

The background of the slide features a large, light blue watermark of the City of Vancouver's coat of arms. The crest includes a crown with four maple leaves, a shield divided into four quadrants (top-left: a ship, top-right: a stag, bottom-left: a ship, bottom-right: an eagle), and a banner at the bottom with the motto 'A NE FOR A'.

Agenda Item 5

Children's Services Performance Update

Falkirk Council

Title: Children's Services Performance Update
Meeting: Performance Panel
Date: 29 September 2016
Submitted By: Director of Children's Services

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report sets out an executive summary of Children's Services performance for the period April to September 2015 and includes our:

- key priorities;
- key areas for improvement;
- significant challenges, risks and changes in Service pressures since the last;
- Performance Panel update;
- important indicators; and
- engagement with our customers.

1.2 The attached Performance Panel Statement seeks to update Members on progress towards achieving the important actions and indicators drawn from our Service Plan.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Performance Panel is asked to note the performance of Children's Services over the period January to September 2016.

3. Background

3.1 This report is informed by the Children's Services three-year plan, with a current focus on planning for 2016-17. Within the current financial constraints, the Service aims to effect a cultural change over the course of the three year plan, through improved integration of the services it oversees and by taking account of service users' and communities' needs.

4. Considerations

4.1 We have set the following key priorities for our Service since the development of the Service in August 2015. These are:

- Priority One: Raising Attainment
- Priority Two: Improve Outcomes for Children Leaving Care

- Priority Three: Infrastructure, Capacity and Transformational Change
- 4.2 As Officers we continually monitor progress on all of the actions within our Service Plan. We have identified 30 key actions from our Service Performance Plan which ensure the above priorities are met. Progress on each of these is provided in the attached Performance Panel Statement.
 - 4.3 The Performance Panel Statement also includes our Service Plan actions that are currently significantly behind target.
 - 4.4 An update on the progress of each Group is provided below:
 - 4.4.1 Priority One: Raising Attainment

S4-6 Attainment Data

With the advent of Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), the Scottish Government replaced the previous pupil attainment reporting system (STACS) with Insight. Data from Insight for 2015-6 will not be available until late February 2017, the data currently available being for session 2014-5, which has already been reported.

Prior to the introduction of CfE, Falkirk Council was one of a number of authorities that had a policy of early SQA presentation, ie in S3. Two of the 8 secondary schools presented in S3 for a range of subjects, while a further 2 presented for awards in English and Mathematics in S3. In session 2013-4, when CfE courses were introduced, early presentation ceased.

Insight data do not take account of presentations for examinations in S3, reporting only on performance in S4 onwards. The attainment data for 2015-6, therefore, will not take account of early presentation in the 4 schools that took place up to 2012-3 with the result that the 2015-6 attainment data under-report our performance.

The performance of the final cohort of pupils who were subject to early presentation, who left school after S6 in June 2016, will cease to be reported after 2016-7. A truer picture of attainment in the Senior Phase in Falkirk Council will, therefore, emerge thereafter.

Raising Overall Attainment

Children's Services are committed to driving up attainment and recognise that initiatives to ensure that this takes place cannot focus simply on the presentation years themselves but must also focus on learning in all stages of primary and secondary education.

Secondary schools are currently being challenged to raise attainment in S4-6 through being expected to:

1. Work more widely with their clusters. Working together, schools ensure that courses, and the pace and challenge in delivering these in primary and secondary schools, are appropriate. Secondary schools are also challenged to ensure that they build effectively on prior learning when pupils enter S1.

2. Analyse attainment data in the Broad General Education (based on CEM standardised testing and professional knowledge of pupils) and in the Senior Phase (attainment in SQA and other accreditation. These data are shared between schools, including data that show the value that is added to pupils' learning over time.
3. Analyse the performance of pupils in the 20 per cent most deprived areas. Nurseries and schools are increasingly working to engage (as opposed merely to inform) families in the Early Years and beyond to address ways of improving learning in the home especially where there is deprivation. A growing number of schools formally include parents as partners in their School Improvement Plans. The Partnership Schools Scotland initiative, supported by the Scottish Parent Teacher Council and funded by Skills Development Scotland, is a model for school, family and community partnership. Eight schools have either signed up or are expressing interest, with Slamannan Primary School and Bo'ness Academy already progressing this initiative.
4. Schools are developing strategies to a shared understanding of the standards associated with each CfE Level in the Broad General Education stages, by moderating standards across primary schools and between primary and secondary sectors. Further, secondary schools make extensive use of SQA Nominees, subject teachers who attend SQA training on standards and who are also deployed by the SQA to quality assure presentation materials and stands.
5. Prepare pupils in the Broad General Education stages to make informed and, therefore, appropriate course choices for S4 onwards.
6. Improve their Broad General Education courses and teaching in S1 to S3 in order to ensure that pupils at these stages are fully prepared for entry to the Senior Phase (ie S4-6).
7. Secondary schools constantly review and fine tune their course offerings in S4 to S6 to meet the needs of each year's cohorts. The number of courses that pupils are expected to take in S4 has now been directed by Scottish Government and all but one secondary school, Braes High School, is in line with these expectations. The Headteacher and management at Braes High School are taking action to bring the school into line with other schools.

