

EFFECTIVENESS OF QUADRANTS

Report of the Director of Children, Schools and Families

Author: Cheryl Hopkins, Assistant Director
Tel: 01992 555916

Executive Member: Robert Gordon

1. Purpose of the report

The report was requested by County Councillor David Billing to provide:

- An overview of progress in delivering direct services to Children and Families since 2001.
- More detailed information on three key areas of work which are high profile and represent cross professional working.

2. Summary

The report outlines:

- The background to establishing CSF Quadrant teams.
- An overview of Quadrant working and performance.
- A profile of each Quadrant.
- A proposal for future scrutiny of Local Services.

3. Conclusions

Members are invited to comment on the report and consider the proposals for methods of local scrutiny.

4. Background

4.1 Hertfordshire was the first Local Authority to set up a completely integrated Education and Social Care Service, centred on the needs of the child. The three drivers were to:

- Develop a Unified Casework Service
- Develop local preventative strategies
- Develop capability in schools

4.2 One of the components of the new service was the establishment of a multi-professional local service bringing together a range of specialist skills and knowledge.

It was agreed that the multi-professional Local Service would be managed on the basis of four Quadrants, each Quadrant being co-terminus with two or three District and Borough Council boundaries, and with the newly formed Primary Care Trusts.

4.3 Within each quadrant multi-professional staff would relate to local communities, each group being large enough to ensure that it contained a critical mass of professionals of different disciplines who could work collaboratively to meet the needs of children and their families. In addition to the multi-professional teams each Quadrant had specialist staff to deliver Student Services – covering school admissions, exclusions and special educational needs.

4.4 The multi-professional teams are responsible for delivering one of the key CSF drivers namely a Unified Casework Service.

To achieve this at the outset of CSF the following were identified as requirements:

- Unified referral arrangements
- Single case management
- Integrated assessment arrangements
- Lead professional ownership of cases.

4.5 Nationally this was a completely new type of service.

Building on existing good practice and procedures a managed transition took place from April 2000. Taking into account the knowledge that changes in service and structure increase risk, a risk assessment of cases and their handover was undertaken and each case tracked as it moved location and worker.

Using the core procedures of the previous SSD and LEA, new procedures were developed and issued to staff. This approach ensured the continuation of best practice but began the development of the new CSF culture where increased multi-professional working was required.

This process of change and development in actual working practice began in April 2001 and continues today as staff continue to develop best practice in the new service. All new procedures in CSF are subject to a rigorous document development and implementation system that ensures quality, consistency and that the views of service users inform all policy and practice development.

4.6 From calculations of travel to work patterns, case location and a 'best fit' working approach were used to agree the optimal use of the available accommodation.

- West Quadrant located at Porters Wood in St. Albans went live on 1st April 2001 followed by:
- North Quadrant based on two sites on 14th April 2001
- South Quadrant based on six sites on 30th April 2001
- East Quadrant based on six sites on 4th June 2001

5. Implementation

5.1 The implementation of CSF throughout 2001/02 was subject to a number of pressures common to all social care, education and health services nationally.

5.2 The difficulties of recruiting and retaining staff especially Social Workers, Occupational Therapists, Educational Psychologists, teachers and in parts of the County, administrative staff had an impact. These shortages caused by a drastic reduction in numbers qualifying nationally and the pressures of cost of living in Hertfordshire were tackled by a range of actions:

- Recruitment campaigns in UK and abroad
- Financial support for post qualification training
- Media and college visit programmes to attract newly qualified staff
- Enhanced use of Professional Assistants
- Flexible contracts of employment
- Attracting staff because of the innovation of CSF

The outcome of these actions was a reduction in social work vacancies from 21.4% in June 2001 to 17.8% in December 2002. There have been 52 Social Workers recruited in this period. More recently our turnover of staff has been affected by the promotion of CSF staff to neighbouring authorities where their unique experience of the new service has made them particularly sought after. Work is currently underway with a cross service staff group to improve our retention activity.

The establishment for Educational Psychologists is 36. In June 2001 there were 3.6 vacancies and there are currently 6.4 vacancies (17.8%). This reflects a national situation and options for restructuring Educational Psychologists workloads are being considered to make the posts more attractive.

The establishment for Occupational Therapists is only 9.5. In June 2001 there were 0.8 vacancies. Currently (December 2002) there are 5.6 vacancies. Agency staff are being sought and options for joint appointments with Health and ACS being considered.

- 5.3 The process of change of systems, service and location together with actions required by central government coincided with a steep rise in referrals. Partner agencies have higher expectations of the new service and are referring more children and families for assessments and services.

At the start of CSF (May 2001) we had 655 referrals, in May 2002 1,325 and November 2002 1,807. For May-November 2001 a total of 9,995 for the equivalent period 2002 12,208.

- 5.4 As CSF began central government required changes in practice that put pressure on staff to complete assessment tasks more speedily and in the new National Assessment Framework. Initial Assessments must be complete in seven working days and Complex Assessments thirty-five days from referral. This change required new procedures, training and practice for CSF staff and co-operation of other agencies.

These new standards are subject to monitoring by the Department of Health. The tight timescales have created a particular challenge for the referral and assessment teams within the Quadrants.

It is a credit to staff that in the first year of CSF the new service completed 79% of Initial Assessments within seven working days of the referral being made. This number was significantly higher than the national average, and reflected CSF's strong emphasis on the importance of speedy assessments to manage risk effectively. However, the authority was less successful in the completion of Complex Needs Assessments within timescales (19%).

In 2002/03 CSF has moved to a more balanced position of 54.7% of Initial Assessments and 70.2% of Complex Needs Assessments occurring within designated timescales. This position is consistent with the national average. Work is underway to improve this area of work.

- 5.5 Existing staff from the Education and Social Services Departments transferred to the new CSF Service. To draw together the staff group and set the context for practice the first Unified Casework Framework (UCF) procedure was issued and supported the crucial change from individual to multi professional working practices. This began the development of new ways of working and enabled the service to learn from practice and contribute to revision of the UCF procedure (September 2002) that linked casework practice to the Oracle database that too had been developing and increasingly supporting practice since April 2001.

