

KEY QUESTION 1 – HOW GOOD ARE OUTCOMES?

Quality Indicator: 1.1.1 Standards - Results and trends in performance compared with national averages, similar providers, and prior attainment

- 13.3% of pupils in all school settings are entitled to free school meals (FSM) (January 2012). This places Flintshire 6th in Wales for FSM entitlement and compares with a Wales average of 17.7%. Performance data in this report is based on the 2012 outcomes where available.
- Performance continues the pattern of previous years with Flintshire being one of the highest performing local authorities in Wales on indicators at Key Stages 3 and 4. When Flintshire's performance in core subjects is compared with Councils across Wales attainment is in line with expectations at Key Stage 3 and higher than might be expected at Key Stage 4.
- Whilst recognising the concerns expressed by schools regarding the consistency of end of Key Stage teacher assessments in the Primary Phase across Wales, Flintshire still has too few primary schools that are in the top 25% and too many in the bottom 25% based on the 2011/12 data in the Foundation Phase (FP) and in Key Stage 2. The Council's schools are below the expected rankings at the end of the FP and at Key Stage 2. The rate of improvement on outcomes at Key Stage 2 is less than that to which Flintshire aims.
- Whilst Flintshire's learner outcomes at secondary level compare favourably with other areas of Wales, Wales does not compare favourably with standards in a substantial number of other countries. Areas of positive performance need to be viewed in the light of a national need to further raise standards of achievement for all learners. This will require a sustained focus on improving pupils' literacy and numeracy skills and ensuring all learners leave full-time education with a recognised qualification in both first language and mathematics.

Foundation Phase & Key Stage 2

- Foundation Phase (FP) outcomes are reported for the first time in 2012. Overall performance at the end of the Foundation Phase is too low at 1% below the All Wales averages. Whilst four out of five learners (79.7%) achieve the expected Foundation Phase Outcome Indicator (FPOI), this places the Council in 15th position (3.6 percentage points) below the expected 6th position). Raising standards across the FP remains a priority.
- In Language, Literacy and Communication (LCE) skills/ English the 2012 outcome was 82%. Performance in LCE is the lowest performing of the Foundation Phase areas and is a key priority for improvement. This places Flintshire below the Wales average of 83.4%.
- 2012 performance in Language, Literacy and Communication Skills/ Welsh (LCW) performance was 84.1%, which is below the Wales average of 85.9%.
- Maths performance at 85.9% is below the Wales average of 86.6%.
- PSD performance at 91.54% is above the Wales average and the strongest area of learning in Flintshire, but further progress is required to secure top quartile outcomes.
- Performance at Outcome 6 is overall good and improving. Outcome 6 in LCE, Mathematical Development (MDT) and Personal, Social Development (PSD) are above the Welsh average.
- In the Foundation Phase Indicator Outcome 5+ only 39% of schools are in the higher

quartiles. These figures are similar in LCE, LCW and maths. In the Outcome 6+ 48% of schools are in the higher quartiles for LCE, 58% for maths and PSD, but only 20% in LCW i.e. one school.

- Comparisons at Key Stage One and Foundation Phase show that our position has been too often in the lower quartiles over the last 3 years.
- At Key Stage 2, there has been a steady improvement in performance at level 4+ over the past few years. There has been an improvement in the CSI at the end of Key Stage 2 over the past three years, but a decline in the relative Authority position which fell in 2012 to 16th (4.3 percentage points below 6th position). Performance at 81.3% is below the Wales average of 82.6%.
- Performance at level 5+ is generally good compared to Wales and shows a steady upward trend in all core subjects. Training provided by the Authority on achieving the higher levels has had an impact on end of Key Stage results.
- There was sustained performance in English in 2011 and 2012 at 83.8% after a steady rise over the past five years. The Council's relative position has fallen to 17th and below the Wales average of 85.2%. At level 5+ there has been a steady rise in performance above Wales averages. Raising literacy standards across the curriculum (English and Welsh) remains a key priority. The newly appointed LOTS (Literacy Outstanding Teachers) are focusing on raising standards at Key Stage 2 in targeted schools.
- In Welsh, performance has weakened at level 4+ over the past two years. At 78.9% the Local Authority is 18th and below the Wales average of 84%. Due to the low cohort size, however, the difference between achieving 6th and 18th position is just eight pupils. At level 5+ Flintshire has been consistently above the Wales average.
- Outcomes in Maths at level 4+ have risen steadily over the past three years from 83.3% in 2010 to 86.3% in 2012, but the Council's relative position in Wales has declined and at 86.3% places the Local Authority as 16th in 2012 and below the Wales average of 86.8% by 0.5 percentage points. 34.5 % of pupils achieved Level 5+ in 2012 and this represents a steady rise in level 5s from 27.9% over the last three years. This trend is above the Wales average. Comparison of cohorts at both Year 2/6 continues to show good value added by the end of Key Stage 2.
- Outcomes in Science at level 4+ have risen steadily over the past three years, but the Council's relative position is only 16th and at 87.8% is just below the Wales average of 88.5%. The percentage of learners achieving Level 5+ has risen significantly from 30.1% in 2008 to 36.4% in 2012. This figure compares favourably with the Wales average of 33% in 2012.
- In Key Stage 2 level 4+ 64% of schools are recorded as being below the median in the CSI and for English. Outcomes are also too low in Science. Raising the quartile position of schools in the core subject areas remains a key priority for improvement.
- FSM eligible learners benchmark data reflects consistently higher performance. In 2010, the percentage of schools above the median for the CSI was 80% at KS1 and 83% at Key Stage 2. Around a third of schools were in the top quarter at each Key Stage (13 schools), with very few in the bottom quarter (just one school at Key Stage 1 (2.4%) and three at Key Stage 2 (7.5%).
- Fischer Family Trust value added data shows that pupils make significantly stronger progress than expected across a wide range of indicators from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.
- At inspection, four schools were judged as having adequate standards and six schools as good standards in 2011/12. One primary school was in special measures, but was recommended to be removed from the category within four terms. Targeted support will continue to raise standards in all primary schools to at least good.

Key Stage 3

- When compared with similar schools nationally, performance of Flintshire learners at the Key Stage 3 Core Subject Indicator is good overall. The Welsh Government Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 Value Added Summary 2010/11 rates Flintshire's outcomes in the first quartile with a significant value added for model 1 and in the second quartile for model 2a.
- 76.0% of Flintshire pupils achieved the Core Subject Indicator in 2012 with increase of 2.2% on 2011 and continuing the upward trend over the last five years. Despite this improvement, the gap between Flintshire and the Wales average, at 3.5 percentage points, is lower than in previous years and Flintshire is placed 7th in Wales.
- Performance of Flintshire learners at the Core Subjects is good overall with Welsh Government Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 Value Added Summary 2010/11 rating Flintshire's outcomes in English and Science in the first quartile for both models. Mathematics is in the second quartile for both models. Welsh First Language was in the third quartile on model 1 and fourth quartile in model 2a. The proportion of learners achieving Level 5+ improved again in English (0.6 percentage points), Mathematics (1.9 percentage points) and Science (1.8 percentage points) in 2012 continuing the trend of improvement in each of the last five years in all of these subjects. However, the gap in performance between Flintshire and Wales narrowed in 2012. Flintshire ranked 6th, 7th and 3rd respectively in the core subjects.
- When considered against FSM benchmarking, six Flintshire schools were above the median in each of these core subjects with six below the median. However, there were fewer schools in the upper quartile, particularly in English.
- Performance in English, maths and science shows a generally positive trend at levels 6+ and 7+, with outcomes close to target other than for English at Level 6+. Compared to Welsh Government value added estimates of performance in 2012, Flintshire schools overall performance is good. Welsh first language, based on a small cohort of learners, was not as successful following a significant improvement in 2011.

Welsh Government 2011-12 Key Stage 3 (from Key Stage 2) Estimates of performance against actual			
	Model 1	Model 2b	Actual
CSI	70.6%	72.9%	76.0%
English	78.6%	80.7%	83.1%
Welsh 1 st	76.8%	76.2%	67.9%
Mathematics	80.1%	81.4%	83.9%
Science	82.6%	84.6%	87.3%

- Outcomes in non-core subjects at Key Stage 3 continue to be good and improving. The proportion of learners achieving Level 5+ in 2012 was higher than in 2011 in all non-core subjects. Flintshire outcomes were in the top four of all authorities in Wales for all subjects in 2012 with the exception of PE (although even here Flintshire outcomes increased from 81.5% to 85.6%).
- FSM benchmarking identifies more individual school non-core outcomes above the median than below in each of the last three years. In 2012 this trend continued and of 144 core and non-core benchmarked outcomes for Flintshire schools, 34 were in the top quartile, 44 in the second, 39 in the third and 27 in the fourth. Outcomes at Levels 6+ and 7+ in non-core subjects have not compared to Wales averages as positively as Level 5+. There were general improvements in 2012 across the range.