A series of School Improvement Meetings, led either by the Director of Children's Services or the Head of Education, accompanied by officers from the centre and the Convenor of Children's Services, were held with schools' Headteachers and Senior Managements in October and November 2015. These meetings subjected each school to thorough scrutiny regarding their attainment, their coursing in the Broad General Education and the quality of their work with their cluster. Further similar meetings will take place in the current term to address attainment.

Work is in progress to raise attainment in Physical Education and Music through the deployment of secondary Physical Education and Music teachers in their associated primary schools.

Raising Attainment in Literacy and Numeracy

Action to raise attainment in literacy and numeracy in primary and secondary schools has resulted from analysis of the following:

- CEM standardised test results in Reading and Mathematics in P1, 3, 5, 7 and S2.
- Results from the Teacher Judgement Survey, in which class teachers assigned CfE Levels in Reading, Writing, Listening & Talking, and Mathematics to pupils in P1, 4 & 7, and S3.
- Reports following validation of schools' self-evaluations.
- School Improvement Plans.
- Volume and nature of requests from schools for support from Curriculum Support Officers.
- Feedback from CPD courses.
- Follow up to Employee Review and Development (ERD) meetings.
- Headteachers' tracking and monitoring meetings with each teacher, with the focus on literacy and numeracy.

These 2015-6 session had been expected to include a programme of CPD for literacy. However the absence of a Support Officer for Literacy and Numeracy (following recruitment difficulties) has curtailed this programme. Four teachers have since been seconded to deliver these sessions and to support literacy and numeracy in schools in 2016-7.

- Attainment in Reading in Primary 1 has shown that, against the Scottish average, Falkirk Council pupils make less progress although the gap between the two is now narrower than in 2013-4 and highlights the low attainment in pupils living in the 20% most deprived areas. Pupils living in Decile 2, however, showed positive value being added. Headteachers are, however, increasingly aware of the needs of these pupils and are implementing initiatives to increase the engagement with families.
- In P3, 5 and 7 Reading scores in standardised tests were strongest in P3 and P5 but showed decline in P7. Factors which influenced this are: pupils having received less effective teaching in their early years than pupils at those stages now receive.
- Reading is a key action point for schools and the newly appointed seconded support teachers of literacy.
- In P1 Mathematics, the impact of extensive work in developing early years numeracy is evident in the fact that, in 2015-6, pupils on average made more progress than the Scottish average. Pupils in Deciles 2 to 7 making significant positive progress. Again, Headteachers are focusing, however, on those pupils and families experience greatest deprivation, ie Deciles 1 and 2.
- In P3 and 5, pupils generally maintain good progress on Mathematics although there is currently a decline in P7, these pupils having had least experience of learning through programmes such as Big Maths. Attainment remains an area for further development, with Headteachers, seconded support staff and clusters making this a key aspect of their cluster and school improvement plans.

SQA performance in Literacy and Numeracy in Falkirk schools compared to national performance will become known in February 2017 when Insight data for school leavers are published.

Reporting Attainment of Looked-After Children

Updated data on the outcomes for Looked After Children in Falkirk will be reported in late September and will, therefore, be reported on at the next Performance Report.

Reporting attainment of this group presents a number of challenges as outlined below and which make it difficult to identify trends.

These challenges are as follows:

1. Cohorts of children looked after at home (LAAH)/looked after away from home (LAAFH) are very small, with the ability of just one or two children making a significant impact on the overall attainment data.
2. Cohorts change from year to year, thus the attainment of a LAAH/LAAFH cohort in, for example, 2015-6 may be very different from that of 2014-5.
3. The length of time that a child is LAAH/LAAFH varies considerably. A child may be Looked After for only part of a school session, making a correlation between the Looked After status and the child's attainment figure indeterminate.

To combat these challenges, Falkirk Council Children's Services ensures that a wide range of reliable data in addition to and including attainment data are gathered regarding each individual Looked After child in schools.

Schools also liaise extensively with Social Work colleagues and a wide range of partnerships to strive to ensure the best outcomes for all children according to their need, including those who are Looked After.

Schools continue to take the GIRFEC approach, engaging other agencies in Team Around the Child (TAC) meetings. Every child has an identified person who monitors their health and wellbeing, and general progress through the school.

Bespoke supports are provided for each child. Those for whom there is a Compulsory Order (Children's Hearings) as well as those without but for whom there is a Permanence Order, are looked after in a variety of settings. Agencies that are regularly engaged in provide bespoke support include: Speech and Language, CAMHS, secondary and primary support through Mariner Support Service and Oxbang School respectively; Cluaran; wider Barnardo's; Falkirk Family Support Service (FFSS) and Intensive FSS.