- 5.6 During 2001/02 work took place to develop the Oracle database to underpin the CSF service. This work was not without difficulty. The phases of work were:
- (i) An initial basic system and data load: January-April 2001.
 - (ii) An initial development phase based upon the “Unified Casework Framework” and a number of user-workshops to identify the basic information that needs to go in the system: April 2001-April 2002.
 - (iii) A consolidation phase which involves integrating the other nineteen different database packages we use into a single product. This is due to be completed by the end of March with a period of a month for final testing.

A number of technical difficulties arose during Phase 2. There were also problems with report templates and workflow which will be resolved as part of Phase 3.

The development of the database and the training of staff to use the new system and share information in new ways was an extra dimension to the challenge of implementing the new service. Staff coped well with the need to run twin track systems, develop enhanced IT skills and the inevitable software and hardware problems.

- 5.7 New Area Child Protection Procedures which set out roles and responsibilities for all professional workers were launched in September 2002.
- 5.8 The new DfES Special Educational Needs Code of Practice has been implemented from January 2002.
- 5.9 Using the ISO Framework we are developing a quality practice model initially for Social Work teams. The Quadrant systems will be assessed by the ISO Inspectorate next Summer.

6. Casework

- 6.1 One of the underlying principles of CSF is to provide a single point of access for referrers. All new referrals go through the Call Centre at Kings Court in Stevenage.
- 6.2 A further principle of CSF is that we will work towards everyone using a single electronic file. A core role for the Call Centre, therefore, is to input referral data in a consistent and cost effective way so that it can be used by caseworkers and managers in Quadrants and Central teams.

The Call Centre comprises 2 separate teams: The ‘Customer Service’ team and ‘Client Services’ team.

- 6.3 The Customer Service team (operated by CAPITA):

- Answers all public telephone calls
- Passes on calls regarding potential referrals to the Client Services team
- Gives callers verbal information
- Routes telephone calls to named workers
- Takes messages for Client Services staff and named workers if they are not available to take calls.
- Checks four times a day whether e-mails sent to Quadrants have been opened.

6.4 The Client Services team comprises 25 wte staff employed by Hertfordshire County Council. The functions of the team are to:

- Take all new referrals to CSF and Adult Care Services in the form of telephone calls, faxes, e-mails and letters from schools, members of the public and other professionals.
- Input data onto Oracle database for CSF referrals and SSIS for ACS.
- Pass documents to Quadrant referral and assessment teams twice daily and within 24 hours.
- Give advice to callers on potential referrals.
- Liaise with Quadrant staff about urgent referrals.

6.5 There is a programme of continuing improvement in place and members of the Client Services management team have responsibility for liaison with each Quadrant. A working group was established to ensure effective referral systems for health and has developed a referral process for use by all health professionals.

In the past a number of concerns have been brought to the attention of Members regarding the Call Centre. All concerns regarding the Call Centre are followed up and a detailed log of work ensures that action is taken to remedy any problems. There are clearly identified performance targets and regular quality checks on the work of both the CAPITA and Client Services Teams.

6.6 The performance of the Customer Service (CAPITA) team is monitored by Community Information. Data from three NOP surveys conducted this calendar year indicate that an average of 78% of callers to the Customer Service team regarding CSF or ACS were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied with the outcome of their call. Overall satisfaction rates increased by 11% in September 2002 compared with January 2002.

6.7 The Client Services team is managed by the Operations Division of CSF. The performance is routinely and rigorously monitored and all concerns are followed up individually by the Client Services Manager.

6.8 The Call Centre acts as a single point of contact in effect "the front of house" for the Quadrants. There is almost a "national cynicism" regarding Call Centres. To deal with this and make the call centre a positive point of the developing HCC and CSF response to the public, detailed work has gone into following up every concern raised by agencies or service users. This has resulted in increasingly positive feedback from those using the service.

Data on the work of Client Services shows:

- A consistently very high percentage of clients telephoned back by Client Services on the same day where it was not possible for initial calls to be directly transferred to Client Services
- All urgent referrals from schools consistently responded to immediately
- A consistently very high percentage of telephone referrals answered and processed on Oracle within target timescales
- All written referral documentation forwarded to the correct destination within timescales
- A very high percentage of written referrals processed on Oracle (having been immediately forwarded to their destinations) within target timescales.

Performance of Client Services in relation to CSF referrals averaged over April - November 2002

| Performance Indicator | Actual % |
|---|----------------------------|
| % calls from Capita taken immediately by Client Services (no call back required) | 66% |
| % call backs completed by Client Services in the same day | 96% |
| % calls taken directly from schools on dedicated line | 100% |
| % telephone calls done within timescales* | 98% |
| % letters/faxes/e:mails processed and entered on Oracle by Client Services within timescales* (all Child Protection referrals are handled within required timescales) | H 99%) M 97%) L 93%) |
| % written referrals forwarded to correct destination within timescales* | 100% |

*Timescales: High Priority (H) = Immediate; Medium Priority (M) = same day; Low Priority (L) = within 24 hrs

- 6.9 The Casework Service is delivered by the Quadrant teams within a Unified Casework Framework. This framework provides a single integrated referral, assessment review and Case Management System. We have in place:
- A single set of forms for referrals, assessments, case plans and reviews.
 - A named worker for all open active cases (the Case Co-ordinator) who is responsible for ensuring that the work relating to each child progresses appropriately and for co-ordinating casework activity when more than one case worker is involved.
 - Clear arrangements for dealing with cases in the absence of a Case Co-ordinator.
 - Minimum number of case workers involved.
 - The ability to monitor the progress of the case.

It is the responsibility of Case Workers and Case Co-ordinators to ensure that updated information is entered onto the Oracle System either directly or via the heritage systems (SSIS, COOS, EPS). All new cases must be checked on Oracle to determine who else is involved in the case and to make direct contact with them.