Key Stage 4 & 5

- At Key Stage 4 the proportion of Flintshire learners that attain the Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh and Maths is excellent. In 2012 provisional figures show this was 59%, compared to a Wales average figure of 50%. This maintains the ranking of first in Wales and the differential between Flintshire and the Wales average from 2011???. In 2011 Flintshire had three schools placed in the upper quartile and a further five in the second, with only two in the lower quartile.
- Outcomes across Flintshire for the Level 1 Threshold have improved once again in provisional figures from 88% in 2007 (Wales 86%) to 95% in 2012 (Wales 91%). This is excellent progress building upon the second highest performance in Wales in 2011. Five schools were in the upper quartile and a further two at or above the median, with three schools in the lower quartile, when compared to FSM benchmarking in 2011.
- Results in the Core Subject Indicator were the best in Wales at 57% in 2011 and this has been maintained in provisional figures for 2012 whilst Wales averages 48%. In 2011 four schools were in the upper quartile for performance at the CSI, with a further four in the second quartile and only one in the fourth.
- Compared to Welsh Government value added estimates of performance in 2012, Flintshire schools overall performance is good with actual performance above estimate on the four indicators estimated

Welsh Government 2011-12 Key Stage 4 (from Key Stage 2) Estimates of performance against actual				
		Model 1	Model 2b	Actual (Prov SSSP)
Level Threshold	1	92.3%	93.3%	95%
Level Threshold	2	67.5%	70.7%	75%
CSI		47.1%	51.1%	57%
Level Threshold +	2	48.6%	52.6%	59%

- The Average Wider Points scores for Flintshire learners has been below the average in Wales in recent years (nine points below in 2011) although we have consistently predicted an improvement in this indicator following changes in curriculum design. Provisional outcomes in this indicator for 2012 show Flintshire now 23 points ahead of the Wales average and this is good progress. Improvements in learner performance have contributed to a 53 point year on year increase and the number of learners completing the WBQ has also been a significant factor. Provisional figures also show Flintshire's average for Capped Wider Points score 12 points ahead of Wales in 2012 compared to just 3 points in 2011.
- Analysis of value added data provided by Fischer Family Trust shows that, when compared to past performance at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3, Flintshire Key Stage 4 learners achieve above expectations for the A* to G pass rate, A* to C passes and A*/A grades. Introducing social factors within the SX has identified negative outcomes for performance at A*/A grades in recent years, but in 2011 this was positive, which demonstrated good progress.
- Flintshire aggregates the outcomes of CATs tests taken by learners in Year 7 each

year. The 2012 Key Stage 4 cohort therefore took these tests in 2007 and there was a marked decline in the proportion of learners with scores above average relative to previous years, with only 43.3% of learners scoring above average on the CATs Mean Score compared to the expected 50%. This has not affected outcomes at Key Stage 4 in the way that may have been feared and this is a good and important outcome.

- The very low proportion of learners leaving full time education without a recognised qualification is excellent with the trend over 5 years being a reduction from 1.5% to 0.3% in provisional SSSP in 2012 (Wales benchmark 1.7% in provisional SSSP although this has been lower and was 0.6% in 2011).
- In schools the proportion of Post 16 learners achieving the Level 3 threshold varies across providers but is good overall at 97% in 2011 and on provisional figures for 2012.
- The average wider points score of Flintshire Post 16 school learners increased to 817 in 2011 compared to a Wales average of 799. This was the first time in recent years that Flintshire had exceeded the Wales average, as more schools undertook the WBQ than in previous years. Provisional figures for 2012 show a decrease in points scores across Flintshire and Wales and this needs to be investigated. There is currently too wide a variation in outcomes within and across centres, with many good outcomes whilst others are only adequate. This is a key driver for the Strategic Outline Case for change.
- Analysis of A Level data for schools provided by Fischer Family Trust shows that value added performance was positive in 2011. Fischer demonstrates that of 1597 matched entries there was a positive value added for pass grades of 1% on the PA model and 0.8% on the SE model. There was a more significant level of value added for the number of A-C grades achieved, at 3.1% and 2.1%. At the highest A*-A level Flintshire had a positive value added figure of 0.9% and 1.1% on the two models and this demonstrates significant progress compared to previous years.
- In Flintshire, participation rates (in Year 12 / FE college) for Key Stage 4 school leavers are good, show a positive trend and are consistently higher than the all Wales average. In 2011 89% of learners progressed into Year 12 compared to 85.1% across Wales. At the end of Year 13, 84.6% of Flintshire learners continued in education compared to 79.4% of Year 13 learners in Wales. Overall, Flintshire Learners are slightly more likely to complete Sixth Form and stay in education than is average across Wales.
- The trend of decline in the number of learners known to be NEET in Flintshire after Year 11 continued in 2012 with a reduction of 0.1 percentage points on the 2010 figure to 2.7%. This is the best figure in Wales and significantly below the national average of 4.4%.
- Outcomes of Estyn Inspections of Secondary Schools are good. This also reflects the outcomes of the 2011 Area Inspection report on the quality and standard of provision for 14 – 19 year old learners in Flintshire, when current performance and prospects for improvement were judged as good. Five Flintshire High Schools have been inspected under the new framework. Progress in these schools has been good. Performance in all key questions has been judged as good across all five schools. Current overall performance is judged as good in each school and prospects for improvement are excellent in four schools and good in the fifth.

Achievement and attainment through involvement with youth support services

- Monitoring of the Youth Service provision is still being undertaken with six full inspections and 11 random inspections taking place during 2011/12. Out of these full inspections three gained a grade 1, two gained a grade 2 and one gained a grade 3. The inspection process now follows the Estyn Guidelines involving Self Assessment under three sections, Leadership, Provision and Outcomes.
- The ASP team supporting Key Stage 2 and three have worked with 131 Year 6 and 7 students, 111 Year 8 and 190 Year 9. 98% of these students noticed reported an improvement as well as staff observing a positive difference. Out of the 432 young people 285 were new cases for the year and 301 of the young people at the end of the year no longer need support.
- Young people also attended a summer school in the holidays which developed their confidence, communication skills, team building skills and problem solving. Some young people have been encouraged and supported to attend the D of E and Youth Forum sessions in the evenings.
- The purpose of the 14-19 ASP team was to provide additional informal and non formal education opportunities for those not in main stream education in order to increase their life chances and opportunities for employment. During the 2011/12 year they worked with 73 individuals of which 59 were new to the project. 40 young people gained Millennium Volunteer awards, six gained John Muir Awards, eight gained OCN level 2 in a variety of ICT units. 42 young people gained in house awards for WKS. This project has formed working partnerships with a wide variety of community, voluntary and statutory organisations with very positive outcomes which have enhanced individual skill levels, widened experiences and improved educational attendance patterns, which in turn have direct links to improving career prospects. 95% of the young people who have left the project have a portfolio of positive achievements.
- The Council continues to provide two Youth workers in John Summers High School in partnership with the school working with year 10 and 11 pupils with pupils who are at risk of disengagement or self-exclusion. 24 participants gained a Youth Challenge award. PASS surveys scores showed an improvement. All of the participants showed improvement in speech and language development with improved confidence and motivation.
- The Council's Youth Service has also built partnerships with other schools to deliver a variety of awards such as 21 Asdan Youth Activities Awards in Ysgol Maes Hyfryd and St David's High School Sixth Form and 9 Asdan Peer Mentoring Awards which have had positive outcomes by developing key skills, working with others and problem solving with the evidence being in the form of a DVD showing very creative skills. There have also been 14 Millennium Volunteer Awards for running a summer playschool for primary aged children which developed a variety of skills such as teamwork, problem solving peer mentoring, CV writing and interview skills for Employment College and University.
- In partnership with Ysgol Maes Hyfred and Flintshire Local Volunteer Council LVC we wrote an OCN level 1 in Volunteering which enabled 20 young people who worked in the Buzz café in Flint to achieve successfully. The outcomes were to increase the young people's employability and team working/ problem solving skills
- In 2011-12 the Duke of Edinburgh Award worked with 424 participants (198 male and 226 female). This compares with 249 young people participating in 2010-11. This exemplifies young people's ability to participate in learning and acquire life skills, whilst enjoying their experiences. In 2011-12 141 achieved completion and received their awards, with further growth leading to higher outcomes:

Bronze	Male	61	Female	57
Silver	Male	8	Female	12
Gold	Male	0	Female	3

Quality Indicator: 1.1.2 Standards - standards of groups of learners

- Generally, the performance of pupils from minority ethnic groups, the more able and talented and the relative performance of boys and girls is good. The performance of Looked After Children and children entitled to free school meals is improving but these remain areas for further development.

Girls/Boys

- The percentage difference in the performance of girls and boys in Flintshire across the areas of learning in the Foundation Phase and in the Foundation Phase Indicator is less than the difference for Wales at Outcome 5+. The lowest percentage difference in Flintshire is in Maths reflecting the position for Wales.
- The percentage difference in the performance of girls and boys in Flintshire at Key Stage 2 is slightly wider in English by 0.6 percentage points but less in maths by 0.1 percentage points. In reading, writing and maths combined the gap remains at 0.6 percentage points between Flintshire and Wales. The Council has targeted groups of schools where there is a significant girl/boy % difference in literacy and this is positively impacting on standards in those schools.
- Performance of boys in achieving the Key Stage 3 Core Subject Indicator is good and has shown a positive trend of improvement with 73.7% of boys succeeding in 2012. This is 6.5% above the Wales average and ranks 4th. Girls' performance at CSI in 2012 was 78.4%. This is 1 percentage point below the previous best figure achieved in 2010, when Flintshire girls ranked 3rd in Wales.
- Performance of boys and girls both show a generally positive trend at Key Stage 4. At 57.2% (in 2011) boys' outcomes for the Core Subject Indicator were 11.7 percentage points above the average of boys in Wales. Boys had the highest outcomes in Wales for the second consecutive year. Girls' outcomes in Flintshire for this indicator, at 57.3%, were 5.3 percentage points higher than the average for Wales and ranked third. In 2012 provisional figures the gap is wider between Flintshire and others, with boys achieving 53% (Wales boys 45%) and girls 61% (Wales girls 52%).
- At the Level 1 threshold provisional figures for 2012 show the continued positive trend with Flintshire boys outperforming Wales boys by 6 percentage points (Flintshire 95%, Wales 89%), whilst Flintshire girls outperformed Wales girls by 3 percentage points (Flintshire 96%, Wales 93%) in 2009.
- In schools there is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls at the Level 3 threshold. The wider points score for girls (841 in 2011) is higher than that for boys (792) although the boys are further above the Wales average performance than the girls.