4.4.2 Priority Two: Improve Outcomes for Children Leaving Care

Looked After Children in Community Placements

The overall rate per thousand population of children and young people (under 18) of both looked after at home and away from home in Falkirk is lower than the Scottish average and compares favourably with our comparator local authorities. This may relate to the efficacy of our universal, early intervention and non-statutory services reducing the need for children to be looked after and accommodated.

Falkirk has a high proportion of looked after children in residential placements (January 2016-14.4%) compared to Scotland as a whole (July 2015-8.9%),

particularly in residential schools (4.4% v 2.5%) and “other residential” settings for example Care Visions (7.1% v 1.2%). It may be anticipated that as Falkirk has a lower rate of Looked After Children per head of population, a higher proportion of those who are looked after have their needs met through residential care. This is reflected in our rank of 4th highest local authority on % of residential placements for Looked After Children, but 6th ranked highest in residential care of under 18's per 1000 population (July 2015 figures; 10th ranked when our January 2016 figures are used).

However, the difference in Falkirk's use of residential care when compared with the national picture presents challenges and work is being undertaken to ensure increased use of community options. Furthermore, when residential care is required, we are increasing capacity locally to ensure that more young people can be placed within the Falkirk Council area. Some of the initiatives relating to these commitments are;

1. Kinship care being promoted to minimise the use of formal care options. We are currently supporting and paying twenty Kinship Carers of Looked After Children. Additionally, in response to the new guidance (Section 13 of the Children and Young People's (Scotland) Act 2104) we now have 79 Kinship Carers who have a section 11 order. The Section 11 carer orders are gradually increasing as we identify new carers eligible for support.
2. A Foster Carer advertising campaign was undertaken through payroll to include a message in all council employees' payslips in February 2016 ahead of the Foster Carers recruitment campaign in March.
3. Our contract with external Foster Care providers has been reviewed and the decision taken to retender with some changes to include cost benefits for sibling, long term and bulk placement provision. This tender will be issued imminently.
4. We have continued to recruit Foster Carers at an average rate of approximately five new carers per year. Unfortunately, however, this has only managed to offset carer depletion as a result of retirements. We are however reviewing our recruitment strategy and intend to embark upon a new communication campaign.
5. In relation to increasing Falkirk's residential provision within our Council area, we have contracted with FTS Care to provide eight additional placements. Furthermore we have increased provision at Care Visions' Westside Farm from four to five beds.

4.4.3 Our continued commitment to meeting the needs of all looked after children is demonstrated by 100% of looked after children and young person having a plan and this plan being reviewed through our statutory reviewing framework.

4.4.4 Priority Three: Infrastructure, Capacity and Transformational Change

Budget Savings 2016-17

Officers have made good progress in delivering the budget savings agreed at the Council Budget Meeting in February 2016. Children's Services Senior Leadership Team continually monitor this progress.

Review capacity to ensure infrastructure is adequate to deliver Early Years provision.

- The final early years campus at Bonnybridge Primary School has now been installed and provides an extended day service.
- Officers are currently working with the Scottish Futures Trust on early assessment work relating to the infrastructure challenges faced in relation to the Scottish Government's plans to increase early years provision to 1,140 hours by 2020.

Develop more Ebusiness and online solutions

This involves Channel Shift in conjunction with corporate services colleagues in Policy Technology and Improvement in areas of Children's Services, such as online enrolment; placing requests; and online school payments.

- The Audit and SSTAR Team are currently finalising their analytical work on processes, workloads and existing systems within schools. It is expected that the outcome will be to identify and prioritise processes that can be automated or improved by using e-solutions to improve efficiency.
- Education Scotland will soon be reporting their findings following an audit of schools' views on ways to reduce bureaucracy.
- The Service remains committed to reinforcing the benefits of CPD needs being met through the use of e-learning courses via the OLLIE platform. Priority has been given to Data Protection, Absence Management and Risk Assessment training courses.

Expand Kinnaird Primary School provision

This requires a more permanent solution given demographic pressures:

- Children's and Development Services have worked on submitting a bid for capital funds for this project within the next 3 year capital programme (2016/17-2018/19).
- Following the Council's Budget Meeting on 17 February, Officers will take this forward to the planning and design stage if the budget is approved.
- If approved, Children's Services will invite representatives from the Kinnaird PS Parent Council on to the wider design team.