7. Multi-Professional Working

7.1 Professionals from different professions are co-located in Quadrant bases (Porters Wood, County Hall, Langleybury and the Old Grammar School).

CSF is not about diluting professional knowledge and skills but is about developing more understanding about each professions' role and responsibilities, opportunities for collaborative working and opportunities to develop and enhance skills e.g:

- Social Workers have gained more knowledge about the key stages in Education and prioritise attendance and achievement at school as well as the care of children.
- Education Welfare Officers have a greater understanding of Child Protection issues and family problems which can have an impact on the child's attendance at school.

7.2 Consistent systems operate to maximise the strength of CSF bringing together multi-professional groups to discuss cases where the expertise of different professionals is required (co-working) or where one professional is seeking advice, consultation from a colleague.

Multi-professional groups identify and put in place Action Plans for Children Out of School (i.e. those truanting, excluded etc.).

Multi-professional contributions are made to the Schools Causing Concern meetings. Information from Educational Psychologists, Education Welfare Officers and Social Workers is shared with School Standards Advisers on a regular basis.

7.3 Quadrant Managers meet with Headteachers in their Quadrants regularly. The local links between schools, Quadrant and operations staff have developed in relation to individual children, project development and focus on local issues. This joint problem solving approach is a significant achievement for the service.

Educational Psychologists and Education Welfare Officers provide a consultation and visiting service to schools and a number of initiatives have developed. For example:

Marriotts School Project in North Quadrant.

This initiative involved Quadrant staff in collaboration with a secondary school to jointly fund a Professional Assistant to undertake direct work with families with social care and attendance issues and provides early identification and intervention for students who would benefit from additional support.

CSF Workers Project

This initiative launched earlier this year with schools aims to develop new approaches to early intervention.

17 workers are located in designated primary and secondary schools across the County working with children and families identified by school staff as needing particular intervention to prevent the need for more specialist services. This scheme is currently working with 91 children to maintain them in school and improve their attainment and avoid escalation of their difficulties. The workers attend a part-time professional course at the University and are also involved with locally based schools and services to develop better working practices.

The Westfield Project

The aim of the project is to develop integrated inter-agency working to improve support for challenging students in order to raise achievement.

An inter-agency Steering Group oversees the project.

A school based support team which includes devoted time of Education Welfare Officer, Educational Psychologist, Social Worker, Connexions Worker and with close links to the Youth Offending Team and Education Support Centre.

The support team offers 3 levels of support :

Level 1: Support offered to Form Tutors, Year Heads and Subject Teachers – staff training, advice and consultation. Identification of students to be supported through the use of risk factors and/or direct referral from school staff.

Level 2: Support provided for individual students referred by Form Tutors, Year Heads etc.

Level 3: Referral to Specialist Services.

- 7.4 Multi agency working outside of CSF has also benefited from the new joint service. The ability of CSF staff to work with other agencies and speak “with one voice” on the education and social care issues has helped promote a range of inter-agency working.
- 7.5 The Quadrants have developed collaborative working with Partner Agencies:
- Quadrant Managers attend PCT Executive meetings
 - Quadrant Managers attend Local Strategic Partnership meetings
 - Group Managers attend Community Safety Partnerships

8. Performance

- 8.1 The Comprehensive Performance Assessment has recognised Hertfordshire County Council as excellent. The Department of Health has awarded CSF two stars with excellent progress and Ofsted has awarded CSF three stars.
- 8.2 A summary of our position on the Performance Assessment Framework (DOH) demonstrates we are in an improving position with only three of the PAF Indicators showing a decline in performance.
- 8.3 Significant improvements include:
- Long term stability of children
 - Re-registrations on the Child Protection Register
 - Young people leaving care with at least one GCSE grade A*-G
 - Health assessments of children in care

We have also improved on the percentage of children in care who offend.

- 8.4 We are showing dips in performance on:
- Relative spend on Family Support – we are criticised for spending too highly on this.
 - Adoptions of children in care. This is clearly a concern and affected by vacancies, increased numbers of children in care, shortage of experienced staff and Court delay. We are addressing this by appointing two workers specifically ring-fenced to progress the Court work.
 - Percentage of young people in care who missed 25 or more days schooling. This is an area identified for further action in the 2003/4 CSF Plan.

9. Performance on 3 Key Areas

County Councillor Billing requested information on 3 key areas of work. These are high profile areas of work for CSF, parents, Members and stakeholders and represent the work of the different professional groups across the Quadrants.

9.1 Child Protection

Hertfordshire has performed well on child protection targets, an area of priority for CSF and other Partner Agencies. The CSF Plan, Strategic Area 5 Section 5.1-5.3 outlines areas for development during the coming year.

The launch of the new Hertfordshire Area Child Protection Committee Procedures in September 2002 has given an opportunity to maintain the child protection work on the multi-agency agenda and ensure continued high standards.

CSF staff have worked with schools and other stakeholders to continue to improve the difficult work of Child Protection. The multi agency work under the umbrella of the Area Child Protection Committee has coped well with the pressure and managed service improvement. Where problems have arisen analysis of the issues has produced a multi agency action plan.

Data from key performance indicators is provided to the Department of Health at 31st March and 30th September annually.

Child Protection Registrations of Children under 18

| As at March | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| England | 31,900 | 30,300 | 26,800 | N/A |
| Eastern Shire Counties | 438 | 405 | 371 | N/A |
| Hertfordshire | 590 | 540 | 485 | 547 |

Children Registered per 10,000 population as of March 2001

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| England | 28 | 27 | 24 | N/A |
| Eastern Shire Counties | 24 | 22 | 21 | N/A |
| Hertfordshire | 25 | 22 | 20 | 22 |

Total on Register by Quadrant

| March 2002 | East | North | South | West |
|-------------|------|-------|-------|------|
| County: 547 | 212 | 148 | 119 | 68 |

Key Points:

- When compared to the general population CSF's register is in line with the regional average.

