further to minute 13 and the matter of non-voting co-opted members, the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management will report verbally.

3. PRESENTATION ON FIRST QUARTER PERFORMANCE 2010/11

The First Quarter Performance Report on activities relevant to Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee is available to view in the web library and a presentation will be made to the Committee.

4. ANNUAL UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF CONTACT, REFERRAL AND ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN WIRRAL COUNCIL'S CHILDREN'S SERVICES (Pages 9 - 16)

5. APPROVED SCHEME OF DELEGATION - CONTRACTS EXCEEDING £50,000 (Pages 17 - 20)

6. SCHOOLS' PERFORMANCE

Mark Parkinson, Head of Branch (Learning and Achievement) will give an update on schools' performance.

7. 0-19 STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES (Pages 21 - 24)

To receive the minutes of the meeting held on 13 July, 2010.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

Report to follow.

9. FORWARD PLAN

The Forward Plan for the period September to December 2010 has now been published on the Council's intranet/website and Members are invited to review the Plan prior to the meeting in order for the Committee to consider, having regard to the Committee's work programme, whether scrutiny should take place of any items contained within the Plan and, if so, how it could be done within relevant timescales and resources.

10. ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 2 June 2010

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	C Meaden (Chair)	
	Councillors	W Clements T Harney P Hayes K Hayes A McArdle	C Povall P A Smith W Smith P Williams
<u>Co-opted Members</u>		Mrs J Kearney Mr R Neale	Mrs J Owens
<u>Apologies</u>		Mr M Clarke	

1 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST / PARTY WHIP

Members were asked to consider whether they had a personal or prejudicial interest in connection with any item on the agenda and, if so, to declare it and to state the nature of such interest.

Members were reminded that they should also declare, pursuant to paragraph 18 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, whether they were subject to a party whip in connection with the item to be considered and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the whipping arrangement.

Councillor C Meaden declared a personal general interest because of her daughter's employment within the Children and Young People's Department. She also declared a personal interest in minute 75 (Aiming High for Disabled Children) by virtue of her employer having received funding from the Aiming High Programme.

Councillor W Clements declared a personal general interest by virtue of her employment in the early years' sector.

Mr R Neale declared a personal interest in minute 75 (Aiming High for Disabled Children) by virtue of him being Vice-Chair of Governors at Elleray Park School.

2 MINUTES

Members were requested to receive the minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16 March, 2010.

In connection with minute 68, 'Officers' Visits to Wirral Children and Young People's Department Children's Homes', a Member requested an update on the situation in

respect of Members' visits to children's homes and when these would recommence. Julia Hassall, Head of Children's Social Care, responded and informed the Committee that a framework was now in place and members should be receiving further information within the month.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 March, 2010, be approved as a correct record.

3 **ORDER OF BUSINESS**

The Chair agreed to vary the order of business and take items 7 and 8 on the agenda first, 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' and 'Transition into Adulthood (Social Care)' respectively, due to the presence of parents for these two items.

4 **AIMING HIGH FOR DISABLED CHILDREN**

The Director of Children's Services provided an update on the progress in delivering the Wirral Local Area Implementation programme for Aiming High for Disabled Children in relation to Short Breaks provision.

The approach sought to transform services across sectors to provide support to achieve the best outcomes for children and young people with disabilities and enable children and their families to live ordinary lives. The Government was requiring the Council and Primary Care Trust to provide a stepped change to the delivery of short break services and to deliver on what was termed the Full Service Offer, designed to meet the needs of all groups of disabled children. The report advised on action taken in meeting the programme requirements set out by Together for Disabled Children, who were administering the Short Breaks programme on behalf of the Department of Education, to date and the further steps required ahead of March 2011.

Dawn Tolcher, Project Manager, gave a presentation on the programme including a variety of project initiatives and proposals for developments at Barnstondale outdoor centre, developing provision to ensure it was a fully inclusive site offering a variety of short break provision. She also introduced Chrissie Francis, a parent carer, who outlined her experiences of the programme and the benefits which it had brought to her family.

Lynn Chamberlain, Centre Manager at the Wirral Resource Centre and Toy Library, also addressed the Committee and spoke of the development of short breaks on Saturday mornings when the building had previously not been used.