5. UPDATE FROM LAST PERFORMANCE PANEL

5.1 There have been a number of significant challenges, risks and changes in Service pressures since our last report to Performance Panel. This section notes some of these:

- The Care Inspectorate has carried out a Joint Inspection of Services for Children in Falkirk and this has now been reported.
- Budget pressures have continued to impact on Children's Services as this service represents a high proportion of the Council's expenditure.
- The Scottish Government's paper "Delivering Excellence and Equity in Scottish Education", published during the summer of 2016, presents challenging timescales for schools and authorities, key elements of which include:
 - publication of school attainment data to parents in March 2017
 - introduction of new CfE-based Scottish Standardised Tests
 - closer partnerships with parents

- a review of governance of Scottish education with a view to legislation designed to increase centralised management and increased powers to head teachers.

6. IMPORTANT INDICATORS

- 6.1 Our Service has a suite of indicators that are required for statutory and business related purposes. We have identified 24 important indicators. We have provided information on all of our important indicators in the attached Performance Panel Statement. Indicators that are on target have comparative data for information. Indicators that are significantly below target or slightly below target have additional background information on the progress and improvement actions for each. Some indicators are marked as 'data only' and do not have targets, but these areas of activity impact on other Children's Service areas and so provide important contextual information.

Director of Children's Services

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Date:

Appendices

DRAFT PERFORMANCE PLAN

List of Background Papers:

None

DRAFT Children's Services – Performance Panel Statement – February to August 2016

Key Actions Progress



Action is significantly behind target.



Action is slightly behind target or in danger of not achieving deadline.



Action is on target.



Action is completed.








Data only indicator.





Key Priorities - Children


1. Raising Attainment

Action	Progress	Status
1.1 Increase the number of young people progressing to vocational opportunities through working with Forth Valley College.	The new school leavers destination data for 2015/16 will be published in October 2016. A new Opportunities for All Co-ordinator will be appointed, who will take this work forward to continue the positive trend.	
1.2 Develop a joint Creative Learning Strategy with Falkirk, Stirling and Clackmannanshire.	Due to staff and service changes with partners the strategy will no longer be written. We will continue to work in partnership to develop creative learning and will use the new National Creative Learning Plan as a guidance to steer our work.	
1.3 Work with practitioners to co-ordinate the creation of a prototype interdisciplinary learning framework	This task has been superseded by our work on the Falkirk Progression Pathways. These are progressing well - literacy, numeracy and Health and Well-Being are well underway with the rest of the curriculum to follow. It has become apparent that the creation of a set of Interdisciplinary pathways would be a valuable next step, and this will be written into the new service plan. The best way forward is to utilise practitioners who have taken part in the IDL progression framework project, to create a set of Interdisciplinary pathways. This will have to be done after the responsibilities of all are complete and with schools.	
1.4 Develop a framework to track the progress of children and young people across the broad general education and senior	This Action is currently in abeyance following the publication of the National Improvement Framework (NIF). Further national guidance and advice are awaited, specifically regarding the	







Action		Progress	Status
	phase in secondary schools	NIF key driver: Assessment of children's progress.	
1.5	Develop an authority framework for measuring attainment across the Broad General Education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This task has been overtaken by Scottish Government's publication of the National Improvement Framework, which, in January 2016, announced the introduction of a standardised testing programme for 2017 for Scotland's schools to supersede the Durham University programme currently used widely. This new testing regime overtakes any requirement for current testing to be moderated with other local authorities against Curriculum for Excellence levels, especially given the limited resources available to do this for only short-term gain. 	
1.6	Address literacy and numeracy priorities emerging from CEM results 2014/ 2015 in order provide relevant staff CPD opportunities.	<p>CEM data was analysed to identify teachers who have been consistently adding value in literacy and numeracy in their establishments. Following discussions with Headteachers, three primary class teachers and one secondary maths teacher have been identified and will work at the centre for two days per week for the next year. Their schools have been given additional staffing to allow this to happen.</p> <p>This group of teachers will work with Literacy and Numeracy 'leaders of learning' from each cluster in order to identify, design and deliver interventions, and build cluster capacity to close the equity gap in literacy and numeracy. These teachers will also support clusters with assessment and moderation processes. They will provide direct support to priority schools; particularly schools with high deprivation. The teachers will be line-managed by Gillian Campbell (Curriculum Support Officer)</p> <p>The post of Curriculum Support Officer for Literacy and Numeracy will be advertised in the coming session. Discussion are also taking place with the Speech and Language Therapy Service to consider how we can combine different approaches in the teaching of literacy.</p>	
1.7	Publish a 3 year "Developing the Young Workforce" plan in accordance with Scottish Government expectations.	This work is still ongoing due to outstanding decisions to be made by various partners which include Skills Development Scotland, the Employment and Training Unit and Forth Valley College. This work will be taken forward by the yet-to-be-recruited new Opportunities for All Co-ordinator.	
1.8	Implement a new Standard for Work Placements that Education Scotland is producing as part of 'Developing the Young Workforce'.	Since the launch of the standard the Co-ordinator has attended meetings with both Education Scotland and the World of Work Network. The Co-ordinator then met our school-based Work Placement Co-ordinators to determine their plans for session 16/17 and next steps in the implementation of the standard. All Co-ordinators agreed the need to create consistent paperwork for the preparation of pupils and employers before, during and after placements, including Personal Learning Plans. As the support materials become available for the new SQA Work Placement Units Co-ordinators will discuss further at a future meeting and use these materials to agree on the best paperwork and forms to use.	
1.9	Complete a Health & Wellbeing audit across all education establishments to create a plan addressing areas for development and priority and good practice.	The audit was completed in October 2015 and is currently being analysed.	