Free School Meals/Non Free School Meals (e-FSM)

- In 2012 the gap between e-FSM and non e-FSM pupils' performance in KS2 has reduced from 2011 and is now closer to the Wales average. Flintshire non e-FSM performance is similar to Wales.
- Performance of e-FSM learners at the Key Stage 3 Core Subject Indicator is encouraging and has been above the Wales average in all recent years. Performance of this group in 2011 was particularly good, with 52.4% of Flintshire e-FSM learners achieving the CSI compared to 43.4% of learners in Wales.
- Performance of e-FSM learners at Key Stage 4 has been good in the last two years (2010 and 2011) moving from a position around the Wales average for the Level 2 Threshold including English/Welsh and Maths to being 11 percentage points ahead of Wales in 2011 (Flintshire 33%, Wales 22%).
- At the Level 1 Threshold Flintshire e-FSM learners have been consistently performing ahead of Wales in recent years. This gap narrowed in 2011 with 87.2% Flintshire e-FSM learners achieving compared to 79.8% for Wales.

English as an Additional Language (EAL)

- In January 2012 there were 544 pupils learning EAL within Flintshire, with the EAL service providing individual support for 188 of these from April 2011 to April 2012. The remainder were offered advisory support and training.
- At Key Stage 1, following a dip in the CSI in 2010, the 2011 results demonstrated an improvement. In 2011 68% of EAL pupils met the core subject indicator. In 2012, only 41% achieved the FPOI in all subjects. However, 76% of EAL pupils achieved outcome 5 or above for PSD.
- The EAL service recognised in 2010 that further developments were required to ensure that EAL pupils were achieving the maximum benefits from the Foundation Phase. In 2010 an advisory teacher was employed to work with nursery and reception class teachers to support the growing numbers of EAL learners within these year groups. The impact of this on the FPOI will not be apparent until 2013. In addition, in March 2012, the EAL service worked in collaboration with Foundation Phase colleagues to deliver training on encouraging early language development. 222 TAs and 61 Foundation phase managers attended. It is hoped that the impact of this training will be seen in future results. There continues to be concern around the growing number of second language learners entering the Foundation Phase with insufficient skills in their first language. This is being addressed through closer collaboration with Speech and Language departments. Bilingual teachers support with dual language initial assessments.
- Despite rising numbers of EAL pupils at Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving CSI has increased from 50% in 2008 to 66% in 2012. The results in each individual subject have increased slightly since 2011. English has risen from 67% in 2011 to 69% in 2012, Maths from 75% to 78% and Science from 71% to 75%. The largest factor in achieving CSI at this age remains the level of language acquisition with 92% of children at WG level C and above achieving the CSI. The Service employed an additional bilingual assistant in Sept. 2012 to support curriculum access for those pupils who are at the earlier stages of learning English.
- The increase in the percentage of EAL pupils achieving the CSI in Key Stage 3 is positive with 75% in 2012, compared to 70% in 2011 and only 45% in 2010. There has been a year on year improvement in these figures since 2008. This has also been achieved with increasing numbers of entries.
- At Key Stage 4 47% (9/19) pupils achieved 5 A*-C in 2012, compared to only 37.5% (6/16) in 2010. 74% achieved 5 A-G*.

Travellers

- In primary, the results for the Travellers vary from year to year due to the low numbers in each cohort. In 2012 there were fourteen Travellers in Year 2 of which four achieved the CSI. In Key Stage 2, two out of six pupils achieved the CSI. These results are lower than would be expected for the settled population and lower, when taken as a percentage, than for Travellers in Flintshire in previous years. However, this is a reflection of the transient nature of the population over the past 12 months. Recent media portrayal of and involvement with some of the families on the Queensferry site have resulted in many new families moving into the area and many known families moving away.
- Substantial progress in reading and spelling ages has been made by many Gypsy Traveller pupils who have been in the area during 2011/12. Out of the children assessed in January 2011 and January 2012, 93% maintained or increased their standardised score in reading when tested with Neales Analysis Reading Test representing average or greater progress in reading accuracy, 84% for comprehension, 62% for spelling (Youngs) and 76% when tested on their mathematics ability.
- In secondary, three out of five (60%) Key Stage 3 pupils achieved the Core Subject Indicator for English, two out of five (40%) for Mathematics, and two out of five (40%) for Science. Only one pupil (20%) achieved the CSI for all three subjects. These results are positive as this is the first year that Flintshire has been able to report results for a number of Traveller pupils at Key Stage 3. The number of Traveller children attending Secondary Education is increasing year on year. Only ten children accessed full time Secondary in 2008-2009. The figure as at October 2012 is 24.

Looked After Children (LAC)

- In 2010/11 66% of Key Stage 2 pupils and 38% of Key Stage 3 pupils achieved the CSI compared to the Wales averages of 57% and 69%. With regard to Key Stage 4, 93% (14 out of 15 pupils) left with at least 1 formal qualification with 79% achieving at least 1 GCSE. These achievements are significantly higher than the Wales averages of 71% and 56% respectively. The percentage of pupils achieving 5 A* - G stands at 33%, which is around the Welsh average of 35%.

Pupils accessing central support for literacy development

May 2011-May 2012	Reading Accuracy	Reading Comprehension	Spelling
% pupils maintaining SAS or improving by 1 point or more	85%	68%	57%
% pupils achieving Level 3 or above at KS2	2010/11 49%	2011/12 68%	

Pupils with Special Educational Needs

Pupils at School Action Plus or Statemented continue to make good progress with outcomes at KS4 being significantly higher than Welsh averages for key indicators.

Percentage of Pupils With ALN Achieving Key Indicators	L1		L2		L2 EMW Flag		CSI Flag	
	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011	2010	2011
% Flintshire School Action Plus	86.3%	77.6%	29.4%	38.8%	21.6%	28.2%	21.6%	27.1%
% Wales School Action Plus	67.4%	68.1%	23.8%	28.4%	11.7%	14.3%	11.5%	13.9%

% Flintshire Statemented	68.6%	77.6%	17.1%	30.6%	14.3%	22.4%	17.1%	22.4%
% Wales Statemented	44.8%	52.9%	13.6%	19.7%	7.4%	8.7%	7.7%	8.5%

Quality Indicator: 1.1.4 Standards – Skills

- Standards in Basic Skills across Key Performance Indicators using a range of national data confirm good progress is being made across Flintshire schools. In monitoring reports from Basic Skills Cymru, the Council achieved 'Green' for all quality performance indicators. There is a clear focus on targeting schools for support in communication, numeracy, and ICT by analysing various data indicators. Impact measurements of training programmes indicate that most pupils make the targeted progress. Inspection reports of Primary and Secondary schools since September 2010 have, in general, commented favourably on the progress made by pupils in literacy, numeracy and ICT skills.
- At Key Stage 1 16 out of the 19 'Read, Write, Inc' schools showed an increase in children achieving level 2+ in the first year of implementation. In 2011-12 effective intervention for Key Stage 2 reading in 38 schools (474 learners) has resulted in average gains of 17 months in reading age, with 80% of learners in the target group (6 to 18 months behind) 'catching up' five schools (7%) show three year trend of low performance in reading outcomes at L4+. These schools have been identified for specific intervention and support.
- Data indicates a decline in the number of Flintshire schools demonstrating outcomes in reading being more than 10 percentage points below the Wales average. This has more than halved since 2008.

2008 – 2011 Attainment Target 2 : Reading (Key Stage 2)

Year	No. of schools more than 10% below Wales average	% of all schools in authority
2008	23	32.8%
2011	11	15.7%

- Standards of numeracy in primary schools have improved through effective targeted support using RM Maths. Maths recovery strategies are delivered to schools and RM target pupils are tracked annually as they develop their numeracy skills Schools have also been trained in the use of Numicon and this data will be used to track numeracy progress. Underperforming schools in maths are targeted from the end of Key Stage results for intervention for teachers in Year 3/4 and Year 1/2. Data indicates that most targeted schools improve their end of Key Stage data as a result of intervention strategies.

2010	2011	2012
88% pupils progressed	94% progressed	88% progress

- Inspection reports reflect that schools are planning effectively for numeracy as a key skill and pupils are able to apply numeracy skills effectively in other areas of the

curriculum. Responses collated by schools from pupil numeracy questionnaires reflect progress made in addressing numeracy as a key skill.

- Flintshire is committed to ensuring that all pupils achieve their potential. The assessment process for the Basic Skills Quality Standard award is applied rigorously and consistently, with twenty primary and three secondary schools gaining the award since 2010.
- Embedding excellent “thinking skills” has been a priority, with the Authority taking the lead in ensuring partner schools focus on developing thinking skills across the phases. Whilst the co-existence of other initiatives, make it difficult to attribute the raising of standards specifically to the effect of this programme, schools involved have reported improved pupil performance, particularly in oracy & problem solving skills and improved learner engagement.
- Recent inspections have identified that the ICT skills of the majority of pupils in the majority of schools inspected are good and are developing well. The majority of teachers in schools also use these ICT skills well across a range of subjects reflecting developing confidence and competence.
- Flintshire schools have developed structured ICT teaching provision which serves to establish and develop appropriate ICT Skills for all pupils and which are designed to develop confident and autonomous users of ICT, furthermore enabling these skills to be exercised throughout the curriculum.
- One primary school in an area of high deprivation involved in the OWLS laptop project 2009/10 has seen an increase in pupils’ confidence and competence using ICT, as well as a significant impact on both reading and writing.
- The use of BKSB data to target intervention and raise standards in literacy and numeracy has become embedded in some high schools, but this effective practice is not consistent across the authority. Therefore, in autumn of 2012, the authority collected BKSB data from all secondary schools relating to Year 10 and 12 learners. This is being repeated in 2012 to analyse any improvement and inform our targeting of intervention and support.
- As part of our monitoring visits in secondary schools, we have observed some very effective practice in the teaching of literacy and numeracy across the curriculum but in other schools this is still in the early stages of development. Whilst our schools are well-placed for the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Framework, this is an area for further improvement. Inspection reports reflect that schools are planning effectively for numeracy as a key skill and pupils are able to apply numeracy skills effectively in other areas of the curriculum. Standards in ICT have seen a steady rise at Key Stage 3 from 81.4% Level 5+ in 2008, to 89.0% in 2011. Similarly, the percentage A*-C results at Key Stage 4 show an improvement from 71.9% in 2008 to 78.3% in 2010.
- Welsh BaccaLaureate performance in the county is very good, both in outcomes and volume of learners currently taking the awards. In 2008 Hawarden High School led the way in Flintshire by piloting the Advanced WBQ post 16 with all learners. The 70 learners who successfully completed the WBQ represented 12.5% of Flintshire Level 3 learners in schools. In 2010/11, 8 schools undertook the WBQ with all learners at Key Stage 4. These eight schools represent 66% of Year 10 learners in Flintshire.