Responding to comments from Members, Dawn Tolcher gave further details of the proposed development at Barnstondale and that a usage group would be looking at the returns that this proposed investment would deliver. There was still further work around awareness of the programme and what was available but it was acknowledged that word of mouth had helped in making the programme known. She also informed the Committee that the Wirral Family Consultation Forum was not solely female dominated and there were a number of males involved.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

5 **TRANSITION INTO ADULTHOOD (SOCIAL CARE)**

Both the Directors of Children's Services and of Adult Social Services submitted a report which highlighted developments in improving Transition arrangements for young people as they moved into adulthood. Transition formed a discrete strand in the wider Aiming High for Disabled Children programme. There was a service improvement framework led by the National Transitions Team which envisaged a more integrated strategic approach across a wider range of local agencies, and which now encompassed the needs of disabled young people between the ages of 14 and 25.

The report outlined progress in the development of a Transitions Team with staff co-located from Children's and Adult Social Care Services, to ensure an integrated approach for the most vulnerable young people.

Pauline Toohey, a parent, gave a presentation to the Committee on transition and parent participation in which she highlighted who would benefit from the improved transitions processes. She also elaborated on the participation of young people and their families and the Wirral Family Consultation Forum.

Both Pauline Toohey and Julia Hassall, Head of Children's Social Care, responded to comments from Members and spoke of the Joint Transitions Team being a first step in helping to overcome what can be an exceptionally confusing time. Training was available for parents in preparing their children from the age of 13 as to what was available in the community and how it could be accessed.

The Director spoke of the difficulties that could arise with criteria for access to care being different for adults than for children. The Transitions Team would be able to help in ensuring a smooth progress into adulthood of those particularly vulnerable set of young people who were receiving a high level of support.

Resolved - That the report, and the formation of a new Transitions Team, be noted.

6 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

The Committee was asked to consider if it wanted to appoint a Vice-Chair.

On a motion by Councillor Meaden, seconded by Councillor Harney, it was –

Resolved - That Councillor W Smith be appointed Vice-Chair of this Committee.

7 **PRESENTATION ON FOURTH QUARTER PERFORMANCE 2009/10**

Nancy Clarkson, Head of Planning and Performance, gave a presentation on the fourth quarter performance report and upon key projects which were relevant to the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

She gave details of what was working well, including:

- Provisional data indicated that changes in practice in 2009/10 had lead to a significant increase in the timeliness of placements of looked after children for

adoption following an adoption decision from 61.1% in 2008/09 to 81.8% in 2009/10 which had exceeded the target set.

- Provisional data indicated a significant improvement in the percentage of referrals to children's social care going on to initial assessment had improved from 64.3% in 2008/09 to 71.7% in 2009/10.
- The percentage of secondary schools judged as having good or outstanding standards of behaviour had increased compared to 2008/09 and the target had been exceeded. Wirral had been reported as having the highest standards of behaviour in secondary schools nationally.
- The percentage of schools providing access to extended services was 99%, a 33% increase on the previous year and the target of 85.3% had been exceeded.
- Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people had reduced from 135.6 in 2008/09 to 122.6 in 2009/10 and the target had been achieved.
- Obesity targets for primary school children in both reception and year 6 had been met for 2009/10.
- Post 16 participation in the physical sciences (physics, chemistry and maths) had increased compared to prior year data.

In her presentation Nancy Clarkson also referred to key performance issues and key risks and expanded on the performance of two of these issues:

- The percentage reduction in the under 18 conception rate was 22%, although this was below target, this was the best performance nationally.
- The number of 16 to 18 year olds who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) was at its lowest ever level of 7.1%, although the target was 6.9%.

In respect of the financial position, it was anticipated that there would be no budget overspend in the current year. The accounts were currently being finalised and the final position would be reported in July.

Resolved – That the presentation be noted.

8 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN 2008-2013 ANNUAL REPORT

The Director of Children's Services submitted a copy of the Children and Young People's Plan Annual Report, a statutory document developed through Wirral Children's Trust arrangements by the Local Authority and partner organisations (Section 17 of the Children Act 2004). The CYPP annual review was carried out by multi-agency strategic groups linked to the five Every Child Matters Outcomes. The groups consisted of representatives from all agencies working with children and young people in Wirral. In addition, consultation was carried out with children and young people. A range of information and performance data was reviewed and through needs analysis emerging areas for focused activity were identified.

