

Children's Services Annual Performance Assessment 2005: 'Areas for Improvement' Action Plan

The following table lists each of the 'Areas for Improvement' identified in the 2005 Annual Performance Assessment, summarises the rationale and evidence for each, and provides details of the strategy and actions in place to address each area.

PRIORITY	RATIONALE/AUDIT EVIDENCE	STRATEGY/ACTION
STAY SAFE		
Ensure appropriate information and delivery of social care services to BME groups	CSCI inspection identified need to review access to services for BME groups "The council should build on the work already undertaken to prevent exclusion from services by: Identifying, consulting and fully engaging black and minority ethnic children and families across the county;" CSCI recommendation 2.11	Engaging with BME groups has been identified as a key priority in the Equalities Impact Assessments. A strategy for engagement will be completed by January 2006 involving the Equalities Officers and the Participation Unit. Current positive developments include the involvement of BME groups and children and young people in the development of the CYPP.
Increase the number of children supported within their extended family as an alternative to, or appropriate form of, care placement	CSCI inspection issue The council should review its Kinship Care Policy to ensure that levels of allowances are appropriate and that guidance on flexibility and discretion is clear CSCI recommendation 2.2	A review of services is under way with the following recommendations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Additional funding to bring Family & Friends and Residence Order Allowances into line with kinship foster carers' weekly allowances. ➤ Further increase the capacity to hold family group conferences at an earlier stage, when respite with wider family and friends could prevent breakdown and admission into care. Consider the establishment of designated staff to support S17 Family & Friends, Private Fostering and Residence Order placements.
Improve transition planning for children and young people with disabilities	CSCI inspection issue "The experience of families in respect of transitions planning was variable. We saw examples where this had been approached in a proactive timely manner, but also heard that this was not consistently the case for all families caring for disabled young people." CSCI inspection report 7.9	Progress is being made to ensure that every young person has a transition plan at 16+ and that these plans are scrutinised twice yearly at a joint meeting between Children and Adult Services to ensure planning and problem solving at an early stage. From those meetings there are also 6 monthly cross divisional meetings which are designed to find solutions if anything goes awry with the transition process following the Transition Planning Meetings. There are also regular meetings between the Deputy Director CSD and the Director of Adult Services to discuss emerging themes, and issues that both services need to consider in service planning and delivery. 100% of 16+ disabled young people have

transition plans in place.

BE HEALTHY

Increase rate of sign-up to Healthy Schools scheme

- Currently there are 55 primary, special and secondary schools with Healthy School status in East Sussex and 26 schools working towards accreditation (41% in total)
- The national target is for 50% of all schools to have Healthy School status by December 2006 (97 East Sussex schools)
- Nationally there is acknowledgment that PSHE teams in different local authorities have varied in the rigour and robustness of procedures used to accredit schools and East Sussex has been more rigorous than most – this has had an impact on our figures – however nationally new rigour is being introduced

- The PSHE and Healthy Schools Team is actively and successfully recruiting more schools to work towards the award
- The team is working with partners across the CSA and Health to raise awareness of the award and to gain support from a range of multi-agency partners for the project
- It is anticipated that the national target will be met by the deadline

Reduce teenage pregnancy and the incidence of STIs among young people

Above national average rates of under 18 conception in Hastings and Eastbourne; young people want better information about where to get advice, and more locally accessible advice

2004 interim conception reduction target is likely to be reached (2004 figures not published until 2006). Hotspot activity. Hastings and parts of Eastbourne but also "pockets" in Newhaven & Peacehaven. Activities include:

- 30.11.05 - conference jointly organised by CSD and Hastings PCT to raise awareness of needs/services in Hastings.
- Rolling out Chlamydia screening programme across the PCT area.
- Working with the PCT to support and accompany young women having a termination (procedure carried out in Brighton & Hove for Hastings residents);
- A young women's YDS Group is being set up in Hastings;
- PSHE team is focussing its efforts to get schools up to the silver standard for "Healthy Schools"; targeting schools in the hotspot areas
- School Nurse mobile phone/texting advice; making school nurses accessible for advice in a confidential/discreet way; operates in Hastings, being extended to Eastbourne.
- Supported accommodation options for young parents exist across the county.
- With Connexions, establishing a "Futures after Birth" project in Eastbourne. (One already established in Hastings.)