Percentage of children whose names have been on the Register, been de-registered and then re-registered at any time.

Re-Registrations PAF A3

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| England | 15% | 14% | 14% | N/A |
| Eastern Shire Counties | 12% | 11% | 15% | N/A |
| Hertfordshire | 14% | 7% | 13% | 20% |

Percentage of Re-Registrations per Quadrant

| As at | County | West | South | North | East |
|-------------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| 31 March 2001 | 13.2% | 6.8% | 11.8% | 18.0% | 14.9% |
| 31 March 2002 | 20.2% | 18.4% | 19.9% | 20.1% | 21.1% |
| 30 September 2002 | 17.9% | 21.0% | 20.5% | 18.0% | 15.0% |

Key Points:

- Since 1999 CSF's re-registration rates have fluctuated.
- Despite a significant rise in 2002, CSF re-registration figure has steadily decreased since March 2002 and is now close to the figure the DoH would regard as good practice.
- An audit of re-registrations from April 2001 to March 2002 was completed by the Child Protection Unit. Alcohol abuse amongst mothers/carers was the single biggest factor featuring in cases of re-registration, whether or not the families had ongoing support from CSF or other agencies. The relapse factor for adults who abuse alcohol is well documented and considered to be a normal part of recovery. Therefore there are likely to be periods when children are adequately safeguarded and do not meet the criteria for registration.

In order to address this rise, CSF is working with Adult Care Services, health colleagues and voluntary agencies working with adults who abuse alcohol to co-ordinate and improve the support to and monitoring of these families.

- Early indications for this year show a return to a lower level of re-registrations.

The percentage of children de-registered during the year who had been on the register for more than 2 years.

PAF C21 – De-registrations

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| England | 13 | 12 | 11 | N/A |
| Eastern Shire Counties | 9 | 6 | 7 | N/A |
| Hertfordshire | 7 | 6 | 4 | 6 |

Percentage of de-registrations, per Quadrant (children on register for over 2 years)

| As at | County | West | South | North | East |
|-------------------|---------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| 31 March 2001 | 4.05% | 4.79% | 8.26% | 4.55% | .92% |
| 31 March 2002 | 5.86% | 4.48% | 11.24% | 1.80% | 4.03% |
| 30 September 2002 | 6.06% | 7.06% | 7.95% | 4.44% | 5.26% |

Key Points:

- Hertfordshire is significantly below the national average. This is because work is actively undertaken to effectively address the causes for concerns during the period children’s names are on the register. This ensures all children have effective care plans.

Percentage of Review Case Conference held on time – PAF C20

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| England | 87% | 81% | 87% | N/A |
| Eastern Shire Counties | 89% | 87% | 88% | N/A |
| Hertfordshire | 99% | 96% | 95% | 96% |

As at 30 September 2002. The percentage of Case Conference Reviews held on time was 99.7%.

Key Points:

- Over the last 3 years Hertfordshire has been consistently better than the National and Regional positions.
- Since the start of CSF the percentage of review case conferences held on time has improved. Currently Hertfordshire is significantly above the national average indicating that nearly all children on the register are reviewed within the required timescales.

9.2 Special Educational Needs

CSF has continued with the LEA strategy of working to deliver the right service to the right child, quickly and with the minimum of bureaucracy. In order to do so the focus continues to be on the positive and flexible use of Earmarked Pupil Funding (EPF) to support the child and school and to reduce the reliance on the time consuming statementing process.

The data that follows indicates that Hertfordshire has been very successful in:

- Providing earmarked funding to increased numbers of children with significant SEN, while reducing the number undergoing the bureaucracy of the statutory assessment process
- Increasing the number of pupils with significant SEN whose needs are being met within mainstream settings
- Reducing the numbers of pupils year on year whose needs cannot be met within in-county special schools.
- Maintaining 100% adherence to statutory timescales for completion of new Statements where all advice from external agencies is received on time.

Continued work needs to be undertaken to:

- Reduce the number of inappropriate requests received for EPF and statutory assessment
- Increase the incidence of delayed statutory advice from external agencies to enable higher adherence to timescales for completion of new Statements where 'exceptions' are included
- Reduce the number of appeals to the SEN and Disability Tribunal registered and heard.

The CSF Plan Strategic Area 4.3 sets out actions to support children with special needs.

There is a broad continuum of provision and support available according to the nature and extent of children's individual needs. These include :-

- Advisory and teaching support services for children with developmental delay, dyslexia, visual impairment, hearing impairment, language/communication disorders, physical impairments, autism and emotional/behaviour problems.
- Delegated funding through school budget shares for additional needs (£9,000,000 in 2002) and economic deprivation (£4,200,000 in 2002/03)
- Individual resource allocations through Earmarked Pupil Funding and Statements of Special Educational Needs.
- 48 specialist units and bases attached to mainstream schools
- 26 Special Schools

Table 1: Earmarked Pupil Funding: Requests and percentage agreed across county

| | Calendar year 2000 | Calendar year 2001 | Calendar year 2002 |
|---------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Requests made | 884 | 777 | 1038 |
| % EPF agreed | 68.0% | 64.0% | 57.0% |

Table 2: Earmarked Pupil Funding: Numbers of Children by Quadrant

| | East | North | South | West | Total |
|---------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|
| January 2001 | 200 | 191 | 173 | 184 | 748 |
| January 2002 | 270 | 232 | 255 | 287 | 1044 |
| January 2003 | 232 | 237 | 250 | 324 | 1043 |

Key points:

- The number of requests for EPF has fluctuated over the last 3 years, showing a significant increase in 2002. The overall percentage of those requests that have met the criteria has reduced over the past three years.
- There has been an overall rise of 295 children with EPF since January 2001. This increase is apparent across all quadrants, and is particularly marked in West.