The annual report was both a review of progress in the second year of the CYPP (2009/10) and an opportunity to refresh the priorities in order to be responsive to national and local change.

The Director responded to comments from Members and explained some of the terms used in the Plan such as the rescheduling of milestones. He also outlined the current situation, which was somewhat unclear, in respect of the ContactPoint service which the new Government had indicated it would not be seeking to progress.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

9 **ADOPTION SERVICE ANNUAL REPORT**

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report which updated the Committee on the work of the Adoption Service in accordance with the requirements of the National Adoption Standards as set out in the Adoption and Children Act 2002. The report also served as the annual report for 2009/10 and updated the performance information provided in the report of September, 2009 (minute 22 refers).

The adoption service was rightly proud that 24 children had been adopted during 2009/10 and that the performance indicator was at 87.5% on 31 March, 2010. It was clear that the adoption service was on track to ensure a good number of children were adopted in 2010/11 with 9 adoptive families having already lodged applications on 31 March, 2010.

It was clear that Wirral was able to recruit sufficient prospective adoptive families to meet the needs of children with a 'Should be placed for adoption' decision.

The report also gave details of the post adoption support which was now developing into a service in its own right. It was anticipated that this service would strengthen in 2010/11 through the leadership of the new adoption support advisor.

Resolved – That the report be noted.

10 **APPROVED SCHEME OF DELEGATION - CONTRACTS EXCEEDING £50,000**

The Director of Children's services reported, in accordance with the Contracts Procedure Rules, on those instances where he had exercised his delegated authority to accept tenders and to appoint contractors. The contracts were in respect of a range of services, including:

- Building works
- Out-of-authority placements
- Residential care placements

Resolved – That the report be noted.

11 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee received an update on its work programme and the Chair circulated a draft work programme for 2010/11 based on an overarching theme of, 'Preparing for the Future and Protecting our Priorities'. The draft included suggestions for officers to draw up a detailed report on what the new national priorities concerning academies, free schools and pupil premiums would mean for Wirral. The current Scrutiny Review on 'Narrowing the Gap' and the impact of deprivation funding should also continue.

The Director commented that it would of course be necessary to inform all Members of the effect of the Academies Bill once the position had become clearer.

After some discussion on the way forward for agreeing a work programme, it was -

Resolved – That the Chair, Spokespersons and one co-opted member meet to consider the work programme for 2010/11 and the Review Panel on ‘Narrowing the Gap’ continue.

12 **0-19 STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE MINUTES**

The minutes of the meetings of the 0-19 Standards Sub-Committee, held on 23 March and 19 April, 2010, were submitted. The Sub-Committee had considered a number of issues, in particular the Ofsted reports relating to the following schools:

Special School

Satisfactory

The Observatory School

Secondary School

Good

Oldershaw School

Primary Schools

Inadequate School

Well Lane

Satisfactory Schools

Birkenhead Christ Church C of E
Cathcart Street
Church Drive
Pensby
St Paul’s Catholic

Good Schools

Bidston Avenue
Black Horse Hill Junior
Christ the King Catholic
St Joseph’s Catholic
Woodchurch C of E

Outstanding School

Great Meols

The Director informed the Committee that in respect of Well Lane Primary School an Action Plan had been prepared by the Authority and monitoring visits were continuing. He outlined a range of actions which could be taken and that a report would be taken to Cabinet on the conclusions reached.

The Committee were requested to appoint the 0-19 Standards Sub-Committee for 2010/11.

Resolved –

(1) That the minutes be noted.

(2) That the 0-19 Standards Sub-Committee for 2010/11 comprise the following members, Councillors Chris Meaden (Chair), Tom Harney and Paul Hayes, with the remaining Committee members serving as deputies, plus the diocesan and parent governor representatives.

13 **ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR**

With the permission of the Chair, Jane Owens raised the issue of her being the Voluntary and Community Sector representative and not having a vote on the Committee when the diocesan and parent governor representatives did.

The Director of Law, HR and Asset Management's representative said that she would be happy to look into this matter and to report back to the next meeting of the Committee.

This page is intentionally left blank

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: 14 SEPTEMBER 2010

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

ANNUAL UNANNOUNCED INSPECTION OF CONTACT, REFERRAL AND ASSESSMENT ARRANGEMENTS WITHIN WIRRAL COUNCIL'S CHILDREN'S SERVICES

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The first unannounced inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment arrangements within local authority children's services in Wirral Council was conducted by Ofsted on 20 and 21 July 2010. The letter setting out the findings of this inspection is attached to this report.