Strengthen preventative services for BME groups

CSCI inspection identified need for review of appropriateness of services
 "The council should build on the work already undertaken to prevent exclusion from services by:

A Matching Needs and Services Audit has been commissioned from Ryan, Tunnard and Brown to identify the reasons for the numbers of BME looked after children being higher than that of

	Conducting an analysis of the disproportionate numbers of children from black and minority ethnic communities who were looked after, in need, and on the child protection register and developing a strategy to address this; “ CSCI recommendation 2.11	the general population. This audit will review 100 referrals to Social Care and 50 Looked After Children files to consider how to improve early intervention services for BME families. The audit will include consultation with BME families about their views on services that would be of assistance.
Improve the “emotional literacy” and well-being of children and families; extend access to CAMHS service	Longstanding shared priority for agencies, seen as central to preventing a wide range of problems from underachievement and bullying to crime and severe mental health problems; national target to expand CAMHS	The CAMHS Strategy 2005-08 will be signed off by the CAMHS Commissioning Partnership on 21.12.05. This provides a framework for commissioning and delivery of integrated CAMHS across agencies. Implementation plans and service level agreements will be developed in early '06, and progress monitored through the CAMHS Commissioning Partnership, reporting to CTEG. New investments include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Expanding the CAMHS Primary Mental Health Service ➤ Outreach workers to support service users and families in non clinical settings ➤ A CAMHS youth participation project to develop user involvement in service planning and development ➤ Access to a specialist CAMHS risk assessment within 24 hours of admission to A&E or paediatric wards including weekends and bank holidays ➤ Roll out of the community support service for SLD/MLD C&YP with challenging behaviour and their families

ENJOY AND ACHIEVE

Improved levels of attainment at all Key Stages, particularly in coasting schools and schools below national floor targets	Analysis of 2005 results and trend data identifies these target areas as priorities for improvement: <p>Foundation Stage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted to report that the Foundation Stage is good or better in all schools inspected; • reduce the number of settings where significant weaknesses are identified. <p>Key Stage 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attainment in East Sussex is at or above the national average in 2006; • improved standards in Reading at KS1 L2B and L2; • focus on identification and training aspects in the teaching of writing that need improving at KS1; • closing the gap at L2+ between reading and writing; 	Agreed strategies to achieve priorities: <p>Foundation Stage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop quality assurance systems and increase shared knowledge of settings <p>Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRAS support plans - schools in MSSR categories 3, 4 and 5 all have individual support plans detailing the support provided by the authority to bring about school improvement and raise attainment • ISP programme for identified schools - in 2005/6 the authority is also offering the opportunity to take part in the additional intensifying support programme to 20 schools in higher MSSR categories but whose data shows the scope for raising
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- identifying reasons for sustained low results and also falling results in some schools.

Key Stage 2

- progress in East Sussex leads to attainment at or above the national average in 2006;
- reduction in the number of schools attaining below the floor targets for English and mathematics in 2006;
- reduction in the number of schools with serious weaknesses (notice to improve) or in special measures at KS2;
- Ofsted reports that leadership and management is good or better in all primary schools inspected;
- focus on identification and training aspects in the teaching of writing that need improving at KS2;
- closing the gap at L4+ between reading and writing;
- closing the gap between performance in English and mathematics and the targets set by schools;
- identifying reasons for sustained low results and also falling results in some schools.

Key Stage 3

The following analysis of 2005 results has informed the strategies for securing improvement.

- English results level 5+ in 2005 increased by 2% over 2004 and are in line with the national average
- Mathematics results fell back from a relatively high point in 2004 to 74% which is in line with the national average
- Science results remained static in the face of a national rise of 2% and are now 2% below the national average
- 8 schools fell below floor targets (ie less than 50% of pupils achieving level 5+ in English, mathematics and science)
- however, value added was poor in a number of schools who achieved above floor targets