Table 3: Statutory Assessments of Special Educational Need

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Requests for statutory assessment | 976 | 1176 | 1103 |
| % statutory assessments agreed | 54% | 49% | 51% |

Key Points:

- Over the last three years the number of requests made for statutory assessment of SEN has increased year on year. However the percentage of requests meeting the criteria for statutory assessment (which has remained unchanged) has decreased during this period.
- Guidance on threshold for statutory assessment was issued with the revised SEN Code of Practice. Hertfordshire criteria are consistent with this.
- The statutory procedures require the assessment process to follow a defined set of steps against specific timescales. Results are reported in 2 different ways - firstly taking certain mandatory exceptions into account (e.g. cases falling in the summer holidays or where other agencies provide late information); and secondly disregarding these exceptions over which the Local Authority has no control.

Table 4: Percentage of Children in receipt of first Statement within Timescales (18 weeks) including Exceptions

| | Calendar year 2000 | Calendar year 2001 | Calendar year 2002 to 28.11.02 |
|--|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| HCC First Statements | 370 | 455 | 503 |
| % of Children in receipt of first Statement within timescales including exceptions | 56.5% | 55.8% | 54.9% |
| % of Children in receipt of first Statement within timescales excluding exceptions | 94% | 100% | 100% |

Table 5: Percentage of Children with First Statements within Timescales by Quadrant including exceptions.

| | Calendar year 2000 | Calendar year 2001 | Calendar year 2002 (to 28.11.02) |
|-------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---|
| East | 64% | 56% | 53% |
| North | 71% | 74% | 61% |
| South | 34% | 38% | 42% |
| West | 65% | 56% | 68% |

Key Points:

- The number of children with new Statements has increased over the last three years.
- The percentage of first Statements including exceptions completed within 18 weeks has decreased slightly over the last three years. This includes cases where there are delays in receipt of statutory advice from external agencies e.g. health. Work is ongoing with health professionals and data indicates some improvement in parts of the county within recent months.
- Where all external statutory advice is received on time, completion of Statements has been maintained at 100% over the past two years. This is a considerable achievement and places Hertfordshire in joint first place in terms of its statistical neighbours.
- In the last four years, the number of children with Statements has decreased year on year. In January 2002, Hertfordshire had the lowest percentage of pupils with Statements, compared to our statistical neighbours.
- However, the number of children in receipt of earmarked funding (EPF or Statement) has increased. The increased use of EPF in relation to a Statement ensures that children receive additional funding swiftly and with minimal bureaucracy..

Table 6: Numbers of children in receipt of EPF and Statements

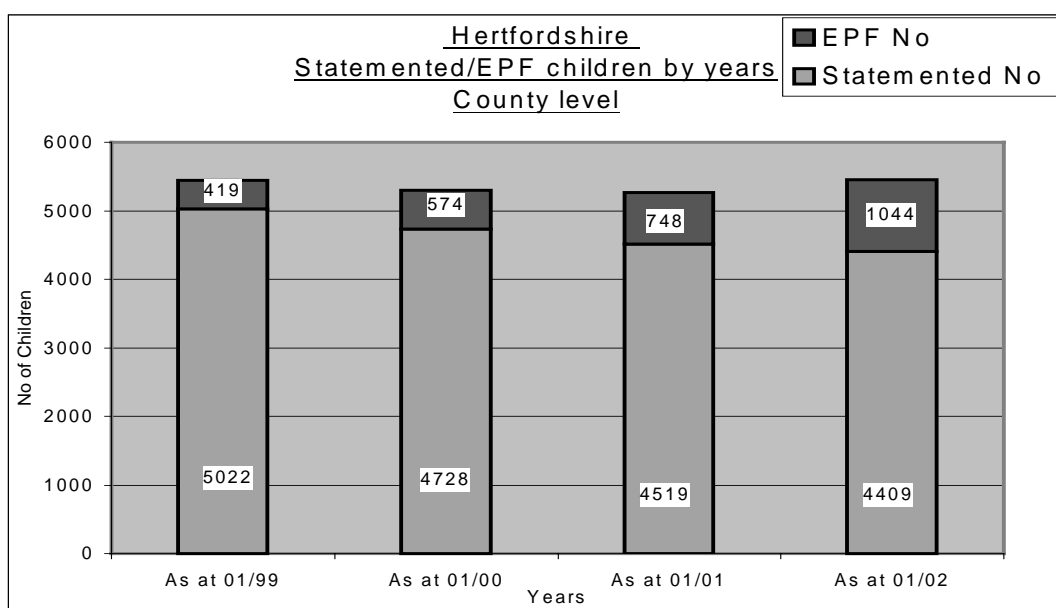


Table 7: Number of children with Statements placed in special schools

| | 01/00 | 01/01 | 01/02 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|
| No. in special schools (including out-county) | 2212 | 2146 | 2151 |

Table 8: Number of children placed in out-county special schools

| | 12/00 | 12/01 | 12/02 |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| No. in out-county special schools | 259 | 230 | 190 |

Key points:

- The number of children in Hertfordshire special schools has remained relatively unchanged in recent years but the needs of the children on roll become more complex.
- The number of children with Statements placed in out-county special schools has reduced year on year, indicating that more children with significant special needs are having their needs met in county.