Quality Indicator: 1.1.5 Standards - Welsh language

- 84.1% of pupils attained Outcome 5+ in Welsh First Language (LLCW). This placed Flintshire below the Wales average at 15th. A Welsh speaking Foundation Phase officer

has been appointed to work alongside the Welsh literacy officer to support raising standards in the Foundation Phase.

- At Key Stage 2 78.9% achieved the expected levels. This is also below the Welsh average. With a small cohort size of 90 pupils every pupil makes a significant difference and analysis of the data shows that an additional eight successful pupils would have placed the Authority in 6th position. Pupil level information and targeted support maximises the likelihood of improved outcomes in future years. The data at Key Stage 2 is also affected by the pupil numbers in the Additional Learning Needs resource base at Ysgol Glanrafon.
- 66.9% of Flintshire pupils who undertook Key Stage 3 assessment in Welsh First Language scored Level 5 in 2012. The Wales results were 84.2%. Numbers in Flintshire are small and represent only one school. This school often also has a much higher population of learners (who transfer from English medium schools into year 7) than is normal in other Welsh medium schools. In 2011 Flintshire saw a significant improvement with 78.7% of learners achieving level 5 or above in teacher assessment in Welsh (First Language) compared to 81.3% across Wales.
- Key Stage 3 outcomes in Welsh as a Second Language are good, particularly when taking account of Flintshire's position as a border county. In 2011 69.9% of Flintshire learners achieved Level 5 or above, compared to 64.6% in Wales as a whole. In 2012 Flintshire outcomes have risen again to 71.8% of learners achieving Level 5 or above compared to 68.2% across Wales and ranking 4th. This was a sixth successive year on year improvement.
- The 2010 results for Welsh first language at Key Stage 4 were very positive, with the Flintshire outcome of 71.4% being just 2.1% below the average for Wales. This represented a significant narrowing of the gap between Flintshire and Wales Performance. Further improvement was secured in 2011 with Flintshire at 73.3% and Wales at 74.65%.
- The proportion of learners gaining a GCSE in Welsh 2nd Language is good. In 2011 43.7% of Flintshire 2nd language learners achieved A* to C in Welsh compared to 42.7% across Wales. 77.4% of Flintshire learners achieved at A* to G compared to 72.0% in Wales. In 2012 48.1% of Flintshire 2nd language learners achieved A* to C in Welsh compared to 46.2% across Wales. 81.8% of Flintshire learners achieved at A* to G compared to 75.2% in Wales. Additionally 71 learners completed NVQ Welsh 2nd Language courses, with 18 gaining full accreditation at level 2 and 28 at Level 1.

Quality Indicator: 1.2.2 Wellbeing – Participation and Enjoyment in Learning

- Estyn Inspections from September 2010 to May 2011 have judged behaviour to be at least Good in 100% of Primary Schools with very good in 4 schools and exemplary/exceptional in three schools.
- Primary School Attendance was 93.9% in 2008-09, 93.7% in 2009/10 and 93.9% in 2010/11. Secondary Attendance was 92.8% in 2008/09, 92.8% in 2009-10 and 93.0% in 2010/11. Comparative attendance is good with primary outcomes second and secondary outcomes fifth highest in Wales.
- Since 2008-09 there have been no permanent exclusion within Flintshire's Primary Schools. The number of fixed term exclusions for primary pupils rose significantly in 2009/10 to 123 instances but has reduced and remained fairly constant with 90 instances in 2010/11 and 99 in 2011/12.
- In 2008-09 in secondary schools there were eight permanent exclusions with 537 fixed term exclusions. In 2011/12 there was one Permanent Exclusion with 509 fixed term

exclusions. The number of permanent exclusions has decreased significantly in Flintshire Secondary Schools.

- Permanent exclusions have declined mainly due to the introduction of an effective Managed Move Policy but also to early intervention by the Inclusion Service working in partnership with schools, parents and pupils and relevant outside agencies.
- All practitioners in the Foundation Phase have been trained in the use of Talking Tubs, an effective approach to involve young children in planning their learning. As a result the children have a greater involvement in following their own lines of enquiry, leading to higher levels of engagement. The development of Learning Stories in the Foundation Phase means that this process is far more accessible to parents and the learners themselves. Learners in many primary and secondary schools are involved in setting their own targets for improvement and are encouraged to celebrate their achievements. A few secondary schools involve young people in planning topics to be taught.
- The CYPP has contributed to the above outcomes by:
 - establishing a range of early years learning opportunities, including pre-school play, and Chatterbox Playtime provision;
 - actively enabling access to formal and informal education provision for disabled children and young people, promoting inclusion with their peers;
 - developing educational support for children and young people from the Gypsy traveller community;
 - launching the 'Achievement Support Project' to work with young people excluded from mainstream education, involving Flintshire Youth Service, Careers Wales, the Access Team and Flintshire Local Voluntary Council;
 - supporting a 'buddying' project in Youth Clubs to enable young people with a disability to attend and participate;
 - developing opportunities for volunteering by 14-19 year olds, including a community gardening project in a sheltered housing for older people which included Ysgol Maes Hyfryd, Flintshire High School, Age Concern and Groundwork; and
 - enabling young people in the Youth Justice system to engage with informal learning opportunities.
- The impact of such provision has helped to contribute to improve school / college attendance and has worked towards the reduced levels of unauthorised absence and the reduced numbers of young people who are not in employment, education and training (NEET) to the lowest in Wales in 2012. The current plan adopts the Results Based Accountability framework to support easier identification, tracking and achievement of goals.
- This holistic approach will contribute to Year 11 pupils remaining in full-time education and will support improved results at each key stage, including for those groups at most risk of poor achievement. The approach has enabled increased attendance, increased essential skills and has contributed to the reduction in child poverty by supporting achievement and raising aspirations.
- Attendance for all Traveller pupils from September 2011 to February 2012 was 77.07%, which although low for the settled population is at a high level for the Traveller population generally and shows increased attendance during this period compared to previous years. From February 12 to July 12 this dropped to 61.49%. This is due to travellers within the county leaving school to attend summer missionaries as part of their religion. This recent pattern is a result of the born again Christian church which has opened in Connah's Quay. Attendance for the entire year was 69.0%.
- Initiative to improve Traveller transition to Secondary including work with parents and

liaison between High school and Primary School Traveller pupils, resulting in year on year increases in numbers attending Secondary Education.

- High sports participation rates in extracurricular school sport and community based sports clubs, which are optional and therefore sustained by young peoples' enjoyment and enthusiasm. 78% of primary and 67% of secondary school pupils participated in extracurricular sport in the last year (National Averages 78% and 65%). 83% of primary and 70% of secondary school pupils participated in sport in a community club outside of school (National Averages 85% and 68%).

Quality Indicator: 1.2.3 Wellbeing – Community Involvement and Decision Making

- The Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) values all children and young people as valuable members of society and we have embedded effective approaches within all sectors to raise awareness of the rights of children and young people.
- Schools have also benefited from being able to better support parental and community needs and have thus enhanced their role and status within the community. The Childcare grant has enabled the development of further after school and holiday childcare provision supporting the care and well-being of children and supporting working parents. Assisted places funding has enabled children from vulnerable families to access childcare (e.g. Nannerch CP – Wrap around Childcare, Welsh for Adults).
- We know that the CYPP is supporting children and young people to engage in meaningful decision making through impact of its work. The CYPP works well with schools, colleges and the wider third sector organisations within our communities to effectively engage and involve children and young people in decision making, delivery, inspection and evaluation of services. The excellent cross sector partnership working has enabled the authority to develop extra-curricular activity, volunteering, young enterprise and social enterprise projects which are led by children and young people. This has included inter-generational work, bilingual projects, regional collaboration and delivery of training with and for staff, e.g. we have:
 - involved young people in the recruiting of staff for the School Based Counselling Service, the Children & Young People's Partnership Coordinator and the Families First team;
 - developed a challenging training session for adults on young people's participation - involving young people from Mold Alun School as part of the 'Young People Say' project (funded by Save the Children);
 - in partnership with the National CLIC project, redeveloped the 'Young Flintshire' website, and re launched it in 2010. The website is now run by a group of Young Editors aged 14 - 19 (YFYEGS);
 - planned and delivered a 'Young @ ♥' event, in which children, young people and older people worked together well on an intergenerational project to celebrate the International Day of Older People. This has sparked ideas for future intergenerational projects with Age concern and HSCWB groups;
 - continued to facilitate young people to attend the Young People's Partnership Meetings, and work with Heads of Services to develop successful solutions to issues raised by young people;
 - developed helpful links between Urdd Gobaith, Cymru and our gypsy traveller communities with young people from Flintshire Youth Forum to share cultural issues and activities; and
 - developed a valuable social enterprise project (US UnLtd) with young homeless

people, as part of the Supporting People programme.