Key Stage 4

- Final figures for pupil performance including all GNVQ results are not yet available – all KS4 data remains subject to validation
- However, it seems that the final ES figure for the percentage of pupils attaining 5A*-C grades will not exceed 55% and will be just over 1% below the national average, having been just ahead of the national average in 2004
- 5A*-C including English and mathematics = 41% approx with 2

attainment

- Provision of data to schools including Fischer Family Trust analyses
- Introduction of Stratis to support SEF completion and enhance school self-evaluation through the use of MSSR
- Reassess priorities for consultant deployment:
 - Spend less time on those 'traditional' SRAS schools that have demonstrated capacity for improvement, and remove them from the list where appropriate.
 - Provide more support for the 'coasting' schools, where the largest gains in performance are likely to be made.
- Design and implement an East Sussex project to provide practical guidance and support to schools covering the key areas of:
 - Introduce Learning Entitlement;
 - curriculum planning;
 - assessment;
 - tracking and reporting;
 - Intervention.
- Consultants and advisers work together to ensure that all the relevant schools actively engage with the ISP initiative. The aim is to ensure that all schools have secure procedures in place for identifying and tackling underachievement.

Key Stage 3

- Enhance leadership within the secondary strategy by offering an opportunity for consultants with a proven track record of leadership and impact to act as team leaders, one for each of the two sub-teams, under the direction of the secondary strategy manager – their role will be to focus the efforts of the team on the most effective means of raising standards
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 - Provide more support for the 'coasting' schools, where the largest gains in performance are likely to be made.
- Design and implement an East Sussex project to provide practical guidance and support to schools covering the key areas of:
 - curriculum planning;
 - assessment;

schools' figures on this measure below 20%

- the % of pupils attaining 5A*-G grades at least including English and mathematics rose by 1% and is in line with the national average
- the number of pupils gaining at least 1A*- G rose to 96.7%, which is higher than the national average and in line with performance of SN

- tracking and reporting;
- Intervention.
- This major initiative to be aligned with current guidance from the Secondary Strategy in the document 'Tracking for Success', and the subject strand network meetings.

Key Stage 4

1. Increase the impact of the curriculum collaboration co-ordinators in securing more effective partnership arrangements between schools as part of developments of the Key Stage 4 curriculum to improve the match of provision to the range of learner needs.
2. Increase the focus of the strategic travel to learn area group in the Lewes area on collaborative working to raise Key Stage 4 standards and improve performance at all levels, and in the Wealden area to increase the numbers of students gaining 5A* to G grades including English and mathematics.
3. Increase the level of challenge for traditionally better performing schools which can be identified as 'coasting', particularly in the Lewes strategic travel to learn area, through increased monitoring and support from the School Improvement Service and Sussex Learning and Skills Council.
4. Ensure that the secondary strategy team effectively extends its focus into Key Stage 4 and enables schools to build on improvements secured in Key Stage 3 including:
 - providing guidance and support to enable improved provision leading to raised standards in core subjects, particularly English and mathematics;
 - improving the effectiveness of intervention strategies to ensure all students are able to achieve their targets;
 - ensuring that all students who gained level 6 in Key Stage 3 national tests gain at least a GCSE grade C;
 - increasing the proportion of students who achieved a level 5 in Key Stage 3 who gain a GCSE grade C pass.
5. Disseminate good practice which has supported improvement in GCSE/Section 96 performance in East Sussex schools including:
 - curriculum modification and development in Bexhill High