Table 9: Number of appeals registered at the SEN Tribunal against Hertfordshire County Council

| | Financial year 2000 | Financial year 2001 | Financial year 2002 (to November) | 2002 Estimate |
|---------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| East | 20 | 11 | 9 | 14 |
| North | 15 | 16 | 11 | 17 |
| South | 10 | 11 | 11 | 17 |
| West | 15 | 19 | 21 | 32 |
| Totals | 60 | 57 | 52 | 80 |

Table 10: Outcomes of all appeals registered

| | Financial year 2000/01 | | | | Financial year 2001/02 | | | | Financial year 2002 (to 30.11) | | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|-------|-------|------|------------------------|-------|-------|------|--------------------------------|-------|-------|------|
| | East | North | South | West | East | North | South | West | East | North | South | West |
| Number Withdrawn | 14 | 14 | 7 | 11 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 15 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 9 |
| Number Waiting | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 10 |
| Number Heard | 6 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 2* | 3 | 1 | 2 |
| Amendment Directed | 5 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Assessment Directed | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Dismissed | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Out-County Placement | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Struck Out | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

* awaiting decision

Key Points:

- During the financial year 2001, the number of tribunals registered was successfully reduced. Figures to date for 2002 indicate an increase is almost certain, with a very significant increase in the West Quadrant. An increase in tribunals registered is a national trend and has been predominantly due to the new tribunal regulations.
- The SEN and Disability Act 2001 widened the powers of the Tribunal from September 2002 to hear cases of disability discrimination. It is still too early to assess the impact of this change
- Figures for appeals registered are higher than those heard largely because:
 - Pupil Services Managers succeed in negotiating settlements with parents prior to the Tribunal hearing.
 - Parents produce additional evidence of the child's needs which results in CSF agreeing to Statutory Assessment. This category forms the majority of cases

registered with the Tribunal which are later withdrawn by parents and so never reaches a hearing.

- The Tribunal frequently makes decisions which are in part in favour of the Local Authority and in part in favour of parents. This complexity of decision making is not accurately reflected in the above tables although the 'Amended Directed' row in Table 11 includes all such directions upon the Local Authority.

9.3 Attendance

The development of CSF has helped bring a shared ownership of attendance to the forefront of all staffs work, rather than leaving the issue to Education Welfare alone. Positive developments have taken place in improving attendance of our Looked After Children and actively engaging childrens home staff, foster carers, schools, school advisers and EWOs in helping children and their carers to develop improved understanding of the school system. Work is planned in 2003/04 to develop the family support work in our family centres, so that the parenting courses include education, attainment and relationships with schools, and the SIAS team will be helping devise the programme. This will build upon existing good links between schools and family centres.

The national trend on attendance has been a cause for concern and schools have a complex task of improving attainment and ensuring inclusion of sometimes difficult and disaffected children. The multi professional work of CSF with schools has helped maintain momentum in this area.

The key points from the figures are:

- Hertfordshire attendance figures are broadly in line with national and regional figures.
- Each year numbers of non-attenders increases from a lowest point at the start of the academic year to a peak in the Summer term.
- Numbers of poor attenders followed the same pattern as non-attenders during 1990/2000 academic year but since then has peaked in the Spring terms. This could be related to those reaching school leaving age.
- Over the last three academic years numbers of non-attenders have fallen overall whereas poor attenders have increased overall.

Although in line with national figures, Hertfordshire can improve on performance targets. The CSF Plan Strategic Area 4.2 sets challenging targets for improvements, particularly reducing unauthorised absences in secondary schools.

Work will be undertaken in 2003 to meet our targets and work as early as possible in families with children at risk of poor attendance. We also will develop a range of targeted actions to be taken with schools where attendance is currently below the county average.

Attendance: Primary Schools

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| England | 94.1% | 94.3% | 93.9% | 94.1% |
| Eastern Shire Counties | 94.7% | 94.9% | 94.9% | 94.7% |
| Hertfordshire | 95.0% | 95.2% | 94.7% | 94.8% |

Attendance: Secondary Schools

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| England | 91.1% | 91.6% | 90.6% | 91.3% |
| Eastern Shire Counties | 92.1% | 92.2% | 91.7% | 92.0% |
| Hertfordshire | 92.4% | 92.7% | 92.0% | 92.1% |

Non/Poor Attenders (less than 50%)

| | Autumn 1999 | Spring 2000 | Summer 2000 | Autumn 2000 | Spring 2001 | Summer 2001 | Autumn 2001 | Spring 2002 | Summer 2002 |
|-------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Non | 335 | 451 | 601 | 324 | 461 | 583 | 231 | 363 | 379 |
| Poor | 759 | 1072 | 1105 | 845 | 1257 | 1172 | 1058 | 1510 | 1324 |

Unauthorised Absence: Primary Schools

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| England | 0.5% | 0.5% | 0.5% | 0.4% |
| Statistical Neighbours | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.3% |
| Hertfordshire | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.3% | 0.4% |

Unauthorised Absence: Secondary Schools

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 |
|------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| England | 1.1% | 1.0% | 1.1% | 1.1% |
| Statistical Neighbours | 0.7% | 0.7% | 0.7% | 0.7% |
| Hertfordshire | 0.7% | 0.6% | 0.7% | 0.9% |

Attendance and Absence Figures by Quadrant

Attendance: Primary Schools

| Quadrant | Attendance |
|----------|------------|
| North | 94.75% |
| South | 94.61% |
| East | 94.81% |
| West | 94.90% |

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| County | 94.8% |
|---------------|-------|

Absence: Primary Schools

| Quadrant | Authorised Absence | Unauthorised Absence | Total |
|----------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|
| North | 4.90% | 0.35% | 5.25% |
| South | 4.89% | 0.50% | 5.39% |
| East | 4.85% | 0.34% | 5.19% |
| West | 4.76% | 0.34% | 5.10% |

| | | | |
|---------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| | Authorised Absence | Unauthorised Absence | Total |
| County | 4.85% | 0.38% | 5.23% |

Attendance: Secondary Schools

| Quadrant | Attendance |
|----------|------------|
| North | 91.31% |
| South | 92.44% |
| East | 92.46% |
| West | 92.09% |

| | |
|---------------|-------|
| County | 92.1% |
|---------------|-------|

Absence: Secondary Schools

| Quadrant | Authorised Absence | Unauthorised Absence | Total |
|----------|--------------------|----------------------|-------|
| North | 7.71% | 0.98% | 8.69% |
| South | 6.24% | 1.32% | 7.56% |
| East | 6.63% | 0.91% | 7.54% |
| West | 7.38% | 0.53% | 7.91% |

| | | | |
|---------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|
| | Authorised Absence | Unauthorised Absence | Total |
| County | 6.97% | 0.91% | 7.88% |

Source: DfES Attendance Survey 2001/02

10. Proposal for Further Scrutiny

- 10.1 Further scrutiny of Quadrant data, issues and challenges could be organised for groups of members meeting front line staff and managers in each Quadrant. This will create an opportunity to explore in more detail performance and particular issues arising as a result.