- The authority provides effective training on pupil participation which strengthens the understanding of 'learner voice' on governing bodies to associate pupil governors.
- The Healthy Schools Scheme, in partnership with CYPP, provides excellent training workshops for School Council pupil representatives on all aspects of participation in an annual conference which equips learners to be effective democratic representatives. These are well attended and pupils and staff welcome our support and recommendations. School Improvement Team monitoring visits include discussions with learners about their learning, opportunities for involvement in decision making and their outcomes.
- 86 schools involve learners in making decisions about environmental issues through their eco councils. 28 schools have achieved the eco-schools green flag, two of which have a platinum award.
- Over the past three years 11 of our 12 High Schools and a number of Primary schools have further developed and enhanced their community focus with financial support through the Community Focused Schools Grant, Small and Rural Schools Grant and the Childcare Grant from the Welsh Assembly Government. Such developments have contributed directly and indirectly to the delivery of the curriculum and have strongly supported the raising of standards, the well-being of children and young people, and their readiness for learning. Activities, many of which are now embedded and sustained, have provided additional and enhanced learning experiences for pupils. (e.g. Argoed High School – Mandarin; Castell Alun High School – Astronomy – Bryn Deva C.P. – Homework Club)
- Some programmes have also facilitated valuable closer links between High Schools and their feeder primaries, with activities for pupils, parents and the wider community. Where such activities have been targeted at Year 6 and 7 pupils – this has supported transition programmes. (e.g. Hawarden High School Consortium)
- With Regard to Key Stage 2/3 Transition, a highly effective primary/secondary transition protocol has been developed which is implemented on a county-wide basis. This ensures effective and accurate transfer of data, consistency of practice and enables effective planning in order to ensure curriculum continuity and progression. A county-wide learner voice survey has shown continual improvement in transition related issues over the three year period. This was named as a case study of good practice by Estyn in their thematic report on Key Stage 2/3 transition.
- Revision programmes in some High Schools have been credited as making a valuable contribution to improved examination results. (e.g. St. David's High School)
- Community Focused School activity and development are also contributing much to Flintshire's Schools' Modernisation Strategy (October 2009) specifically through consideration of Improved Learning Environments; Inclusion and Well-being and Working in Partnership themes.
- Flintshire County Council supports schools to develop their understanding of the International Dimension and Global Citizenship through British Council activities. A number of schools are linked with colleagues in Europe and Asia to celebrate inclusion and diversity.
- Gypsy and Traveller Forum in Flintshire successfully completed several projects sponsored by Save the Children. A DVD was produced by the young people aimed at reducing stereotyping against their community. As a result two members of this Flintshire Traveller Forum are now on mainstream FYF - giving a voice to Traveller young people within a local forum. Three young people on the National Traveller Forum have been involved in discussions with the Children's Commissioner for Wales about issues that affect their community.

- Chatterbox play packs translated into Polish to enable access to this initiative for Polish parents.
- Liaison with Banardos has resulted in two new community groups which aim to provide information and support access to services for Ethnic minority parents within Flintshire.

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KEY QUESTION 2 – HOW GOOD IS PROVISION?

Quality Indicator: 2.1.1 Support For School Improvement – Local Authority Support, Monitoring, Challenge and Intervention

- Support for school improvement is good, but can only be graded as adequate (although with positive prospects) due to the judgement descriptions of the current inspection framework. Strengths include support for school leadership including self-evaluation and planning for improvement; provision and use of data; monitoring and evaluation processes; identification of and intervention in underperforming schools. These are supported by strong and transparent systems, effective communication and a professional level of challenge within the system enabled by strong and enduring relationships.
- The Council has made good progress in removing primary schools from Estyn and Local Authority categories within expected timescales. Four schools were removed in 2011/12 and recommendations have been rapidly met in the one school previously identified as requiring Special Measures. However, the Council is also clear that it is accountable to communities for ensuring that underperforming schools are identified early and worked with supported to secure better outcomes for learners.
- The quality of the Council's monitoring and intervention is good. Procedures for identifying underperforming schools are robust and are underpinned by the School Partnership agreement. This framework details the criteria used to categorise schools with clear processes for providing intervention, challenge and support.
- All schools are transparently categorised and each school is aware of the category in which it is placed and the reasons for the categorisation. Currently, 12 primary schools are in local authority categories of concern, whilst no secondary or specialist schools are in need of enhanced levels of intervention. In 2011/12 91.5% of primary schools voted good/very good for the clarity of the Council's definition of monitoring, support and intervention. However, there remain too many primary schools causing concern to the local authority due to insufficiently positive outcomes, often related to issues in governance and leadership.
- The County Council School Performance Monitoring Group builds on predecessor school monitoring meetings to broaden the expertise available to schools to support better and more effective governance and leadership, together with improving learner outcomes. The Group meets with individual schools where the Authority has concerns on at least a termly basis. The outcomes of these meetings and required actions are clearly documented to School Leadership Teams and Governing Bodies. Progress and impact are reported at the following meeting cycle.
- During regular termly school visits and contacts with Governing Bodies, the link officer closely monitors the quality of school leadership. The evidence from these is used to confirm perceptions of the quality of school leadership and the school's "direction of travel". This evidence is key in determining the potential need for intervention whether due to under performance or due to facing challenging circumstances. The Council has utilised its statutory powers and issued three warnings notices to primary schools within the last year. In each case, the senior school leadership positions changed and necessary actions were committed to by Governors.
- Schools understand that advisory activity is targeted in proportion to need. A base level of support and training is available to all schools through the Link Adviser visit programme, learning networks and the CPD programme. For intervention schools, a recovery plan is brokered on which the Headteacher and Chair of Governors report progress to the School's Governing Body and the County Council School Performance

Scrutiny Group. Wherever practicable, this is incorporated into the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.

- The use made of data by schools and Council officers at all levels to raise standards of performance is good. Welsh Government Core Data sets are complemented by the provision of additional data analyses to support and challenge schools in evaluating the performance of particular groups. Rigorous analysis of school and authority data is undertaken. There is good data in respect of vulnerable groups to support schools in improving outcomes for learners. This informs the school target setting process and enables advisers to challenge expectations. Training and briefings on data usage are regularly available for school leaders and Governors. Key messages on performance data are also collectively considered at Headteachers' Federation and Governors' Association meetings.
- Significant progress has been made in improving school self-evaluation processes as a result of guidance and support to Headteachers, link visits and Headteacher seminars. Adviser scrutiny of self-evaluation reports similarly highlight appropriate levels of rigour in the analysis of outcomes and provision, with the priorities for improvement now explicit within the majority of school improvement plans for 2012/13 and appropriately referenced to SEG and other funding sources.
- Where there are significant issues of leadership, intervention is focused on developing the school's own capacity to improve. To secure effective whole school improvement, intervention programmes involve collaboration between staff from a variety of services such as Inclusion, HR and Finance. The capacity of the system to improve itself and learn from experience has been enhanced by Headteachers that have been employed and trained as System Leaders from September to support Target Setting, Focus Visits and Headteacher Performance Management in the Primary Sector. System Leaders/ Officers also attend governing body data meetings annually to support the development of the Governors' challenge role.
- Collaboration between Flintshire and other authorities is strong. Flintshire leads for North Wales on Management Information Systems, Inclusion, Wellbeing and aspects of School Modernisation. Flintshire has hosted national pilots on a range of education improvement issues including Professional Learning Communities and Additional Learning Needs. Council staff have a high national profile in leading and developing policy and practice in a number of areas, including Foundation Phase, Governance, Leadership and Performance Management. The team are also contributing to the proposed new Wales Education Improvement Protocol to identify and intervene in Authorities in need of significant improvement. This enables the team to provide much valued advice and support to schools.
- The transition to new regional school improvement service provision is developing well. Since September 2012, Flintshire, along with other North Wales authorities has been working within a new regional school improvement service structure to drive increasing standards and improving performance. Officers have been trained as System Leaders. On a practical level this has entailed the utilisation of common approaches to monitor, challenge, support and intervene in schools. They are:-
 - Common approach to monitoring and supporting school performance;
 - Common approach to challenge and intervention in school performance issues
 - Single collation of school performance and data collection and analysis
 - Shared leadership and management evaluation tool;
 - Common profiling of Local Authority Performance; and
 - Co-ordination of regional literacy, Numeracy and Inclusion Strategies.
- Flintshire has pooled its best approaches and documentation with other Authorities. Other North Wales Authorities have done likewise in generating the North Wales School

Improvement Strategy in place from September 2012. Final arrangements have also been made for staffing of the home commissioning team and the regional school improvement service delivery team from April 2013.

Quality Indicator: 2.1.2 Support For School Improvement – The Authority’s work in Raising Standards in Priority Areas, including Curriculum Support

- The Council’s increasingly effective monitoring of school performance and its strategies for school improvement result in focused support and intervention for priority areas and curriculum support. The quality of training and curriculum support provided for literacy and numeracy is good, continues to be much needed and has a significant impact on raising standards in all Key Stages.
- High quality improvement planning ensures initiatives effectively address local and national priorities and continue to provide well-targeted interventions in schools most in need of improvement. Experienced and skilled team members work effectively across key stages providing very good quality training. Effective mentoring of teachers and coaching of subject leaders strengthens leadership roles within schools.
- The authority has highly effective and embedded processes for training and quality assuring teacher assessment. The maintenance of accurate and robust teacher assessment processes year on year is central to the work of team in challenging standards and is a particular strength of the authority. Support includes training, audits, attendance at annual cluster moderation events to monitor the accuracy of best-fit judgements and cluster profiles in each of the core subjects.
- Focused reviews of teaching and leadership for English and mathematics and effective and embedded networking systems in both primary and secondary phases ensure best practice is shared throughout the authority.
- Primary intervention is planned and on-going for the group of lowest performing schools in Language/Literacy and Maths/Numeracy. Targeted support is given by officers who work closely with the Foundation Phase Advisory Team and System Leaders. Targeted training has been given, including professional development for key staff and the school co-ordinators, and training in teacher assessment at Key Stage 2 and 3.
- High quality training in use of intervention programmes and on-going support targeted at need, has enabled schools to effectively tackle under attainment in literacy and numeracy based on the “Catch Up” training evaluation. There is good take up for courses like Supporting Higher Attaining Learners in English, the impact of which has been a 3 percentage point increase in the number of learners achieving level 5+. This being a 5 percentage point increase over the last 3 years from MIS data.
- The Chatterbox Playtime team continue to develop innovative and high quality programmes to engage parents/carers in the early literacy and numeracy development of their children. The team consistently receives very positive feedback from parents, schools and external agencies for the quality and impact of its courses from LAP/NAP data. The Family Learning programme has also made significant progress in trying to break the inter-generation cycle of low basic skills, with approximately 35% of participating parents gaining qualifications from the Open College Network from Family Learning data.
- Focused support to schools and/or individual class teachers has delivered significant improvements in the quality of primary science pedagogy. Observations from monitoring reports and follow-up visits have indicated a significant improvement in the pedagogy in target schools and improvements in end of key stage performance.
- Significant progress has been noted in the range and depth of science enquiry tasks in

Year 1 and 2 classes as a result of a series of focused INSET sessions delivered during 2010/12. These INSET sessions focused on the planning, teaching and assessment of higher order tasks, particularly those that develop Level 3 aspects. However, concern has been noted regarding the status of science in the Foundation Phase following the end of teacher assessment of science in Year 2. In response to these events a new exemplar science scheme is being developed to ensure teachers plan and deliver higher level science enquiry tasks. During 2012 the existing exemplar science scheme was upgraded to reflect a changing WG focus on numeracy and literacy across the curriculum.

