

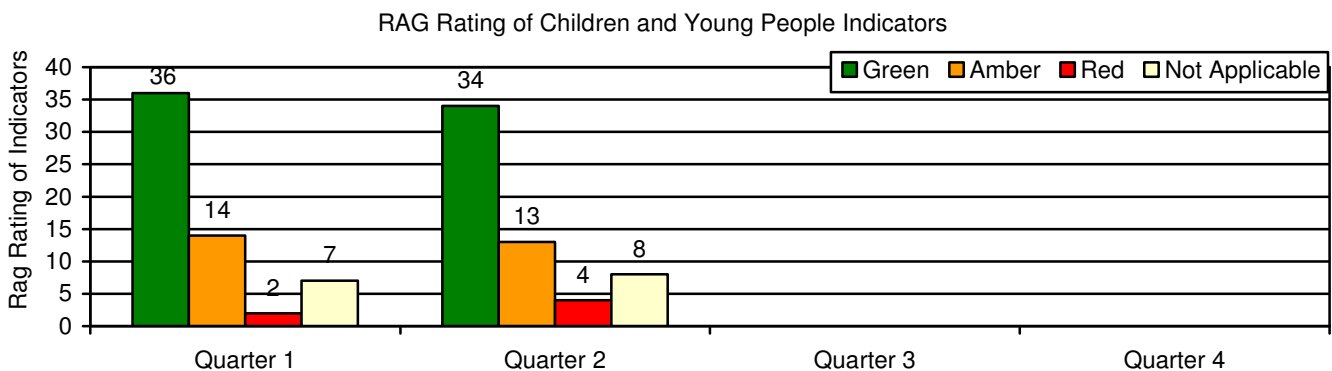


Children and Young Peoples Exception Report – Quarter Two (1st July 2008 – 30th September 2008)

This report provides information on the overall performance of those indicators considered to be key in improving services for Children’s and Young People in Staffordshire as reflected in the Children and Young Peoples Plan and Local Area Agreement, highlighting areas of improvement and areas that require further review / challenge.

Delivery against the priorities included within the Children and Young Peoples Plan continues to progress well. Of the 59¹ Children and Young People Plan indicators assessed in quarter two, 57.6% have a risk assessment of green; 22.0% have a risk assessment of amber, 6.8% has a risk assessment of red and 13.6% have been classified as not applicable as there is no current target information available for these indicators.

There has been an increase this quarter in the number of indicators risk assessed as red, this is partly due to increased focus on whether what is being delivered is in line with agreed plans/strategy’s and internal quality assurance of the information presented. These indicators will be closely monitored through the Children and Young Peoples Planning and Performance Group, and the Childrens Trust Executive Board to ensure that there are robust plans/actions in place to bring performance back on track.



Of those indicators that have been risk assessed as green within the quarter two performance report, there are two that are highlighted as showing excellent progress in delivery and performance, demonstrating an outcome focused approach to planning, collaboration and delivery to improve services for Children and Young People in Staffordshire.

CYP 3.1.1: Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy (DCSF Statutory Early Years and Attainment Indicator NI 72).

Achievement at Early Years Foundation Stage (Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy) continues to be excellent, with services delivered being closely aligned to the work of

¹ The following indicators have not been reported on for quarter two as the lead for these indicators sits outside of the Childrens Trust, for example Safer and Stronger Communities Thematic Partnership and Adult Social Care and Health.

other areas within Children and Lifelong Learning such as the Early Years and Childcare Unit, to engage both maintained and non maintained settings in improving standards/services for children, Staffordshire's performance has shown consistent improvement since 2006 rising from 52.4% to 59.5% (provisional 2008 data), this being 10% above the national average of 49.0% in 2008, placing Staffordshire as 14/150 local authorities.

CYP 4.1.1: Number of children and young people's services who have signed up and done a self assessment for the hear by rights standard.

Engagement in the hear by rights standard has significantly improved, quarter ones performance report highlighted serious concern (risk assessed as red) over the engagement of children and young peoples services across the wider partnership of the childrens trust in undertaking the hear by rights standard, predicting that the target would not be achieved, six, against a target of ten services. During quarter two this has improved, with 10 services now engaged in this standard, the support of the Children and Young Peoples Participation sub group has ensured services are well supported in undertaking the standard, and continues to progress well demonstrating excellent partnership working.

Of those indicators that have been risk assessed as red or amber within the quarter two performance report, the four that have been assessed as red have been highlighted, as although there are concerns over the current performance of these indicators, measures are being taken to ensure that robust plans with clear accountable and challenge are being put in place, thereby ensuring progress should begin to travel in the correct direction to demonstrate improvement although not necessarily the achievement of the target. These are as follows:

CYP 1.1.1: Under 18 conception rate (LAA Designated Indicator NI 112).