A suggested timetable would be for a twilight session in each Quadrant to enable a brief report on the outcome of visits to be presented to the June Committee.

11. Financial Implications

There are no financial implications arising out of this report.

Background Papers used in this report

Report of the Proposed Children, Schools and Families Service – April 2000.
Quadrant Unit Plans 2002/3.
Performance Assessment Framework – Autumn Statement 2002.
DfES Attendance Survey 2001/2.

QUADRANT PROFILES

WEST QUADRANT

The West Quadrant covers the District and Borough Councils of St. Albans and Dacorum respectively and has a total population of 272,400.

There are 42,566 children of school age served by 23 Secondary Schools, 108 Primary Schools, 8 Special Schools and 2 Education Support Centres.

There are 2 Family Support Centres and 3 Residential Childrens Homes in the area.

There are 192 staff 157.81 wte.

Key Facts

- 350 referrals per month
- 10 different professional services provided
- 68 children on the Child Protection Register
- 250 children Looked After
- 400 children with disabilities
- 3000 admissions each to Nursery/Primary/Secondary Schools each year
- 1250 children with Statements of Special Educational Needs

The Quadrant contains the following teams:

- 3 Referral and Assessment Social Work Teams
- 1 Educational Psychology and Advisory Teacher Team
- 1 Education Welfare and Hospital and Home Education Team
- 1 Community Team
- 2 Family Centres
- 5 Long Term Casework Social Work Teams
- 1 Disabled Childrens Team
- 1 Youth Team
- 1 Special (Educational) Needs Team
- 1 Student Services Team
- A Quadrant Administration Team

Quadrant budget for 2001/2 = Staffing £4,427,214: Revenue £851,396

Achievements over the Last Year

- Maintenance of Core Services to Children, Schools and Families through a period of significant staff vacancies. West Quadrant hit a low of 33% vacancies in the Summer and Autumn.
- Key Managerial staff have left and are leaving in the next few weeks:
 - 3 on promotion to another authority
 - 2 on promotion within CSF
 - 2 moves within CSF
- Good performance on Child Protection:
 - Reviews held within timescales
 - Few children on the register for over 2 years (PAF Indicators)
- Good strategies for improving attendance and reducing exclusions (District Audit Report on School Attendance).
- Most complaints resolved at Stage 1
- West Quadrant is fortunate in having one Quadrant base. Multi-professional working is most advanced in this Quadrant with evidence of co-working between professional groups, active multi-disciplinary casework groups etc.

Targets for Improvement Identified in the West Quadrant Unit Plan 2002/3

- Increase educational achievement for children leaving care (PAF results 2002).
- Decrease number of children in care receiving final warnings or criminal convictions (PAF results 2002).
- Address the increase of children out of school and the number of children who are poor attenders (Children Out of School Database Reports).
- Increase influence on school policies and practice for improving attendance and reducing exclusions (District Audit Report on Attendance and Exclusions).
- Reduce number of Permanent Exclusions.
- Recruit and retain qualified staff.

NORTH QUADRANT

The North Quadrant covers the Districts of North Hertfordshire and Stevenage and takes in the urban centres of Stevenage, Letchworth, Hitchin, Baldock, Royston and surrounding villages and has a total population of 197,000.

The Quadrant base is Letchworth. There are also staff based at Southgate, Stevenage and the Valley School, Stevenage.

There are 30,000 children of school age served by 18 Secondary Schools, 88 Primary Schools, 6 Special Schools and 2 Education Support Centres.

There are 2 Family Support Centres (one run by NCH in Stevenage) and 3 Residential Childrens Homes in the area (one long-term for disabled children and one respite unit).

There are 196 staff 159.24 wte.

Key Facts

- 350 referrals per month
- 110 children on the Child Protection Register
- 280 children Looked After
- 250 children with disabilities
- 2,500 admissions each to Nursery/Primary/Secondary Schools each year
- 900 children with Statements of Special Educational Needs

The Quadrant contains the following teams:

- 3 Referral and Assessment Social Work Teams
- 1 Educational Psychology and Advisory Teacher Team
- 1 Education Welfare and Hospital and Home Education Team
- 1 Community Team
- 1 Family Support Centre
- 4 Long Term Casework Social Work Teams
- 1 Disabled Children Team
- 1 Youth Team
- 1 Special (Educational) Needs Team
- 1 Student Services Team
- A Quadrant Administration Team

Quadrant budget for 2001/2 = Staffing £4,022,525: Revenue £712,681

Achievements over the Last Year

- North Quadrant has been fortunate in maintaining a stable, experienced group of staff with few vacancies.

- Good performance on Child Protection:
 - Reviews held within timescales
 - No child on the register for over 2 years
- 100% of Statutory Assessments for children with Special Educational Needs within timescales.
- Almost all complaints resolved at Stage 1, only 2 proceeded to Stage 2. Eight complaints went to Local Ombudsman, only 1 partially upheld.

Targets for Improvement Identified in the North Quadrant Unit Plan 2002/3

- Increase educational achievement for children leaving care (PAF results 2002).
- Decrease number of children in care receiving final warnings or criminal convictions (PAF results 2002).
- Address the increase of children out of school and the number of children who are poor attenders (Children Out of School Database Reports).
- Increase influence on school policies and practice for improving attendance and reducing exclusions (District Audit Report on Attendance and Exclusions).
- Reduce number of Permanent Exclusions.

SOUTH QUADRANT

South Quadrant covers the Hertsmere, Watford and Three Rivers District Council areas, has a total population of 268,915.