- The Authority is committed to utilising the Basic Skills Quality Standard Award in order to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential. Lessons are assessed, SLT are challenged and documentation scrutinised prior to awarding the Standard. External verification confirms rigour and validity of the Authority's accreditation processes. 22 primary and three secondary schools have gained the award since its introduction in 2010. Council provision of BKSB resources further support high schools' evaluation of basic and key skills' needs and progress, enabling them to target support most effectively.
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT): The quality of support, guidance and training is good, and holds exceptionally high patterns of "buy back" and satisfaction. For example, 94% of primary schools voted good/very good for the effectiveness of the Council's support for Education ICT services in last year's School Survey.
- Strong strategic focus upon innovation and creativity promotes effective use of ICT to impact upon standards (1.1.4). Support and guidance of the wider use of ICT is excellent, especially exemplified by work with the literacy team.
- Foundation Phase: The quality of support, guidance and training within the Foundation Phase is good with experienced team members working effectively across maintained and non-maintained settings to provide high quality training and guidance which meet both the national agenda and local needs. Evidence is drawn through professional networks, course evaluations and service plans. Effective networking systems in the maintained and non-maintained sectors ensure best practice is shared systematically across the authority. 91% of Primary schools voted good or very good for the provision for the Foundation Phase education planned by the Local Authority.
- Welsh Medium Support: There is high quality Welsh language support through Athrawon Bro as evidenced by overall improving standards in Welsh language assessments and examinations. Primary and Secondary Welsh Medium Provision benefit from North East Wales collaborative networks and access (where needed) to specialist staffing from North West Wales.

Quality Indicator: 2.1.4 Support For School Improvement – Support for School Leadership, Management and Governance

- Support for school leadership and governance is good. There are effective processes to identify, evaluate and develop the quality of school leadership. This has resulted in strong and improving quality of leadership in schools as evidenced by school inspection outcomes, overall improvements in learner outcomes and the progress made by schools identified by the Council as being in need of improvement.
- Evaluation of the quality of school leadership is central to the Council's intervention programme. Leadership is evaluated through scrutiny of performance outcomes, link officer monitoring visits and regular school performance monitoring meetings. Reviews are undertaken where schools give cause for concern and subsequently interventions are implemented with a particular focus on school leadership. A regional approach and

regional forms have been adopted from September 2012 for all School Focus Visits. This includes the implementation of a new regional Leadership and Management Evaluation Tool developed from local best practice.

- Robust and effective recruitment procedures are in place for all senior appointments. Comprehensive induction programmes are in place both for new Headteachers and existing Headteachers from out of area or transferring schools. Termly PHIP Meetings have been held for 1st and 2nd Year new primary headteachers and mentors have been appointed. Consistently positive feedback has been received from headteachers who find the programme supportive in developing their new role. Although funding for PHIP ceased in September 2012, new headteachers' meetings have continued and mentors have been allocated.
- A highly-effective programme of curriculum leadership networks focuses on developing and disseminating good and sector-leading practice and ensuring that senior leaders are well informed about local and national issues and their role in enabling key developments in teaching and learning to take place at their schools. Leaders and managers in schools are accessing Flintshire Corporate Leadership programmes this year. A new business managers development network has also been launched.
- Conferences for primary headteachers and deputies/senior managers have been held termly for training, information sharing and sharing of good practice. Evaluations are completed at the end of each session and feedback informs future events. Feedback for 2011/12 judged the conferences to be good overall and supportive of school developments. Additional time needs to be built in for more group discussions. Similarly, the Authority continues to support the highly regarded sub-regional and regional secondary leadership conferences.
- The Local Authority has invested in appointing and training Headteachers as Acting System Leaders from September 2012 to conduct schools' target setting, support school self-evaluation, school improvement planning and conduct headteacher appraisals in line with the new Performance Management arrangements. This approach has benefits in raising expectations at the "donor" and "receiving" schools as well as enabling full time School improvement Officers to increase their availability to support schools causing concern. For some interventions, the Acting System Leaders are best placed to offer practical support and challenge.
- Termly meetings for Foundation Phase Managers/Nominated Practitioners are delivered by the Senior Adviser and Training Officer as professional development, sharing best practice and highlighting priorities for improvement to build the capacity of middle managers to secure higher standards in their schools across the Foundation Phase. Six Foundation Phase Partnership Groups encompassing all Flintshire schools, reporting to a Local Authority Partnership Board, have been established to provide a platform for sharing best practice, encourage joint working, deliver professional development/ PLCs and develop resources in order to raise standards in Foundation Phase and build sustained capacity for self improvement. Targeted Foundation Phase support for schools with low performance has proved to be effective in building practitioner skills and confidence, resulting in improved data and contributed to schools being removed from follow up categories.
- In response to changing national priorities the Local Authority has also:-
 - introduced the Leadership standards, a self-review tool to school leaders both as part of the performance management guidance and training and as part of our continuing commitment to leadership development via the leadership development network (average of 25 attendees across all phases);
 - worked in partnership with our local HEI (Glyndwr university) to offer a modular accredited programme at level 7 (Masters) which includes leadership modules;
 - encouraged middle leaders to develop their skills by applying to become external

mentors on the national MEP programme for NQTs, with currently the highest number of mentors recruited from this Local Authority across Wales;

- continued to support and mentor potential NPQH candidates (currently 12 candidates interviewed and endorsed by the Council from both phases. In the last round four candidates were selected for assessment of whom three were successful in achieving the award. They have all given feedback to the leadership network; and
- from September 2012, we have commenced implementation of “best of the North” approaches through the common approach to school improvement. Documentation and practices from Flintshire and Denbighshire are very much to the fore.

Support to Governors

- The annual governor development programme is continuously updated to reflect national priorities and address key themes. It continues to be provided in partnership with Governors Wales, the All Wales Centre for Governor Training and Research, Flintshire Governors Association and with neighbouring local authorities. This has increased the style, depth and availability of training offered. Training programmes already include the, soon to be, statutory training on induction, role of the Chair, role of the Clerk and understanding performance data. Particular focus is given to the effective use of data to inform development and this has improved governors’ ability to hold the school to account for its performance and to agree and monitor priorities for improvement.
- Current resource levels will need to be increased to meet the ongoing statutory training requirements. The six north Wales Governor Support Services meet termly and further collaborative work in delivering training is planned. The Authority is exploring options with local FE College providers to deliver some of the statutory governor programmes
- Course evaluation and post-training evaluation documents demonstrate the value and effectiveness of the programme. Evaluations of the programme are consistently high. The 2011 post training evaluation survey (10% return) shows 97% of governors are aware of the training and support available and felt that the Education Service is providing the training and support needed to fulfil their role as a governor. 96% felt that the training made them more effective as a governor giving them a better understanding and made their role easier. Attendance at governor training sessions is monitored and benchmarked across North Wales. Attendance rates remain consistent and are amongst the highest in North Wales
- Four governing bodies in Flintshire have been assessed as meeting ‘The Governors Wales Quality Standards Award’. A further 11 governing bodies have applied for assessment against the award as at September 2012.
- Flintshire Governors Association acts as an effective consultative forum. The Chair of the Association is also current Chair of Governors Wales Management Committee establishing a key consultative link with national policy makers.
- The Local Authority provides an electronic Lotus Notes database link to each school which provides a real-time register of governor appointments and vacancies and enables schools and the Council to effect timely governor recruitment. There is regular monitoring of governing body vacancies and attendance at training. The Council works with schools to ensure that governing bodies have the skills they need and reflect the communities they serve.
- Officers attend governor meetings in schools causing concern and the school performance monitoring procedures allow for termly (or more frequently if required) meetings between the Corporate Director, elected members, advisers, Headteacher and Chair of Governors to clarify the causes for concern and the expectations for improvement.

- Primary Link Officers and System Leaders have monitored, challenged and supported the work of governing bodies through attendance at all Governing Body Core Data Meetings, attendance at meetings of schools in a categories of concern, sending letters of concern where needed and calling in Governors to attend performance monitoring meetings with elected members and the Director at County Hall. Governing Bodies of schools in categories of concern have improved significantly in their monitoring and challenge role as a result of these actions over the past year.