1. Background

The new national regime of annual Ofsted inspections: Contact, Referral and Assessment arrangements commenced in June 2009. The inspections are carried out under Section 138 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. The inspection contributes to the annual review of performance of the authority's children's services, for which Ofsted will award a rating later in the year.

2. Preparation for the Inspection

The inspection in Wirral was one of the latest conducted in the first round of inspections nationally. Wirral has constructively used the inspection framework to assess and embed good practice particularly throughout the past year, adopting a performance improvement approach, monitored through fortnightly Contact, Referral and Assessment Meetings. This has involved a wide range of operational managers, off line auditors and support officers directly involved in the service. Monthly meetings to report on progress have taken place with the Director of Children's Services and Senior Children's Social Care Managers, and six weekly meetings to review practice and progress have continued to take place between the Chief Executive, Director of Children's Services and Head of Branch for Children's Social Care.

2.1 Team specific plans have been presented and updated at each meeting, which have focused on the processes in place, the throughput of work and the quality of assessments. Many relevant policies and procedures have been updated and briefed out to staff through lunchtime sessions, and there has been an improved focus on the auditing of the quality of assessments on both a single and multiagency basis. During the past 12 months there have also been two "mock inspections" or practice audits undertaken, the second of which involved senior colleagues from the Learning and Achievement and Participation and Inclusion Branches.

2.2 Implementation of the new management structure and increased social work capacity throughout the past year has supported the improvement plan, in particular the new post of a dedicated manager at the Central Advice and Duty Team, and the posts of Principal and Practice Managers.

3. The inspection process

The inspection is unannounced, and the lead inspector contacts the local authority prior to nine o'clock on the day of the inspection to announce their arrival. In Wirral the three inspectors visited three of the four Assessment Teams, the Central Advice and Duty Team (CADT), and the Children with a Disability Team. Inspectors also met with two Area Team Leaders, the CAF / Quality Assurance Manager and the Emergency Duty Team Manager. During the inspection 60 children's files, one private fostering file and nine supervision files were seen. The Head of Branch and Strategic Service Manager, Children and Families were fully informed throughout the inspection. The inspectors fed back their findings on the afternoon of the second day of the inspection, to an audience which included the Leader of the Council, the Cabinet member for Children and the Chief Executive of the Council. The inspectors were professional, skilled and sensitive to local issues. Members of staff felt they engaged in constructive and knowledgeable discussion about their work.

4. Findings

The inspectors identified six strengths, many of which support the strategic direction of travel, and in particular the revised systems in operation at the "front door" into Social Care, through the work of the CADT, the rota of staff receiving incoming referrals, and the weekly monitoring systems in place.

- 4.1 Thirteen areas of satisfactory practice were identified, defined by Ofsted as "practice and arrangements that meet the requirements of statutory guidance", which included core expectations such as responding appropriately to the needs of children identified as being at risk or, or suffering significant harm.
- 4.2 Four areas of development were identified these are: improvements required in reflective supervision, and staff appraisal which informs the training plan; improved processes for responding to requests for consultation and advice sought by professionals and other callers; improvements required in recording the rationale by managers authorising assessments and consistently establishing the process for the transfer of cases from assessment to care management teams. All areas for development have been incorporated in the development plan overseen by the Contact, Referral and Assessment Meeting.
- 4.3 The findings of the inspection were briefed out to all managers involved in the inspection on the day the feedback was received, and subsequently to a wider audience of Social Care staff members on 29 July, at two consecutive Branch Communication meetings involving the Cabinet member for Children's Services and the Director of Children's Services.

5. Conclusion

This is a very positive inspection, and reflects the hard work by staff and managers to improve services for children and families. This is a challenging area of working requiring constant vigilance and attention, which will be sustained through a constant focus on maintaining and improving services still further, for some of the most vulnerable children in Wirral.

6. Risk assessment

The provision of excellent contact, referral and assessment services for children in need, at risk of significant harm or who have experienced significant harm is an area of work demanding constant attention, monitoring and oversight. The inspection has confirmed that good systems are in place to do this; however, there can never be any room for complacency. It is an area of considerable risk.

7. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

8. Staffing Implications

In order to sustain improvements in the service it is important that a full staffing complement is maintained.

9. Equal Opportunities Implications / Health Impact Assessment

All new policies and procedures developed during the previous year have been subject to Equality Impact and Health Impact Assessments.

10. Community Safety Implications

Providing good quality contact, referral and assessment systems directly impacts on safety within the community, through the identification of risks which are assessed and mitigated through the provision of appropriately targeted services.

11. Local Agenda 21 Implications

There are no direct implications associated with this report.

12. Planning Implications

There are no direct implications associated with this report.

13. Anti – Poverty Implications

Children and families experiencing the impact of poverty are highly represented in the cohort receiving input from Children's Social Care contact, referral and assessment services.

14. Social Inclusion Implications

Many children and families referred to Children's Social Care are at risk of social exclusion.

15. Local Member Support Implications

Children and families receiving this service live in all wards across Wirral.

16. Background Papers

- Letter dated 18 August 2010 from HMI Jenny Gwilt: Annual unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements within Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council children's services.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That:

- (1) Members note and comment on the report.

Howard Cooper
Director of Children's Services

18 August 2010

Mr Howard Cooper
Director of Children's Services
Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
Hamilton Buildings
Conway Street
Birkenhead
CH41 4FD

Dear Mr Cooper

Annual unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements within Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council children's services

This letter summarises the findings of the recent unannounced inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements within local authority children's services in Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council which was conducted on 20 and 21 July 2010. The inspection was carried out under section 138 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. It will contribute to the annual review of the performance of the authority's children's services, for which Ofsted will award a rating later in the year. I would like to thank all of the staff we met for their assistance in undertaking this inspection.

The inspection sampled the quality and effectiveness of contact, referral and assessment arrangements and their impact on minimising any child abuse and neglect. Inspectors considered a range of evidence, including: electronic case records; supervision files and notes; observation of social workers and senior practitioners undertaking referral and assessment duties; and other information provided by staff and managers. Inspectors also spoke to a range of staff including managers, social workers, other practitioners and administrative staff.

The inspection identified areas of strength and satisfactory practice, with some areas for development. During the inspection 60 children's files, one private fostering file and nine staff supervision files were seen.

From the evidence gathered, the following features of the service were identified:

Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Remodelling Project, based on in-depth research of the service by Lancaster University, has resulted in significant additional investment in front line services and better use of resources to underpin the development of preventative work.

- The 11 integrated multi-agency area teams are working very well to provide support in local communities to families whose children have additional needs through the effective implementation of the common assessment framework and the team around the child.
- The multi-agency Family Safety Unit provides a very good service to families affected by domestic violence by supporting victims; additionally, services are commissioned which offer children therapeutic programmes.
- The extensive and varied programme of performance management activity, including multi-agency audits of contact, referral and assessment work, is very effective. Senior managers use this information well to improve individual practice, challenge casework decisions and identify themes for service development.
- Qualified social workers from district assessment teams, including those from the children with disabilities team, staff the central advice and duty team (CADT) on a rota basis. This is good practice which provides social workers with regular experience of the range of work at the front door of the service and ensures that staff maintain up-to-date knowledge.
- Weekly meetings of all front line managers to review and monitor the operation of thresholds, decision making and learning and practice development are highly effective in ensuring that all children and families receive a consistent and appropriate level of service.

Satisfactory practice

- Children at risk of or suffering significant harm are identified promptly and dealt with appropriately. Child protection investigations are comprehensive, timely and always carried out by qualified social workers.
- Initial and core assessments are carried out by suitably qualified and experienced social workers. The quality of assessments is at least adequate and often good, demonstrating clear analysis of risk, protective factors and action plans.
- The practice of keeping both paper and electronic files is time-consuming. However, records do demonstrate effective management oversight and are mostly up-to-date.
- There is a clear management structure and good management oversight of front line staff who are well supported and have manageable caseloads. There are good training opportunities and newly qualified social workers have protected caseloads.
- There is clear guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Board on integrated working across the partnership. The purpose and use of the common assessment framework (CAF) are well understood and established, especially in

secondary schools. CAF quality is audited on a regular basis and where the standard expected is not met remedial work occurs promptly.