Under 18 conception rate (LAA priority indicator), provisional data showed performance against this indicator to be 42.0 per 1000 per 17 years olds, it is not expected that the target will be achieved. There is concern as to whether current service delivery in relation to this indicator is supporting improvement, and that the target will not be met. However, there are areas of strength that will drive the delivery against this indicator forward, these include the development of the Sexual Relationship Education forum, which will enable a coordinated approach to Sexual Relationship Education in schools and other settings. The care matters strategic group, will address the needs of children in care in relation to this indicator. The West Midlands Government Office and National Support Team have reviewed the Teenage Pregnancy Service, as a result of this review a clear action plan is being developed to improve the delivery of services relating to Sexual Health and Teenage Pregnancy, including accountabilities and ensuring that progress is monitored and challenged.

CYP 1.7.1: Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6 - 8 weeks from birth (NI 53).

Once again (as with quarter one) it has not been possible to accurately assess the progress of the indicator relating to Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6 - 8 weeks from birth, in relation to data, as quarterly performance data is still not available. Data for this indicator should be collected and monitored on a quarterly basis, through mandatory Primary Care Trust child health information records reported to the Department of Health, as per the agreed national indicator definition. The Department of Health has recognised that currently the Primary Care Trusts are not able to provide robust data so they are allowing the use of proxy data, this is only an interim agreement and robust data will need to be provided. Currently both South Staffordshire and North Staffordshire Primary Care Trusts are continuing to develop systems for monitoring continuation of breastfeeding. There is an

ongoing concern with regards to this availability of data, which was also apparent in the delay in performance reporting of breast feeding data during 2007/2008. It is therefore, not possible at this current time to be able to robustly demonstrate that we are delivering against this indicator and the proxy measure indicates that performance is well below the target. Variance against target is 23.4%. However proxy data does demonstrate an increase on the baseline of 0.7%, although there is some distance to travel to the target (6.1%).

CYP 2.3.1: Percentage of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time (NI 65).

Performance in relation to the percentage of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time, continues to fall, 15% against target of 11% for quarter two, this maintains the downward trend for this indicator with the average monthly performance being 14.4%. There has been an overall increase in the number of children suffering neglect, however, this is not necessarily seen as a negative, with the increase in the number of professionals being trained in recognising children being at risk of neglect and where safeguarding intervention is necessary, it was expected that in the short term the numbers would rise. Although there may have been increased focus and support going into families, conditions frequently improve to an acceptable level where a child protection plan is no longer required, then when this focus is removed, some families inevitably transgress to previous care standards and re-registration occurs. There is a lag in the impact of the preventative strategy due to considerable lead times required to achieve substantial change with many families where neglect and poor parenting are long-term and often inter-generational problems.

CYP 3.4.2: Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 PSA 11 (DCSF Statutory Early Years and Attainment Indicator NI 98).

Attainment against the statutory indicator Progression by 2 levels in Maths between Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, remains an area of concern, in that, provisional data indicates that the milestone target of 30.4%, set for 2008/09, will not be achieved, an outturn of 18.6% is predicted, there has been a drop in performance on the previous year of 5.2%, this indicates that performance is not travelling in the correct direction to maintain the improvements made and to achieve the very challenging 2009/10 DCSF agreed target of 37.0%. However, the school improvement division has developed a robust strategy to move forward performance in relation to this indicator, they are undertaking new measures to support schools through realigning resources according to need, targeted monitoring and tracking of pupils progress, to identify areas of success, areas for early intervention and support.

Also highlighted is one indicator assessed as amber as there is concern over the accuracy of the assessment based on available data, direction of travel of the indicator.

CYP 5.5.1: Number of young people in serious housing need.

Although the indicator lead has assessed the indicator as amber, the performance of the indicator relating to the number of young people in serious housing need, continues to decline steadily (the decline relates to an increase in the number of young people, lower outturn is positive), following the trend in 2007/08. (The target in 2007/08 was 237, final outturn was 262. The baseline for 2008/09 refresh of the plan is 249 (based on May to October 2006 data), 2008/09 quarter one's performance; 290 quarter two's performance; 325, against a target of 230). There is concern over the robustness of the data and whether this reflects the true picture in relation to this

indicator, as currently only connexions data is represented, there is concern that once other partners data is assessed, that this could potentially increase the numbers identified.

However, there are clear and robust plans in place to move forward this indicator, a more collaborative approach to delivery against this indicator is being undertaken by the strategic partnership and a district level, to improve support and delivery of services to young people in serious housing need. With this collaborative approach more accurate and representative data should emerge, but it will take time for the collaborative approach to have an effect on the numbers of young people in serious housing need.

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