Quality Indicator: 2.2.1 Support for Additional Learning Needs and Educational Inclusion – work to meet its Statutory Obligations in Respect of Children and Young People with Additional Learning Needs

- The Local Authority has maintained its strength in meeting statutory obligations with regard to Additional Learning Needs (ALN). The 2011 LAESCYP inspection concluded that “processes to support ALN are clear, efficiently managed, and effectively monitored. Well-understood procedures and rigorous multi-agency moderation of requests for additional support provide schools with responses that are consistent”.
- As part of the ongoing rigorous monitoring of the Statutory Assessment process a Provision Mapping Monitoring Data base has been set up to record all requests for Statutory Assessment/ SLAs and notification from health for pre-school pupils with ALN. This will record numbers of requests, the source of the referral, the decision of the Moderation Panel and the final outcome and provision (e.g. Statement or Note in Lieu/SLA). This has started in September 2012 and is in a trial period. It is anticipated that this will support the continued the trend of improvement with regard to issuing Final Statements within 26 weeks, in particular without exceptions (71.2 % in 2007/09 to 95.6% in 2011/12).
- Appeals to the SEN Tribunal Wales remain low indicating good working practice and agreement regarding provision and support. Learning Advisors work very closely with parents and other professionals to ensure satisfaction of Statement content. The number of appeals by school population places Flintshire as fifth lowest of Welsh Local Authorities for 2010/11. During the period 2011/12 only one appeal was lodged reducing further the level of appeals.
- Flintshire is working hard to balance the need for additional resources against an appropriate level of challenge to schools to fulfil their duties with regard to pupils with ALN. Increased scrutiny within the moderation process has impacted on the allocation of council funded resources. Service Level Agreements (SLA's) continue to be utilised to ensure quicker access to support for these pupils. The number of SLAs issued annually has been fairly constant since 2007 at approximately 55 per year up until 2010/11. Whilst 59 requests for support at School Action Plus were made to the Council's Moderation Panel in 2011/12, only 35 SLAs were issued as a result of the increased scrutiny and expectations. Revised SLA documentation also reinforces the role of schools in supporting pupils with ALN. This along with raising expectations of the officer role at reviews and the development of the SLA Database has ensuring increased rigour with regard to monitoring.
- The total number of Statements continues to decrease, from 899 in 2007 to 680 in 2012 supporting the principles of Statements or Something Better. The impact of the additional provision is monitored by lead officers through the Annual Review process.
- Increased monitoring and accountability relating to the allocation and impact of TAs continues to be a priority. The administration relating to this has been allocated to a member of the Statutory Assessment Service and regular liaison with finance and HR

officers, and school based staff is ensuring more rigorous monitoring of the budget. The recording of information through ONE has ensured the availability of accurate and current data and will support improved monitoring by Council officers.

- Revision of the Council's moderation processes has resulted in improved practice. A dual panel process has been retained in relation to learning and BESD. However the panels now meet at the same time with an allocated time slot for joint consideration of pupils which had previously been passed between the panels. The impact of this has been to reduce the time delay in pupils accessing appropriate provision and also reducing the time spent by officers previously required to attend both panels.
- Membership of the Learning Moderation panel has been reviewed and now includes the Superintendent Paediatric Physiotherapist to support panel decisions relating to the physical needs of pupils and their impact on access to the curriculum.
- The process relating to Year 6 transition has been revised to ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010. Decisions are fully recorded clearly documenting why parental / pupil preferences have not been supported when this occurs.
- Early intervention remains a strength of the Council with ongoing partnership working with a range of agencies ensuring awareness of pupils with ALN from an early age.
- The EYAP Monitoring Database has been streamlined to provide more specific information and to highlight to the Education Psychology service when pupils are needed to be brought back to the Council's Moderation Panel for discussion. Figures for 2011/12 demonstrate the effectiveness of this process as 64 pupils were identified and subsequently monitored or supported at EYAP Stage of the Code of Practice.
- The excellent working relationship between Inclusion Service officers and the Foundation Phase Team has continued to support the improved standards for pupils with ALN in 2012/13. Termly meetings have been established during 2011/12 between the Senior Learning Advisor for Foundation Phase, the Early Entitlement Team, the PPA and the Senior Learning Advisor for IEAS to critically examine the monitoring of provision and finance for pre-school and early entitlement pupils with ALN. We have also ensured teachers in the Early Entitlement Team liaise with the Educational Psychologist with responsibility for pre-school to share information on pupils with ALN in pre-school/Early Entitlement settings.
- The Council has been reviewing the range of specialist provision for pupils with ALN. A programme of change has been developed in response to the changing profile of pupil needs and also to support the priority of maintaining local placements. The role of identified officers has been revised to include responsibility for monitoring of specialist provision and implementation of the service vision for 'Resourced' pupils.
- The introduction of monitoring and tracking devices across the Inclusion Service has supported officers to evaluate the effectiveness of their provision with regard to pupil progress.
- The inspections of the two specialist schools identified areas of sector leading practice within both schools. The Welsh Government has also recently accepted a UPOSS bid between Ysgol Maes Hyfryd Specialist School and Deeside College which will support the development of provision within the FE sector for pupils with communication difficulties.
- The Senior Learning Advisor for Social Inclusion and Wellbeing is the lead officer for Safeguarding within the Lifelong Learning Directorate. As a member of the LSCB, he is well placed to review the impact of safeguarding policies and procedures on pupils with ALN. Training for school-based staff is delivered through the Inclusion Welfare Service, again providing the Council with the opportunity to promote the safety and wellbeing of children with ALN.
- The Council officer with responsibility for LAC achievement is a member of the Inclusion

Service and as such has well established links across the whole service. She is a member of the Behaviour Management Group and ensures that the needs of LAC with ALN are considered and resourced appropriately through the range of provision available or funded through the SEG. Attainment of these pupils is rigorously monitored through member scrutiny.

Quality Indicator: 2.2.2 Support for Additional Learning Needs and Educational Inclusion – work in raising standards for children and young people with ALN

- The 2011 LAESCYP inspection report recognised that “the service provides good quality support and comprehensive training for teachers. As a result, more schools have found that they can respond to the needs of many pupils from within existing resources. This is having a significant impact on referrals for additional support and has reduced the number of referrals to the service.”
- Training remains a core area of work for Inclusion Services. Greater rigor with regard to potential need and impact is applied when considering access to training. In some areas this is considered jointly with partner agencies, e.g. SALT participation in the ELKLAN training and evaluation process. This ensures training resources are targeted at schools with the greatest need for support.
- The extensive training programme has continued and has been extended in response to school requests in some areas, e.g. additional courses for TAs supporting pupils with BESD (three courses to run in the Autumn Term instead of the single course planned).
- The focus of the Authority remains to build capacity within our schools and reduce the dependency on the Council. A training programme for new ALNCoS in Flintshire has become a regular part of the training programme and includes information regarding the ALNCo role, Graduated Response, information regarding the range of Local Authority services and provision and entry/exit criteria for Local Authority support. This has been devised in direct response to the significant turn over of staff in this role and an increase in requests that were not appropriate to the pupil’s level of need. (As stated in 2:2:1 only 35 out of 59 requests were successful).
- The change of approach within our services with the focus being on supporting school-based staff to know their pupils well, whilst providing advice, guidance and support on moving the child forward has resulted in success, despite initial reservations from schools, e.g. following the introduction of the Learning Support Assessment Pack, the number of pupils requiring additional support from the Local Authority has shown a downward trend from 173 (2009/10) to 133 (2011/12).
- Greater collaborative work has been a focus within the Council, with outside agencies and also as part of the consortium. This has led to the following recent developments / opportunities:
 - the Learning Advisor for EAL joining the Foundation Phase training courses to provide information relating to language acquisition. 220 Foundation Phase TAs have accessed training on Early Language Development and adult-child interaction. Evaluations indicated a positive response to this event and the EAL foundation phase teacher has observed improved interactions between TAs and EAL pupils in the early years;
 - four dual language assessments for EAL pupils with language difficulties in 2011/12. This is a new development for the Local Authority, previously SALT assessments had only been completed in English;
 - Educational Psychologists and Learning Advisor for Looked After Children have delivered joint training for social workers and teachers regarding the completion of Personal Education Plans;

- the Senior Learning Advisor for IEAS and the Educational Psychologist with responsibility for pre-school are working with the Foundation Phase Advisors to deliver a series of training sessions for TAs in the Foundation Phase. This will be delivered in the Spring Term 2013 and will address the 'Role of the TA with pupils with ALN in the Foundation Phase';
- ELKLAN delivered for both primary and secondary sectors in collaboration with health colleagues. Collaboration with neighbouring Local Authorities has been identified to facilitate the delivery of Welsh medium courses;
- collaboration with Denbighshire and Conwy Local Authorities to deliver the British Dyslexia Association course for TAs;
- the exploration of a consortium BILD accredited training course for de-escalation and physical intervention approach for all agencies; and
- Flintshire continues to lead more widely in the Welsh Government 'Robust Trial of the ALN Statutory Reforms.' This entails continuation of the Quality Assurance System and the implementation of the IDP. Two Local Authority Officers are the project managers and are overseeing the involvement of several of Flintshire's schools and have also included the neighbouring Wrexham Local Authority, who have involved two Early Years settings in the 'Robust Trial'. Training for all schools on the implementation of the QAS and IDP has been completed. Raising awareness sessions were delivered to many identified groups including Inclusion Officers, North Wales Local Authority Officers, schools, health and social services. The trial has been extended further and two ALNCoS have been seconded to support the expansion required. They will also participate in the Train the Trainer programme ensuring sustainability of the new ALN Statutory Reforms when they become legislation. The project managers have also been directly involved in the Welsh Government Consultation Conferences in both North and South Wales.
- Effective monitoring of service impact remains a priority and following the development of the QAS for the ALN Reform within Flintshire, appropriate tracking systems are being developed across the whole Inclusion Service to support effective evaluation. Following a recent training event, managers are also considering how the ONE database can be utilised to collate and provide information in a format suitable for each service area.
- Training along with outreach services has supported positive outcomes for a range of pupils with ALN, e.g:
 - biannual assessments for Traveller pupils who are working below chronological norms in areas of literacy and numeracy demonstrated significant progress. Out of the children tested in January 2011 and January 2012 93% maintained or increased their standardised score in reading accuracy, 84% for reading comprehension, 62% for spelling and 76% when tested on their mathematical ability; and
 - individual English language support for EAL learners with language acquisition stages A-C has supported increased numbers of Secondary aged pupils achieving the CSI at Key Stage 3 and 4.
- Sessional support provided by the Learning Support Service has supported the following pupil progress:

May 2011-May 2012	Reading Accuracy	Reading Comprehension	Spelling
% pupils maintaining SAS or improving by 1 point or more	85%	68%	57%
% pupils with negative improvement on SAS	15%	32%	43%
% pupils achieving Level 3 or above at KS2	2010/11 49%	2011/12 68%	

- Training and ongoing support for pupils with Visual Impairment has continued to ensure 100% access to their local mainstream school. The Service NNEB provides direct training in the production of materials for TAs supporting individual pupils increasing school's ownership of pupils support needs. Pupil outcomes:

	Key Stage 2 CSI	Key Stage 3 CSI	Level Threshold 1	Level Threshold 2
Hearing Impaired	100%	71%	86%	57%
Visually Impaired	100%	50% (1 of 2 pupils)	100%	67%

- Links between Inclusion Service and School Improvement Service continue to be strengthened. The directorate has moved from four separate strategies to one School Improvement Strategy combining the previous Primary, Secondary, ICT and Inclusion strategies into one document. This has enabled managers to consider the key priorities for schools and ourselves and target resources accordingly.
- Inclusion officers continue to participate in planned support and school improvement team visits to schools. This was previously targeted at the secondary phase but has now extended into primary. Reports highlight the areas of strength and recommendations with timed action plans for improvement are generated. Information collected through the QAS is used to inform visits.