		<p>School, The Bishop Bell Church of England School and Eastbourne Technology College;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ improving performance at the more inclusive performance indicators of 5A* to G grades and students leaving Year 11 without any qualifications in Hastings.
<p>Improve levels of attainment of 5 A-G grades including English and mathematics</p>	<p>The following analysis of 2005 results has informed the strategies for securing improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2005, 87.3% of pupils gained at least 5A*-G grades, including English and mathematics (figure includes special schools) which is in line with the national average figure • This is a 1% improvement on the 2004 figure of 86% • Nationally there was no improvement from 2004 to 2005 on this measure • However, East Sussex performance is the lowest in the statistical neighbour group • The Lewes and the Wealden areas of the county had the lowest added value on this measure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment is taking place currently to fill English and mathematics consultant vacancies in the SIS secondary strategy team • Support to English and mathematics departments will focus on schools where performance is weak and where there is poor value added • Further support will be offered to leading mathematics and English departments to improve their weaker counterparts, especially targeting subject leaders • ASTs will be deployed to support weaker teachers • Partnership working between the recruitment team in the CSA and the SIS will work to improve the ability of the county's schools to recruit quality subject specialists, especially in mathematics and quality subject leaders
<p>Improve attainment of children entitled to FSM; also attainment in target geographical areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attainment for FSM pupils in KS2 tests in 2005 was significantly below the average for all pupils (18% below in English, 15% in mathematics and 12% in science); however, the 2005 value added scores from KS1 to KS2 show very little difference for FSM pupils (99.6 for FSM pupils and 99.8 for all pupils) • in 2005, the value added score from KS2-4 for pupils entitled to FSM was significantly lower than that for pupils overall (944 for pupils entitled to FSM as opposed to 1,001 for pupils not eligible) • this follows the national and local pattern of previous years <p>Geographical variation in performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • data supports the notion that geographical variation within the authority is too great; • actions needed to raise attainment in targeted geographical areas; • many of the highest attaining schools show the lowest value added rates of achievement; • geographical variation is inconsistent between key stages; • in 2005, the areas with the lowest level of KS2 attainment were Hastings (English, mathematics and science) and Eastbourne (English); Wealden showed the highest levels of attainment in all 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The autumn target setting visits being made by contact advisers in 2005 to all schools have a specific focus on targets for pupils from vulnerable groups, including pupils entitled to FSM, and the effectiveness of provision made to reach targets set • visits to approx 40 schools in all phases are being made jointly by the contact adviser and a member of the CSA support services to increase the expertise available to challenge and support schools in this process • all schools where practice is considered inadequate in terms of progress of vulnerable pupils will receive guidance and support <p>Geographical variation in performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary consultants and advisers work together to ensure that all schools actively engage with the school improvement agenda to identify and tackle underachievement. • Primary strategy learning networks and website used to share good and successful practice across the county • from January 2006, the focus of the secondary strategy team will be on 'coasting schools' where attainment may be close to

	<p>subjects;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • value added scores from KS1 to KS2 in 2005 showed very little variation across the county, with Eastbourne and Lewes slightly below the county average and Hastings, Rother and Wealden slightly above; • in 2005, the highest value was added between KS2 and 4 in the Eastbourne area of the county (1,023) with the lowest being added in Lewes (982) and Hastings (977) – value added in Rother at 989 was below the county average of 994. 	<p>or above the national average but where added value is weak – the Lewes area will be targeted</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leading departments in geographical areas will be supported by the SIS to increase their capacity to improve their weaker counterparts • AST support will also be targeted at underachieving departments in coasting schools
<p>Improved attendance at school, in particular reduction in unauthorised absences</p>	<p>Consistent improvement overall for last 4 years but unauthorised absence is still an issue in many schools. This is a result of more robust procedures within schools for authorising absence. This has also allowed the EWS to use its statutory powers more effectively.</p>	<p>EWS and CfBT Contact Advisers working together to support schools in setting challenging targets for improving attendance. EWS reporting to CfBT on curriculum issues which may be impacting on attendance in individual schools.</p> <p>An increased number of schools using the Attendance Panel approach - particularly in primary sector. This will increase prosecutions and therefore more children will be back in school.</p> <p>Implementing fixed penalty notices, particularly for unauthorised term time holidays - schools have been sent procedures for issuing fixed term penalties particularly in relation to unauthorised holidays in term time. Evaluation of Code of Practice to take place in Summer Term in order to further develop the use of FPNs.</p> <p>Evaluation of impact of prosecution currently taking place. Improving school and EWS effectiveness in using IT to support attendance and further develop EWS database to improve monitoring of effectiveness.</p> <p>The EWS is developing a good practice manual for schools which will be published in the coming academic year to support schools in improving attendance.</p> <p>Piloting an attendance reward system in 3 primary schools: a system called Cool Cats which aims to make attendance a whole school issue and reward good attendance in order to support primary children in maintaining good attendance. The Cool Cats system will be evaluated in the final term of 2005/6 and a report produced for schools with a possibility of making the system</p>

		available to all primary schools in 2006/7.
Children with SEN have better coordinated, earlier support, within their own communities wherever possible (reducing agency placements and appeals)	<p>Crucial to effective inclusion of, and achievement by, children with SEN and a key priority of the Government's SEN Strategy</p> <p>We have the highest number of appeals per 10,000 population of any English county and also very high pupil numbers in special and agency schools</p>	Implementation of the SEN Review involves a wide range of actions designed to improve local provision and reduce external placements/appeals.

MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION		
Reduce the number of looked after children receiving final warnings, reprimands or convictions	Numbers have been above national and SN comparators. The data for Q2 this year shows a reduction in the numbers of LAC offending compared to Q1 from 25 to 22. The % ratio has gone up in Q2 compared to Q1, however, from 9% to 9.6% because the overall numbers of LAC aged 10-17 fell in these 3 months from 277 to 229.	There is strong evidence emerging of the positive impact that the introduction of restorative justice has had on reducing looked after children offending in Lansdowne House over the past year – this will be extended to all the new smaller residential units being created as part of the children's residential accommodation strategy. Consideration is also being given to extending the restorative justice approach into fostering.
Increase the number of BME carers with whom BME children in care can be placed, as appropriate	<p>CSCI inspection issue</p> <p>"Placement choice remained restricted for some children from black and minority ethnic communities, including those with a dual heritage" CSCI inspection report 5.15</p>	<p>Recruitment of BME carers has been a priority for the Fostering and Adoption service. The strategy has involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working with BME staff to identify ideas and best practice for recruiting BME carers. Proactive face-to-face communication with BME people at BME events. <p>4 BME carers have been recruited since April 2005.</p> <p>There has also been an emphasis on helping white carers have greater understanding of the needs of BME children. There has been a meeting with the Fostering Association to inform them about racist incident reporting and provide advice about cultural identity. The issue of BME children will be included in the next Foster Care Association Conference and information has been included in a newsletter sent to all carers.</p>
Increase the availability of respite care for disabled young people	<p>CSCI Inspection Issue</p> <p>"The council and health partners should involve parents and children in reviewing the need to expand the range and choice of respite care options." CSCI Inspection recommendation 2.4</p>	Capital resources have been identified to develop the respite care services at Dorset Road. Over sixty carers for disabled children were invited to participate in the planning of this service (both via a questionnaire and by joining a planning group). A parents group has now been set up which will be a focus group for the development of all respite care services. An annual survey/questionnaire of parents and carers to check their

satisfaction with the service they receive had a 50% return rate with most stating their satisfaction and appreciation of the service. Where there were suggestions for change these will be incorporated into the re-provision. Young people are consulted about aspects of service delivery via a pictorial version of "viewpoint" and by "talking mats", a system developed by the FISS team for consultation with severely disabled children.

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

<p>Improve the sensitivity of services to differing cultural needs of children and young people in the care of the Council</p>	<p>CSCI inspection raised issues: "Although the council were working towards level three status managers were realistic that there remained a significant agenda within the action plan to be more responsive to users cultural needs, and the councils own impact assessment highlighted this. Our findings concurred with this." CSCI Inspection report 7.</p>	<p>A specialist social worker has been employed to work with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children and there is currently a small working group looking at the needs of BME and LGBT young people in care. Also discussions re CSA training and awareness raising sessions.</p>
<p>Access to appropriate post 16 provision in specific areas</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two post 16 area reviews have taken place, one for Hastings and Rother and one in the Wealden area of the county 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Hastings and Rother revised proposal • Extend vocational centre provision • Implement outcomes of Wealden STAR
<p>Below average A level achievement in some schools</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A level data is as yet unvalidated • There are no national comparators yet for 2005 A level performance • Early indications from provisional data are that there has been an encouraging improvement in A level results overall in the county this year (average UCAS point score per entry up from 70.2 in 2004 to 78.1 in 2005) • Several school sixth forms have made big gains this year over 2004 • Hastings sixth forms gained more than 12 UCAS points per entry over 2004 result (71.6 point average as opposed to 59.1) • However, despite the improved position, East Sussex final results do not quite match the national average for 2004 and thus are not likely to match the national average for 2005 • Results need to be read in the context that only 1 out of 4 post 16 students in East Sussex attend school sixth forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased capacity in the secondary SIS team from January will enable a greater focus on under-performing sixth forms • Rapidly improving partnership arrangements with the LSC is leading to more joined-up interventions in under-performing sixth forms eg joint visit to Beacon CC by contact adviser and LSC adviser in the summer term to moderate school self-evaluation of sixth form provision • Four under-performing sixth forms in the Hastings and Rother area will work with Hastings new college to develop a collaborative approach to curriculum planning.