



Performance Monitoring Report

for

Social Care & Learning

**Third Quarter 2008/09
October-December 2008**

Portfolio holders:
Councillor Gareth Barnard
Councillor Dale Birch
Councillor Alan Kendall

Director: Lesley Heale

Section One: Executive Summary

Introduction by the Director of Social Care & Learning

Bracknell Forest has now received confirmation of our Star Rating for Adult Services and Children's Services.

Adult Services have been given a rating of 3, Outstanding, which is the highest grade possible for the Service.

Children's Services have been given a rating of 3, Good. This is a very good attainment also – only 9 Local Authorities nationally were given the highest grade of 4, Outstanding.

Our GCSE pass rate 5 A* - C grades was the best ever for the Local Authority with an improvement in our overall performance which is greater than the national average. However we are not complacent and we aim to improve our results further to keep us in line with the improvements attained by neighbouring Local Authorities.

The department was particularly pleased with the outcome of the unannounced inspection of Larchwood short break and respite unit for children. The overall quality rating was judged by Ofsted to be Outstanding. Approval has now been secured to proceed with the Garth Hill College Project.

The priorities for the next quarter are:

- Complete the review of the Children and Young Peoples Board and refresh the Children and Young Peoples Plan
- Continue the transfer of responsibilities from the Learning and Skills Council through the 14 – 19 Partnership
- Finalize our vision and strategy for integrated Youth Services
- Examine and implement the findings and recommendations from the Lord Laming Review of Safeguarding
- Commence the Transforming Adult Social Care Pilots
- Respond to the requirements of National Strategies and continue to support schools through the Ofsted Inspection Process

Children's Social Care

Youth Offending Service 'performs well'

The Youth Offending Service submitted their Youth Justice Plan in September and then received a one day inspection visit. They have received a judgement of 'performs well' (grade 3 out of a possible 4) from the Youth Justice Board for their capacity and capability "to analyse, plan for and deliver a service which reduces youth offending and reoffending". This very good result builds on last year's successful inspection, which took place at the same time as the Joint Area Review, and reflects the hard work of the team and support from all the partners involved.

Looked after Children Education Award Ceremony held

On the 31st October 2008 Bracknell Forest held the first Looked After Children Education Award Ceremony. This was an opportunity to celebrate the children's educational successes and achievements throughout the year and help to motivate them to continue to achieve. During the 'official' ceremony, held at the John Nike Centre, certificates and awards were presented by the Mayor to each young person in recognition of their individual achievements. Carers, parents, social workers and councillors were present to applaud them.

Adoption

At the end of December 2008, there were 6 looked after children with a plan for adoption. 5 of these children have been placed with prospective adopters but an adoption order has not yet been made. The remaining child awaiting placement is a White British girl aged 1, with complex needs and active family finding has continued. A potential match to prospective adopters is being considered.

Safeguarding

At the end of December 2008, there were 48 children subject to a protection plan. 15 were registered under the category of Neglect, 8 under the category of Physical Abuse, 2 under the category of Sexual Abuse, 22 under the category of Emotional Abuse and 1 under the joint category of Emotional & Physical Abuse.

Best Practice Examples in Safeguarding

The Local Children's Safeguarding Board Manager has led work on the comprehensive data set, safeguarding cue card, and safeguarding toolkit that are identified by GOSE as examples of best practice.

Learning and Achievement

Ofsted Inspections

Cranbourne Primary school was inspected by Ofsted in October and identified as a *satisfactory and improving school*. Wildridings Primary School had a two day Ofsted inspection where the provision for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and in the quality of teaching and learning were identified as areas requiring improvement.

Adult and Community Learning

The Adult and Community Learning service received an Ofsted progress monitoring visit in November. They reported appropriate progress against all the action points identified in the previous inspection. This is a good outcome and will mean that the service will not be inspected again for some time.

Future 14- 19 Provision

The LA, on behalf of the 14-19 Partnership, submitted a formal application in November to provide a range of new diploma qualifications. This Gateway 3 submission required considerable coordination and detailed work by members of the department, staff in all our secondary schools, Bracknell and Wokingham College and other partners.

Adults Social Care

Consultation on Commissioning Strategies

This quarter saw the consultation on the development of two new Commissioning Strategies which will be presented to the Executive in the next quarter.

The first of these is in relation to Sensory Needs, where the service and support to people with a sensory impairment is provided under contract to Wokingham.

The second is in relation to those people with Dementia. For both of these significant consultation has been undertaken with people who use the services and their carers as well as service providers.

Access & Inclusion

Inspection of College Hall

College Hall Pupil Referral unit was inspected during this quarter by Ofsted. The judgement was that the unit provided a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. A number of strengths were highlighted along with some areas for future development. Recruitment of staff has been a major issue in the past, and the report noted that significant positive progress has been made in this area.

Family Support Advisers

15 Family Support Advisers have been appointed, working in 22 schools in the Borough. Funding has come from schools own resources together with 'match' funding from the Extended Services project. The early indications of effectiveness are good. There is a comprehensive programme of support, networking and supervision in place. It is anticipated that more schools will join this programme later in the year.

Implementation of Targeted Youth Support

The DCSF deadline for having all of the elements of Targeted Youth Support in place by 31 December 2008 was met. A series of workshops for staff and partners took place throughout this quarter, with the intention of coordinating the range of services that are available locally for those young people who are in danger of going 'off – track' and supporting them in dealing with their issues.

Performance & Resources

Capital Programmes

The Council's bid under the PCSfC initiative has been successful. Plans are now being developed which enable the Department to begin the phase 1 implementation when funding becomes available from April 2009.

The issues reported earlier in relation to The Pines have been rectified. All accommodation and refurbishment has now been completed.

There are a large number of other school projects which are ongoing. Progress during this period has been made and there are no major issues to be reported. Work has begun on the Trampoline Centre at The Brakenhale School.

School Admissions

Applications were received for secondary schools and the recording of parental preferences began. There was an increase in the number of primary admissions booklets and application forms sent out compared to the previous year.

Human Resources

The arrangements for the newly qualified teachers recruitment pool has commenced for the 2009/10 academic year. This has provided a pool of quality candidates for schools and is a key recruitment tool for Bracknell Forest schools. The review of the safeguarding arrangements has seen the recommendation for 3 yearly CRB rechecks on all staff working with children and young people.

ICT

The evaluation of the ITT responses for the ASC IT Systems Replacement is near completion with the final analysis of all the tenders due early January. Recommendation of a preferred solution will be made in January 2009.

Finance

Financial performance against budgets remains good with an increase in forecast under spend on the revenue budget which is now expected to be £450k below approved budget. Whilst some new pressures are emerging in domiciliary support in Adult Social Care, the expectation remains that the Department achieve the reported under spend. In respect of the capital budget, progress is now being made on the major projects in the programme, most notably the re-provision of the Brakenhale Open Learning Centre and the rebuild of Garth Hill College.