2. Improve Outcomes for Children Leaving Care

Action	Progress	Status
2.1 Support the Scrutiny Panel on Outcomes for Looked After Children and implement recommendations.	One final session has been arranged to gather information. Thereafter, the panel will be tasked to formulate and agree recommendations to be presented to the Scrutiny Committee.	
2.2 Contribute to the development of a new Corporate parenting Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The development of a Corporate Parenting Plan is now included within the draft Integrated Children's Services plan and forms one of its seven priorities. The Corporate Parenting Plan is a statutory requirement following the implementation of Part nine of the Children and Young Persons Scotland Act 2014 and it contains three priorities: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness Raising Development of the Champions Board Training Planning for Corporate Parenting is embedded in the new Children's Commission Structure with clearly defined governance and reporting routes. 	
2.3 Plan and implement arrangements for residential child care workforce to work towards degree level (SCQF Level 9) qualifications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The degree level (SCQF Level 9) qualifications are under development by SQA. The Workforce Development Manager is in close contact with SQA and SSSC as to when the qualification will be available and launched. Residential childcare staff in Falkirk have the full qualifications to meet the current required level for SSSC Registration. Each residential child care worker will have an individual learning plan/pathway to enable them to move towards the Level 9 qualification. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) is a key principle underpinning the Standard and will make a significant contribution to gaining the required number of credits at SCQF level 9 for the existing workforce. <p>Timescales for implementation:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Managers and supervisors : From October 2017 Five years from the date of re-registration New starts : From October 2017 Five years from the date registered Workers : From October 2019 Five years from the date of your re-registration 	
2.4 Commission services for children and young people with disabilities with a particular focus on those young people who are approaching school leaving age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Public Service Improvement Framework self-evaluation exercise was undertaken within the required timeframe and an action plan developed to improve transitions from children to adult services. The Early Bird Approach for parents of young people diagnosed with ASD is now embedded with positive evaluation and feedback. This approach will be rolled out to older children. A funding bid to pilot capacity building for young people with autism moving to adulthood was successful and a befriending service which assists young people with the transition to 	

Action	Progress	Status
	independence has been developed.	
2.5 Provide appropriate support to young people who are looked after and those previously looked after.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our local authority children's homes continue to receive very positive inspection results and grades. Our contracted internal residential homes similarly have received positive inspections throughout the course of the year. • We have continued to focus attention on foster care recruitment and work has commenced to develop a standalone supported carer scheme, which offers support to children as they transition to independent living. • We have increased our Westside Farm provision in partnership with Care Visions from a four to five bedded children's home. • We have contracted with FTS Care, enabling us to provide an additional six placements for young people within the Falkirk Council area. • In response to the Children and Young Persons Scotland Act 2014 our established Leaving Care Service is subject to review and development to ensure that it is able to deliver Aftercare to a cohort of older young people and also deliver Continuing Care services. The service has utilised a number of innovative approaches and secured external funding to develop peer mentoring. 	

3. Infrastructure, Capacity and Transformational Change

Action	Progress	Status
3.1 Social Work Information System	The inaugural meeting of the SWIS replacement Board took place on 23 rd August. At the meeting, it was agreed to recruit a Project Lead together with arranging a series of presentations from well-known external suppliers of social work systems. The presentations will be used as priming sessions to allow a greater understanding of product availability and to prepare requirements for a new system. The presentations will be arranged for September/October.	
3.2 Deliver on budget cuts 2015/16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieved Whilst the pace of delivering the individual elements of the budget cuts was different, the Service overall delivered on achieving the total savings and also achieved an underspend position at the 15/16 year end. 	
3.3 Agree budget cuts 2016/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achieved. All budget cuts for the Service were agreed at the Council's budget meeting in February 2016. 	
3.4 Introduce centralised admissions system / process for nursery pupils and consolidate early years capacity planning in central team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - January 2016: Centralised enrolments process underway for second year running. - Further work planned in 2016 re: alignment with, and further centralisation of, nursery enrolments process and the development of an online facility for placing requests. - September 2016: Delays in progress due to 5 month+ vacancy in Forward Planning Officer role. New Forward Planning Officer must concentrate on 2017 enrolment process and learn the job before this task can be re-initiated. Online placing requests implementation will not be possible until corporate systems are available and priority processes have been completed by other services. Estimated delivery of any further significant development in this area will be 2018. 	
3.5 Review capacity to ensure infrastructure is adequate to deliver Early Years provision.	Bonnybridge Early Years Campus, opened in August 2016, addresses the need for an extended day, all year provision in each community ward across Falkirk. The infrastructure demand in relation to meeting the need to increase to 1140 hours by 2020 has been audited. Discussion with Scottish Future Trust have begun with potential pilots to be organised showcasing a varied and flexible approach to Early learning and Childcare in Falkirk. Parent Consultation re 600 hours is now complete and results and potential areas for action are identified and submitted to CSSLT.	
3.6 Review and improve the use of MIS within the service and ensure our ICT software, hardware and infrastructure is up to date and meets current business and curricular need.	A review by Internal Audit of SEEMiS for both licencing and Security Controls received a positive report, with some remedial actions. As a result of the Audit, a System Security Statement and Access Control Policy have been created and approved. A resilient data centre has now been implemented by SEEMiS, providing automatic failover	