The main Quadrant base is Langleybury. Long term casework teams are based in Hempstead Road, Watford, Hertsmere Civic Centre and Hawkford Hall, Rickmansworth. The Youth team is located in the High Street and Clarendon Road, Watford.

There are 61,950 children of school age served by 15 Secondary Schools, 92 Primary Schools, 5 Special Schools and 1 Education Support Centre. 12 of the Secondary are Foundation or Voluntary Aided Schools, which are responsible for their own admissions.

There are 217 staff 177.02 wte.

There are no residential Childrens Homes located in South Quadrant and there is a relative shortage of foster placements.

There are 3 Family Support Centres.

The closeness of the South Quadrant to the North London boroughs has a significant impact on the recruitment and retention of workers, since in many cases, similar jobs are advertised on considerably higher salaries in neighbouring boroughs.

The employment of newly qualified inexperienced workers who require more support and supervision, the long term illness of a Key Manager and operating from 6 sites have posed the Quadrant a challenge.

Key Facts

- 360 referrals per month
- 119 children on the Child Protection Register
- 222 children Looked After
- 280 children with disabilities
- 2900 admissions each to Nursery Schools, 2900 admissions to Primary Schools and 3350 admissions to Secondary Schools each year
- 1234 children with Statements of Special Educational Needs

The Quadrant contains the following teams:

- 3 Referral and Assessment Social Work Teams
- 1 Educational Psychology and Advisory Teacher Team
- 1 Education Welfare and Hospital and Home Education Team
- 1 Community Team
- 3 Family Support Centres
- 3 Long Term Casework Social Work Teams
- 1 Disabled Children Team

- 1 Youth Team (Youth Programmes Unit and Young Citizens Project)
- 1 Special (Educational) Needs Team
- A Quadrant Administration Team

Quadrant budget for 2001/2 = Staffing £4,578,368: Revenue £788,255

Achievements over the Last Year

- Working with a number of schools to develop improved delivery and integration of support services (e.g. Westfield, Francis Combe, Hertswood).
- Working with the Hertsmere PCT and the Borehamwood Community partnership to develop proposals for a community based facility for the integrated location for the provision of services to children and families in the Borehamwood area.
- Maintaining Core Services to Children, Schools and Families through a period significant staff vacancies.
- Good Child Protection performance:
 - Reviews held on time
 - Few children on the register over 2 years
- High level of Statutory Special Educational Needs Assessments completed within timescales.
- High percentage of children admitted to one of their 3 ranked secondary schools.
- High percentage of EP and EWO school consultation visits carried out in accordance with the Service Agreement.
- Innovative project work with schools and partner agencies e.g. Westfield School Project, Borehamwood. Community Partnership which includes the PCT and Borehamwood Schools (plans to develop a Children and Families Resource Centre).

Targets for Improvement Identified in the South Quadrant Unit Plan 2002/3

- Increase educational achievement for children leaving care (PAF results 2002).
- Decrease number of children in care receiving final warnings or criminal convictions (PAF results 2002).
- Address the increase of children out of school and the number of children who are poor attenders (Children Out of School Database Reports).
- Increase influence on school policies and practice for improving attendance and reducing exclusions (District Audit Report on Attendance and Exclusions).

- Reduce number of Permanent Exclusions.
- Recruit and retain qualified staff.

EAST QUADRANT

The East Quadrant covers the three District/Borough Councils of Broxbourne, East Herts and Welwyn and Hatfield and it links with 3 Health Primary Care Trusts.

The Quadrant services a population of over 73,000 children aged between 0 and 17. There are 27 Secondary Schools, 144 Primary Schools, 7 Special Schools, 3 Education Support Centres and 11 School based units located in the East Hertfordshire area.

There are 3 Family Support Centres and 2 Residential Childrens Homes in the area.

Quadrant staff work from 6 separate sites located in Welwyn Garden City, Waltham Cross, Cheshunt, Ware, Hatfield and Hertford.

There are 278 staff 237.28 wte (55 for Specialist Advisory Service, 38.39 wte).

Key Facts

- 500 referrals per month
- 215 children on the Child Protection Register
- 211 children Looked After
- 450 children with disabilities
- 5,000 admissions each to Nursery/Primary/Secondary Schools each year
- 1,270 children with Statements of Special Educational Needs
- young people worked with – prevention and re-integration

The Quadrant contains the following teams:

- 4 Referral and Assessment Social Work Teams
- 1 Educational Psychology and Advisory Teacher Team
- 1 Education Welfare and Hospital and Home Education Team
- 1 Community Team
- 3 Family Support Centres
- 6 Long Term Casework Social Work Teams
- 1 Disabled Children Team
- 1 Youth Team
- 1 Student Services Team
- A Quadrant Administration Team
- Specialist Advisory Service (providing services for all Quadrants)

Quadrant budget for 2001/2 = Staffing £6,721,284: Revenue £965,810

Achievement over the Last Year

- Maintenance of Core Services to Children, Schools and Families through a period of high staff vacancies and high volume of referrals (500 per month).
- The Quadrant comprises 254 square miles of urban and rural areas and is the largest Quadrant.

- Currently staff work from a number of sites which can mitigate against integrated, cross professional working. Staff can feel isolated when based in small teams located away from the Quadrant.
- Good Child Protection performance:
 - Reviews held on time
 - Few children on the Register for over 2 years
- Few complaints progressed to Stage 2, and only 1 to Stage 3.

Targets for Improvement Identified in the East Quadrant Unit Plan 2002/3

- Increase educational achievement for children leaving care (PAF results 2002).
- Decrease number of children in care receiving final warnings or criminal convictions (PAF results 2002).
- Address the increase of children out of school and the number of children who are poor attenders (Children Out of School Database Reports).
- Increase influence on school policies and practice for improving attendance and reducing exclusions (District Audit Report on Attendance and Exclusions).
- Reduce number of Permanent Exclusions.
- Recruitment and retention of Social Work staff