- Initial and repeat contacts are managed appropriately. Management oversight and decision making about when to complete an initial or core assessment are timely and well considered.
- Performance indicators relating to contact, referral and assessment work, including timeliness of assessments, are generally satisfactory in comparison with statistical neighbours.
- All children subject to child protection plans have an allocated qualified social worker and there is no unallocated work in the contact, referral and assessment service.
- Children are seen alone during assessments where appropriate and there is good evidence that their views inform children in need and child protection plans.
- Appropriate consideration is given to equality and diversity issues in all casework. Consideration of diversity issues and demographic trends is also evident in service development plans.
- Practice procedures are clear, accessible and staff are aware of what is required of them.
- Satisfactory action has been taken in relation to the areas of development outlined in the 2008 private fostering inspection.
- Staff are aware of the lessons learned from a recent serious case review.

Areas for development

- Supervision is routinely undertaken, however the quality of staff supervision files is inconsistent with little recorded evidence of reflective supervision or consideration of personal development issues. Annual appraisals do not take place and as a result consideration is not given to how individual learning needs contribute to an overall training plan.
- The CADT provides a consultation service for professionals and other callers and the recording of these consultations is separate from the integrated children's system (ICS). In some cases this arrangement prevents the analysis and co-ordination of repeat concerns about children and families as consultations do not currently progress to being recorded as contacts and are filed on a separate database.
- While managers in district assessment teams and the children with disabilities team authorise assessments, they do not always record the rationale for

management decisions in the assessment document on ICS.

- The process for transfer of cases from district assessment teams to care management teams is not yet consistently established and this impacts on the capacity of district assessment teams to carry out timely assessments.

The areas for development identified above will be specifically considered in any future inspection of services to safeguard children within your area.

Yours sincerely

Jenny Gwilt
Her Majesty's Inspector

Copy: Stephen Maddox, Chief Executive, Wirral Metropolitan Borough Council
Dennis Charlton, Chair of Wirral Safeguarding Children Board
Councillor Mrs Sheila Clarke MBE, Lead Member for Children's Services, Wirral
Metropolitan Borough Council
Andrew Spencer, Department for Education

WIRRAL COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 14th SEPTEMBER 2010

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES

APPROVED SCHEME OF DELEGATION – CONTRACTS EXCEEDING £50,000

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Members, in accordance with the Constitution of the Council, of those instances where delegated authority has been used by the Director of Children's Services with respect to the acceptance of tenders and to the appointment of Contractors.

1.0 Capital contracts

1.1 School's Capital Funding for 2010-11 was approved by Cabinet on 22 July 2010. Tenders for capital contracts in excess of £50,000 are listed below.

Scheme	Contractor	Amount £
Demolition of Pensby Junior School	North West Construction UK Ltd	£68582.80 + fees £6172.45
Boiler Renewal at Pensby Park and Gayton Primary	DCI Plumbing	£152907
Boiler Renewal at Irby Primary and Greasby Junior	Atherton & Partners	£144660
Stanton Road Primary – PVI mobile replacement	Terrapin	£253557.80 + fees £19016.94

2.0 Contract for Positive Activities for Young People

Contract with Youth Federation £54500

To develop high quality programmes of diversionary youth support activities for young people aged 8 – 19 years. The activity programmes support the implementation of the Integrated Youth Support Strategy by use of planned group work. Planned work will seek to engage with young people who are at risk of offending or causing a nuisance, vulnerable young people, young people at risk, young people involved in risk taking behaviour and young people involved in substance misuse.

The provision will respond to District needs and maximise the opportunities provided through joint planning with other partners and develop existing provision, by setting up programmes in each of the four Districts within Wirral, namely Birkenhead, Wallasey, South Wirral and West Wirral.

3.0 Transport of Pupils to Swimming Baths

Tenders were received for the transport of pupils to swimming baths and the contract has been awarded to Happy Als for the period of September 2010 to July 2011. The contract value is £127700 and these costs will be paid by schools using the service.

4.0 Out of Authority Placements

This budget makes education provision for a number of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) whose needs cannot be met in maintained schools. The placements not previously reported costing in excess of £50,000 per annum are listed below.

2009-10 Out of Authority Placements

Start Date	School	Ref	Cost
29.06.10	Underley Hall School	DO	£ 147,380
24.05.10	West Kirby Residential School	PB	£ 54,617
30.06.10	Wings School	LR	£ 102,930

5.0 Children's Residential Care Placements

This budget makes provision for Independent Residential Care of Looked After Children. The placements not previously reported costing in excess of £50,000 per annum are listed below.