Action	Progress	Status
	<p>should an issue arise.</p> <p>A new SEEMIS online help portal has been established, allowing designated users to log, track and review issues. In addition, the Support Systems Team has created training videos to support schools in a more sustainable way.</p> <p>A pilot of Groupcall, the new parent communications portal, was undertaken in 5 establishments. Some positive results have been achieved, with a reduction in the use of paid texts and an increase in the use of parental email for non-urgent messaging. A parental app was also in trial at one establishment. As a result, Groupcall will be rolled out more widely in the new school session.</p>	
3.7 Develop and implement more e-business and online solutions supporting all service users including parents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council's Channel Shift Group has now selected and procured a product to support Channel Shift in the Council. The product, Firmstep, is now being implemented in other Services. • Children's Services has identified some areas for this work: Online Enrolment and Placing Requests. 	
3.8 Develop a model that supports and allows community asset transfers (community halls and community centres per budget decision)	<p>We have developed a model based on usage figures and forecasts for 2015/2016. This has resulted in identifying the least used community halls. The hall users and management committees have been informed and meetings have taken place to explore either closure or CAT (Community Asset Transfer).</p>	
3.9 In response to demographic growth – expand capacity in Kinnaird PS	<p>Project is on track for completion for the start of the school term in July 2018.</p>	
3.10 In response to demographic growth – expand capacity in Larbert HS	<p>September 2016 - Met with Architecture and Design Scotland (August 2016) who will be facilitating the design and planning process for enlargement of Larbert HS. Delivery will be phased from Summer 2017 onwards.</p>	
3.11 Build new ASN secondary school in Grangemouth	<p>- Hubco Stage 1 Report was submitted in Sept 2015 and approved by Falkirk Council in October 2015. The timescale for the new build is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - planning permission granted December 2015 - stage 2 almost complete (Jan 2016) - Stage 2 report anticipated mid-Feb 2016 - Advance works anticipated Feb-April 2016 - Financial close expected by mid April - construction start expected May 2015 - construction expected to finish July 2017 - school opening planned for August 2017 	

Important Indicators on Target – Children’s Services

		2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Target	Benchmark
		Value	Value	Value		
1	EDU_ECO_025 % of school leavers attaining Level 4 in Literacy	88.5%	91.8%	Not yet available	90%	Virtual Comparator 94.6% Scotland 93.5%
2	EDU_ECO_026 % of school leavers attaining Level 4 in Numeracy	78.5%	82.2%	Not yet available	82%	Virtual Comparator 89.1% Scotland 93.5%
3	EDU_ECO_027 % of school leavers attaining Level 5 in Literacy	69.1%	71.7%	Not yet available	71.5%	Virtual Comparator 77.1% Scotland 74.6%
4	EDU_ECO_029 % of school leavers gaining 3 or more Highers	42.8%	43.7%	Not yet available	46%	Virtual Comparator 49.0% Scotland 46.6%
5	EDU_ECO_030 % of school leavers gaining 5 or more Highers	30.4%	30.7%	Not yet available	33%	Virtual Comparator 34.6% Scotland 32.4%
6	SWK_CHF_LAC_02a Rate per 1000 population of children looked after at home (LAAH)	4.6	3.6	3.8	Data Only	Scotland 2014/15 = 4.0
7	SWK_CHF_LAC_03a Rate per 1000 population of children looked away from home (LAAF)	7.1	8	7.7	Data Only	Scotland 2014/15 - 10.9
8	SWK_CHF_LAC_06 Proportion of young people who are looked after who have a plan	100%	100%	100% (<i>tbc</i>)	100%	Scottish average 2014/15 - 97.0%
9	SWK_CJS_REP_01 Percentage of Criminal Justice Social Work Reports submitted to court by the due date	99.9%	98.8%	97.5%	100.0%	No benchmark
10	SWK_CJS_CPO_02 Percentage of individuals on new CPOs with supervision requirement seen by a supervising officer within one week	92.8%	92.9%	94.1%	100.0%	No benchmark
11	SWK_CHF_CRP_01 Proportion of complaints completed by Children & Families Social Work and Criminal Justice Service within 20 days	77.2%	58.3%	73.5%	70.0%	Council Standard

