

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
31ST JANUARY 2008

Cabinet - Agenda Item No. 9 (b)
18 December 2007

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT CHILDREN'S SERVICES 2007

Executive Summary

The Annual Performance Assessment process is a continuous one. Ofsted judge children's services using a self-assessment, performance indicators and a range of other evidence. A letter giving the results of the assessment was drawn up and published in November.

For 2006-07, the results awarded to the Council are:

Being healthy	Good
Staying safe	Good
Enjoying and achieving	Adequate
Making a positive contribution	Good
Achieving economic well-being	Good
The council's children's services	Adequate
Capacity to improve	Adequate

This paper describes details of the results, highlights a number of strengths and issues following this assessment.

Proposal

That members note this report.

Reasons For Proposals

To provide an opportunity for members to consider the Annual Performance Assessment results.

Carolyn Godfrey, Director, Department for Children and Education

**CHILDRENS SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
31 JANUARY 2008**

*Cabinet - Agenda Item No. 9 (b)
18 December 2007*

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT CHILDREN'S SERVICES 2007
Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the Ofsted assessment of the performance of the children's services within Wiltshire County Council.

Background

2. The Annual Performance Assessment process is a continuous one. The Department is required to complete a self-assessment which was submitted to Ofsted in June. Inspectors then considered the self-assessment and a range of other evidence, chiefly performance indicators across both education and children's social care. A meeting between two Inspectors and representatives of the Council took place in September, after which the first draft of the Annual letter was drawn up and sent to the Council in October. The Council then had the opportunity to comment on the accuracy of the letter, before its final publication in November. The letter is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
3. The judgements are predominantly based on performance data 2006/07, this means that the school test results for summer 2006 were used.

Main Considerations for the Council

4. The letter includes the grades for a number of assessed areas:

Areas for judgement	Being healthy	Staying safe	Enjoying and achieving	Making a positive contribution	Achieving economic well-being
The contribution of the council's services in maintaining and improving this outcome for children and young people.	3	3	2	3	3

The council's children's services	Grade
The contribution of the council's children's services in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	2

Capacity to improve	Grade
The council's capacity to improve its services for children and young people	2

The descriptors for each grade are:

Grade
Grade 4: Outstanding - A service that delivers well above minimum requirements for users
Grade 3: Good - A service that consistently delivers above minimum requirements for users
Grade 2: Adequate - A service that delivers only minimum requirements for users
Grade 1: Inadequate - A service that does not deliver minimum requirements for users

5. The reason for the overall adequate judgement is the grade 2 in EA and in cap to improve. The grade 2 given for Enjoy and Achieve is based on educational performance not being good enough when compared to that of similar authorities. This is both for the outcomes of Ofsted inspections of schools (percentage of schools getting good or outstanding outcomes) and for the attainment of pupils in key stage tests. Capacity to Improve (2) was also judged to be adequate, this is because the 2006/07 data showed that the progress made was not rapid enough in some specific areas eg key stage results, schools in a category of concern and timeliness of reviews of children looked after. Within service management, a key area for development was to further develop partnership working with the PCT.
6. The grade for “The contribution of the local authority’s children’s services in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people” contributes its grade 2 to the CPA assessment.
7. The assessment process highlights areas for development. Most of these areas were already recognised by the Department and focussed work to improvement was underway. The aim is to achieve significant improvement before the department is subject to a Joint Area Review (a full inspection) in summer 2008.
8. The issues highlighted by the assessment had already been prioritised and actions are already in relevant plans and will be carried through into the revised Children and Young People’s Plan (April 2008). Commissioning of services underpins a number of areas for development and robust commissioning is a focus for both the Council and the Children and Young People’s Trust Board
9. Performance for 2007/08 is showing some improvement:
 - Since September 2007, 22 schools have been inspected, 68% have been good or outstanding with none inadequate and there are now only 4 (previously 7) schools in categories of concern.

- Key Stage test results – 2007 data is now available and whilst it shows some continued progress, Wiltshire still needs to improve when compared to similar authorities.
- Looked after children reviews are currently 92% on time (previously 85%) and the participation of children and young people in those reviews has improved to 93% (78%).
- Young people Not in Education, Employment or Training – recent data is showing some signs of improvement with the Autumn figure being 0.5% better than the same time last year.

10. In addition to the performance mentioned above, key indicators continue to be:

- Improving outcomes for vulnerable groups esp Looked after children, Black and Minority Ethnic, Free School Meals and Disability
- Exclusions
- Teenage pregnancy
- Access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Placement choice for LAC
- Adoptions
- Substance misuse
- % spend on preventative work

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

11. None.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

12. Attainment of Black and minority ethnic pupils and outcomes for looked after children are highlighted in the Ofsted letter as areas for development.

Risk Assessment

13. The Council needs to recognise the importance of improving key performance indicators relating to the outcomes for children and young people, and ensure that resources are carefully and fully directed at areas of underperformance.

14. The findings of this assessment will influence the approach that the inspectors take towards the Joint Area Review in June 2008 and it is likely that these areas will be under even greater scrutiny. Significant effort must be made to improve outcomes to enable inspectors to see evidence of improvement and to achieve better grades.

Financial Implications

18. None

Options Considered

19. None.

Proposal

20. The Authority is required to present this letter to an appropriate meeting of the relevant executive committee of the council, make the report available to members of the public and copy this letter and report to the council's appointed auditor, and to other partners. The latter will be done through a report to the Children and Young People's Trust Board.

CAROLYN GODFREY

Director for Children and Education

Report Author

Lynda Cox

Head of Performance Management and Co ordination

The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this Report: None