Start Date	Provider	Swift Reference	Annual Projected Cost
30.04.10	Good Foundations	153332	£ 118,524
13.05.10	Quality Protects Children	108765	£ 115,143
26.04.10	New Reflexions	157770	£ 239,046
28.05.10	Good Foundations	77568	£ 98,987
03.08.10	Good Foundations	155090	£ 75,217
13.07.10	Care Today	8396	£ 112,942
20.07.10	Considerate Care	3415	£ 80,274
16.07.10	Good Foundations	88655	£ 80,753

6.0 Extension to Existing Contracts

The following contract with a value of more than £50,000 has been extended by 7 months from 1st September 2010 to 31st March 2011:

Contract with SCS Kinder

Advocacy Services for Looked After Children £36,141

The advocacy service is available to children and young people aged 0 – 24 years who have requested the services of an advocate, and who are Looked After and placed in a residential home or foster placement on Wirral or outside of the Council's geographical boundaries, Care Leavers or former Service Users and those remanded in care or custody and are detained in secure accommodation. The previous contract was £61,956 and with the extension is £98,097.

The following contract with a value of now more than £50,000 has been extended for 12 months (1st April 2010 -31 March 2011):

Contract with WIRED

Independent Visiting Service for Looked After Children £42,000

The Service is intended to benefit Looked After Children and Young People, specifically targeted at those Looked after Children and Young People placed out of borough and on Wirral aged 6 to 21 years, who have not been visited by either a parent or person with parental responsibility for them during the previous six months. The previous contract was £42,000 and with the extension is £84,000.

7.0 Financial, Staffing, Equal Opportunities/Health Impact Assessment, Community Safety, Local Agenda 21, Planning, Anti-poverty, Social Inclusion and Local Member Support Implications.

There are no implications arising out of this report.

8.0 Background Papers

There are none.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the report is noted.

Howard Cooper
Director of Children's Services

This page is intentionally left blank

0-19 STANDARDS SUB-COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 13 July 2010

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	C Meaden (Chair)
	Councillors	W Clements (in place of Cllr Hayes) Pat Williams (in place of Cllr Harney)
<u>Co-opted Members:</u>	Mrs J Kearney Mr R Neale	
<u>Apologies</u>	Mr M Clarke	

22 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The members of the Committee were asked to consider whether they had a personal or prejudicial interest in connection with any item on the agenda and, if so, to declare it and to state the nature of the interest. The following declaration was made:

Councillor Chris Meaden – a personal interest in general as her daughter works in the Department of Children's Services.

Mr Neale – a personal interest in minutes 28 and 29 by virtue of being a former member of staff, still in contact with members of staff, at Castleway Primary School.

23 ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Chair agreed to vary the order of business.

24 WIRRAL METROPOLITAN COLLEGE OFSTED REPORT

The members received a copy of the Wirral Metropolitan College OFSTED Report which had been inspected in May 2010. Sue Higginson, Vice-Principal at the College attended the meeting and outlined the main findings of the inspection for members.

Sue Higginson reported that the overall main findings at the College were Good. The inspection had found that the College had demonstrated that it had good capacity to improve outcomes for students and the quality of provision. The proportion of students achieving their qualifications had improved consistently and significantly since the last inspection and was now high in many areas.

Sue Higginson highlighted that the inspection had found that links with employers, schools, the local authority and a range of community groups were outstanding and continuing to develop. She commented upon the fact that the College was well focused and had an action plan aiming at Outstanding at the next inspection.

Resolved – That the Panel offers its congratulations to Wirral Metropolitan College on its achievement.

25 **SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES**

Stuart Bellerby, Strategic Service Manager, Secondary & Lifelong Learning, reported that there were currently no Secondary Schools in Ofsted categories

26 **SECONDARY SCHOOL OFSTED INSPECTIONS APRIL 2010 - JUNE 2010**

Stuart Bellerby, Strategic Service Manager, Secondary & Lifelong Learning, reported that of the 22 maintained schools, 12 were reported 'Outstanding', 7 'Good' and 3 'Satisfactory' – a situation that was well above the national average.