Important Indicators slightly below target – Children 

		2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Target	Benchmark
		Value	Value	Value		
12	EDU_ECO_028 % of school leavers attaining Level 5 in Numeracy	60.9%	59.6%	Not yet available	63%	Virtual Comparator 64.7% Scotland 62.5%

Progress

Insight publication of data pertaining to school leavers takes place in February of each year, which is also when Insight publishes data relating to Numeracy and Literacy. An update will, therefore, be reported in the next Performance Panel statement.

Challenges in identifying a suitable officer with the appropriate specialism to lead Numeracy have caused some corresponding delay in taking forward this initiative. However, the Subject Development Group for Mathematics continues to identify good practice with regard both to Senior Phase and the Broad general Education years for dissemination within departments across the Council, supported by a Curriculum Support Officer.

Improvement Action

Two seconded teachers have now been identified to lead Numeracy with effect from the start of the current academic session. Focus will be on both primary and secondary sectors. With regard to primary attainment in mathematics in the upper stages, the focus will be on enabling schools to build on good practice in the early and middle stages.

In secondary schools the focus will be on ensuring that courses in S1 to S3 (i) build on prior learning: and (ii) articulate fully with Senior Phase courses.

		2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Target	Benchmark
		Value	Value	Value		
13	SWK_CHF_LAC_04a Proportion of all looked after children in community placements	81.6%	83.8%	85.6% (@31/01/16)	91.1%	Scottish average 2014/15 - 91.1%

Progress

Falkirk has higher proportions of looked after children in residential placements (14.4%) compared to Scotland as a whole (8.9%), particularly in residential schools (4.4% v 2.5%) and 'other residential' settings such as Care Visions (7.1% v 1.2%).

Falkirk residential placements - 31/07/14 – 68 (10 in Falkirk Residential Home); 31/07/15 – 59 (9); 31/01/16 - 53 (9)

It may be expected that, since we have lower rates of looked after children, a slightly higher proportion in Falkirk may have high tariff residential needs. Indeed this is reflected in our rank 4th highest local authority on % of residential placements but 6th ranked on highest rate of under 18 population in residential placements (latest national figures from July 2015; 10th ranked when our January 2016 figures are compared with those).

Kinship care placements are beginning to increase: 31/07/15 – 30; 31/01/16 – 36

Improvement Action

- 1 Kinship care continues to be a placement of choice to avoid formal care. We are currently supporting and paying 20 Kinship carers of looked after children, and in addition, in the light of the new guidance on section 13 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, 79 kinship carers with a section 11 order. The section 11 carer numbers are gradually increasing as we catch up on the new carers eligible for support.
- 2 We have continued to recruit foster carers and have averaged around half a dozen carers per year. This though has only kept our numbers at the same level due to retirements. Over 2016, our recruitment has not been as successful, with both campaigns attracting only a handful of enquires some of which were for respite rather than full time care.
- 3 The Council contract with external foster carer providers has been reviewed and a decision was taken in January to retender with some minor changes to include cost benefits for sibling placements, long term placement and bulk placements provision. The procurement process has encountered delays but we are hopeful that the tender will go out imminently.

		2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Target	Benchmark
15	EDU_EQU_025 Tariff score of lowest attaining 20% of School Leavers	127	127	Not yet available	135	Virtual Comparator = 191 Scotland = 168

Progress

Insight publication of data pertaining to school leavers takes place in February of each year, which is also when Insight publishes Tariff scores. An update will, therefore, be reported in the next Performance Panel statement. The reason for figures being significantly lower than benchmark are: (i) Insight does not take account of tariff scores gained by pupils in a number of Falkirk Council schools who were presented for Standard Grade when they were in S3. Although this practice ceased after 2014, the impact of this omission is still evident in the apparently low figures given in Insight; (ii) pupils in lowest attaining 20% often follow one or more courses for which tariff points are not accounted by Insight but which, for these pupils, are more suited in providing them with the potential for entering a positive destination

Improvement Action

Education officers, along with head teachers, are now reviewing the detailed results for the Council's secondary schools in order to make a fuller analysis of the outcomes of the 2016 exam diet. Within each secondary school, faculty heads are analysing examination results and agreeing strategies for improvement with their departmental staff. This will then be incorporated into school and faculty improvement planning.

Faculty heads from across the authority meet together within Curriculum Management Groups (CMGs) to identify strategies for improvement. Subject Development Groups (SDGs) also meet to promote improvement in individual subjects. Development work across all CMGs and SDGs is co-ordinated by a Curriculum Support Officer with responsibility for secondary education.

Authority officers will hold a review meeting in each secondary school early in the current academic session. This will comprise detailed examination of attainment at whole school and subject level. Improvements in attainment will be acknowledged and strategies for further improvement agreed for schools to incorporate into their school and faculty improvement plans. The attainment and achievements of vulnerable groups such as looked after children and pupils otherwise at risk of underperforming will also be scrutinised.

		2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Target	Benchmark
16	SWK_CHF_RSP_01 Number of overnight respite weeks provided to children with a disability	231.7	210.4	199.3	>210.4	Scottish Government Concordat 2010/11 – 211.7
Progress <p>Tayavalla (Action for Children) are the largest providers of overnight respite care accounting for 56% of the service in 2015/16 and this proportion has grown over the last 3 years. The number of weeks provided during that period: 2013/14 - 118.3 (51% of overnights provided); 2014/15 – 108.8 (52%); 2015/16 – 112.6 (56%)</p> <p>The level of respite care provided directly by the Council’s Family Based Short Breaks (FBSB) service has fallen over the same period: 2013/14 - 76.3 (33% of overnights provided); 2014/15 – 67.3 (32%); 2015/16 – 53.4 (27%)</p> <p>The reduction of FBSB provision can be accounted for by the fact that a number of carers have retired, are on maternity leave or have been de-registered for other reasons. The CWDT has not had capacity to undertake a specific recruitment drive to increase the numbers of FBSB Carers due to an increase in demand in other areas of the workload which have had to be prioritised. Additionally there is an increase in referrals of children with very complex physical and medical needs which are difficult to meet in the context of FBSB. Also, a small but increasing number of parents prefer not to have their children away from home overnight.</p>						
Improvement Action <p>Commitment has been given to increasing capacity to enable CWDT to undertake specific recruitment and assessment of FBSB Carers</p>						

		2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Target	Benchmark
17	SWK_CHF_RSP_02 Number of daytime respite weeks provided to children with a disability	521.1	447.3	372.2 (awaiting Direct Payments info)	>447.3	Scottish Government Concordat 2010/11 - 587.7

Progress

Provision has fallen across all provided/purchased services over the last 3 years –

	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Family Based Short Breaks (FBSB)	215.41	191.83	150.86
CwD - Small Befriending Group	59.84	60.22	59.54
CwD - Activity Scheme (Easter & Summer)	106.51	99.77	95.26
CwD - Youth Clubs / Art Group	21.50	17.40	14.58
Crossroads	53.33	55.07	51.02
Self Directed Support	55.60	20.47	25.75
Others	8.70	2.55	0.97

Notes:

1) 1 week = 52.5 hours (Scottish Government definition for reporting purposes)

2) CwD = Children with Disabilities Team


Improvement Action

We aim to maintain as many children with their families and in their communities as possible. Day time respite and support will continue to be promoted and utilised when appropriate as it is both good practice and provides a cost effective intervention when compared with overnight respite. Our developed Saturday day sessions provide a direct alternative to overnight respite allowing parents a significant period of respite whilst their child is being cared for.

Important Indicators – Data Only

		2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	Target	Benchmark
		Value	Value	Value		
18	EDU_EQU_017 % of LAAH school leavers achieving level 4 in Literacy	22.2%	50.0%	Not yet available	Target not appropriate -	Although the performance of Looked After Children is a key priority for Children's Services, target setting and benchmarking are not always appropriate, as the cohort of Looked After Children is small and constantly shifting. A change in circumstances of even one or two children can impact either positively or negatively on the attainment of the cohort as a whole. The ability of one child can have an enormous effect (positive or negative) on the average performance of the whole cohort.
19	EDU_EQU_018 % of LAAFH school leavers achieving level 4 in Literacy	66.7%	64.7%	Not yet available	Target not appropriate	
20	EDU_EQU_019 % of LAAH school leavers achieving level 4 in Numeracy	11.1%	30.0%	Not yet available	Target not appropriate	
21	EDU_EQU_020 % of LAAFH school leavers achieving level 4 in Numeracy	47.1%	35.3%	Not yet available	Target not appropriate	
22	EDU_EQU_026 % of LAAH school leavers entering a positive destination	44.4%	50.0%	Not yet available	Target not appropriate	
23	EDU_EQU_027 % of LAAFH school leavers entering a positive destination	76.5%	52.9%	Not yet available	Target not appropriate	
24	SWK_CHF_CP_01 & 01a The number and rate per 1000 referrals dealt with by social work under Child Protection procedures	218 & 7.7	207 & 7.3	197 & 7.0	Target not appropriate	No benchmark

Inspections (during period: 1/1/16 – 30/6/16)

Title	Update	Status
Integrated Children's Services Inspection	Report published. Action plan being drawn up.	
California Primary School	Report to be published shortly and consequent Action Plan will be drawn up.	