Stuart Bellerby reported upon Bebington High Sports College which had been inspected in April 2010. He noted that the main findings of the inspection commented that the school was an improving school which provided a satisfactory quality of education for its students. It further commented that the care, guidance and support the students received was outstanding and that the specialist status as a sports college pervaded every aspect of the school's life and also had a significant impact on the local and wider communities. Stuart Bellerby reported upon the areas where the inspection had identified areas for improvement and noted that the school was likely to receive a second monitoring visit.

27 **NATIONAL CHALLENGE UPDATE**

Stuart Bellerby provided further details of Wirral's National Challenge and gave an update to members. He outlined the background to the National Challenge Programme 2008 concerning 6 schools in Wirral and noted that the target for 2011 was that no school would be with the National Challenge Programme.

28 **PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES**

Mark Parkinson, Head of Learning & Achievement, reported on the five schools which were in special measures, Manor Primary, Well Lane, Castleway, Heygarth and Millfields Primary.

Manor Primary had now been in special measures for a year and had received 2 visits by HMR which had reported that the school was satisfactory although there were still areas of concern. Mark Parkinson explained the Authority's Action Plan and reported upon areas being supported including Maths, English and governance.

Marie Lawrence Strategic Service Manager - Early Years & Primary Education, Learning & Achievement Branch reported that Well Lane had a very active programme of support and that staffing issues were being addressed. The school was now reporting good SATs results and 78% of teaching was now reported to be 'Good' or better. The school had successfully been partnered with Liscard Primary School and professional partnerships had been developed. The school was aiming to get out of special measures by next spring and the outlook was positive.

The Headteacher of Castleway Primary was reported to be still on sick leave and an Acting Headteacher had been employed on a temporary basis from Brackenwood Junior.

Complaints around the Ofsted inspection were still reported to be ongoing. The Action Plans for Castleway and Millfields had now been approved.

Members would be updated on the progress of all the schools in special measures at the next meeting of the 0-19 School Standards Sub-Committee.

29 **PRIMARY SCHOOL OFSTED INSPECTIONS APR 2010 - JUN 2010**

The members received a summary of the outcomes of recent OFSTED inspections of primary schools. The various schools had been graded as follows:

Inadequate Schools

Castleway Primary

Satisfactory Schools

Hillside Primary
St Johns Catholic Primary
Woodslee Primary
Heygarth Primary
Millfields Primary

Good Schools

Eastway Primary
Park Primary
Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary
St Albans Catholic Primary
Heswall St Peters CE Primary

Members commented upon each school in turn and Marie Lawrence commented upon recent progress at the schools.

Recommended – That the reports be noted and the Sub-Committee record its thanks to the Learning and Achievement Branch – Primary Team for their hard work and support.

30 **SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN OFSTED CATEGORIES**

Paul Ashcroft – Strategic Service Manager – Participation reported that there were currently no special schools in Ofsted Categories.

31 **SPECIAL SCHOOL OFSTED INSPECTIONS APR 2010 - JUN 2010**

The members received a summary of the outcome of the Ofsted inspection of Meadowside School. Overall the findings of the inspection was that it was a very good school that provided outstanding care to its students the majority of whom have profound and multiple learning difficulties or severe learning difficulties.

The members also received a summary of the outcome of the Ofsted inspection for The Lyndale School. Paul Ashcroft commented that the school had received that the

school had received 10 Outstanding grades and 9 Good and that it was an excellent report for the school.

32 **EARLY YEARS CENTRES OFSTED INSPECTIONS APR 2010 - JUN 2010**

The members received a summary of the outcome of a recent Ofsted inspection of Ganney's Meadow Early Years Centre. The outcome had been graded as outstanding in overall effectiveness.

Marie Lawrence commented upon the report and remarked that it reinforced the reputation of the Centre.

Recommended – that the report be noted and the Sub- Committee record its appreciation of this result.

33 **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Recommended - That the next meeting of the Sub-Committee be arranged in early December by Mark Parkinson in consultation with the Chair.

34 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The 0-19 School Sub-Committee were informed that Marie Lawrence, Strategic Service Manager - Early Years & Primary Education, Learning & Achievement Branch, would be leaving the Authority and therefore this was the last Sub-Committee that she would attend.

Recommended – That the Sub-Committee records its best wishes for the future to Marie Lawrence.