Quality Indicator: 2.2.3 Support for Additional Learning Needs and Educational Inclusion – provision for children and young people with ALN, including provision that is commissioned and /or provided by or with other agencies

- The Local Authority has an extensive continuum of support services and provision for pupils with wide range of ALN with the majority of pupils being able to access their education within Flintshire. Changes are underway with regard to specialist provision to improve the suitability and range in relation to individual need.
- Pupils attending specialist Resources have access to good and in some cases outstanding provision as indicated by Estyn Inspection reports. The Local Authority has clear criteria for access to Resourced provision and this has been generated in conjunction with other professionals where appropriate, e.g. SLI. Pupils access the provision via a Statement of SEN or SLA and places are allocated through the Moderation Panels. Reviews are held regularly and indicate that pupils make good progress. Work is underway to extend the remit of Resourced provision to support pupils across the county, not just those within the identified schools.
- The continued focus on challenging the need for, along with the costs associated with Out of County placements is ongoing and has brought about a financial savings. Clear

outcome focused protocols are in place, aimed at ensuring collaborative working between the Directorate, Social Services for Children and Health.

- A regional hub has been established for the North Wales consortium to support the placements for low incidence, high cost residential placements. The work undertaken by Flintshire through the Out of County review has been adopted by the hub to be extended across the region.
- Pupils who are unable to access mainstream provision are also supported through the Local Authority's EOTAS provision. Home tuition is provided where necessary and tutors work collaboratively with schools to support pupils to maintain links with their schools. Access criteria have been reviewed to ensure this support is available only to those who are incapable of attending school.
- Local Authority officers have a good knowledge of the services provided by other agencies and signpost schools and parents towards these. Support is also provided to make appropriate requests, e.g. SC-MAP referrals and SALT. Officer support and guidance for schools has improved the completion of referral forms and consequently has reduced the delays in accessing provision. Training by officers is also provided to support a clear understanding of individual needs where necessary, e.g. training regarding Gypsy Traveller culture for Careers Wales Advisors.
- The Inclusion Service regularly reviews its provision, and the way in which support is delivered. Changes are underway within a number of services, for example:
 - the EPS is reviewing its protocols in relation to its service delivery. A range of consultation models are being trialled and targeted, and service access is being considered against a time allocation model. Inter-service protocols with the Behaviour Support Service are also being reviewed;
 - a joint Principal Educational Psychologist is currently operating across Flintshire and Wrexham. The longer term view is that this will become a single service and work is underway across the two Councils to determine the structure and remit of the new service;
 - the integrated service delivery through CLASS / SALT has been reviewed and simplified into three clear stages of support; and
 - progress is being made with regard to a sub-regional sensory service covering Flintshire, Wrexham and Denbighshire Councils. This is due to be in place by the start of the next academic year.

Quality Indicator: 2.2.4 Support for Additional Learning Needs and Educational Inclusion - work with parents and carers of children and young people with ALN

- The Council works well with parents, as evidenced by the consistently low numbers of appeals to the special needs tribunal for Wales (SENTW). Local Authority officers are readily identifiable and accessible to parents and carers to ensure access to advice and support.
- All parents whose children are going through Statutory Assessment are requested to fill in a satisfaction survey. Out of those returned in 2011/12 83% indicated they were either very or extremely happy with the process with 100% being satisfied with the final statement and provision.
- The Council has a Parent Partnership Service (PP) provided through the Citizens Advice Bureau. This service is used extensively to support parents. The PP has representation on the Inclusion Service Steering Group to advise regarding support for parents. Annual Reports are also produced for the Inclusion Service and these are used along side questionnaires to guide future practice.
- The Council provides an effective Dispute Resolution Service to parents through SNAP

Cymru. This service is signposted by officers and through Parental Information Documentation.

- The Local Authority utilises 'MEIC' which is the National Advocacy and Advice Helpline for children and young people. 'MEIC' provides a single point of contact via telephone, text and instant messaging seven days a week. This provides independent professional advocacy.
- Information Booklets are provided to parents as part of the statutory assessment process. A named officer is allocated to all pupils undergoing statutory assessment and parents liaise directly with this officer regarding their child and any queries regarding the process. Information relating to secondary transfers has been updated to ensure parents are fully informed regarding this process.
- Parents are invited and encouraged to attend Annual Review / SLA review meetings to discuss the needs and progress made by their child. All parents are asked to complete the Parental Contribution Form to the Annual Review. Any concerns are addressed at the meeting.
- There is high percentage attendance (in excess of 95%) at Educational Psychology Consultation Meetings and Behaviour Planning Meetings. This supports parents to develop appropriate strategies for use with their children.
- The Inclusion Service has a range of guidance booklets to inform parents regarding services and provision. Further information is readily available through Flintshire's website. The Family Information Service also provides full information regarding an extensive range of support and services available locally.
- All schools have access to the Bibliotherapy information system through the Inclusion Service Officers and local libraries. A research project is underway to measure the impact of this system.
- The Educational Psychology (EP) Service works closely with parents and prioritises early intervention and support. Advice and support is provided in the early stages of pupil difficulty to prevent escalation of need. The Service also has an essential role to play in signposting parent to access other services for both the pupil and parental need. EPs have strong links with CYP officers and information is circulated regularly. This in turn is used to inform parents of a range of services and provision, e.g. summer activities. EPs also provide parents with essential information regarding their own needs. A Parental Satisfaction Questionnaire has been developed and is currently being used with parents to review the EP service.
- Guidance for parents to help support individual pupil needs is provided by all Inclusion Services through consultation meetings, e.g. Learning Support (literacy / numeracy acquisition), CLASS (language / communication skills) and Behaviour Support. The Sensory Service also provides support for parents and families to develop signing, visual stimulation and general communication skills. Reports to parents include information relating to targets and progress towards these.
- The Local Authority recognises the positive impact of parental involvement on pupil attainment. Schools are encouraged to work collaboratively with parents and to develop strategies to improve parental engagement. The EP service in conjunction with the Parenting Strategy Officer has developed a range of training packages to support this. Where these have been implemented, schools have reported a positive impact on parental involvement, e.g. School Readiness Programme where parents indicated an improvement in their child's kind and helpful behaviours along with a reduction in behavioural difficulties.
- The English as an Additional Language (EAL) service has further developed the support to parents regarding admissions. Officers now attend all admissions meetings with all EAL parents to ascertain their child's previous educational experience, interests and strengths. There has been an increase in the number of school reports obtained from

previous schools abroad, resulting in more efficient differentiation and pupil groupings for EAL learners new to the county.

- Bilingual Polish support for EAL families is now available through the EAL service. The translation service (Language line) is used regularly in schools for speakers of other languages.
- Information relating to community support for parents to develop their own language skills is provided where necessary. The Inclusion Welfare Service also provides a crucial service in supporting parents through signposting a range of services and benefits.
- Specialist Council teams provide outreach support for Gypsy Traveller families. This has been extended to include completing parent's evenings on sites.

Quality Indicator: 2.3.1 Promoting Social Inclusion and Wellbeing – Work to Promote Social Inclusion and Wellbeing of all Children and Young People, including Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Preventing Exclusion and Education Otherwise Than At School (EOTAS)

- The Council has a highly effective range of services and provision targeting social inclusion and wellbeing. The Senior Learning Advisor for Social Inclusion and Wellbeing, appointed in September 2011, leads the provision targeted at providing support to pupils, parents and schools in this area. The service comprises of the following:
 - an Inclusion Service with a strong team of experienced professionals who work closely with schools to support social inclusion, e.g. Behaviour Support Service, designated LAC officer, EOTAS officer, Educational Psychologists, School Based Counsellors and the Inclusion Welfare Service; and
 - Time for Change, which is a new service developed through Families First funding, replacing previous Cymorth projects. This is a multi-disciplinary team that will target support for vulnerable young people and their families.
- A Wellbeing Strategy has been developed for the LA in collaboration with representatives from schools and other agencies. The Pupils Attitude to Self and School (PASS) survey has been implemented in all secondary schools and the majority of primary schools to provide support alongside other systems to give an indication of pupil wellbeing.
- Policies and guidance promoting social inclusion include the Behaviour & Attendance Policy, Respecting Others guidance, Child Protection guidance and a Managed Moves Protocol which has now been extended successfully into primary schools.
- The well established Inclusion Welfare Service which provides excellent universal and targeted support. Officers are based within high schools and work on a consortium basis to ensure excellent knowledge of the local area, pupils and families.
- A highly effective Behaviour Moderation Panel which has representation from a range of agencies / officers, i.e. Education Psychology, LAC, Youth Justice Service (YJS), EOTAS, Behaviour Support, Inclusion Education Assessment, Youth Service, Careers Wales, Inclusion Welfare and school-based staff. This forum identifies and coordinates provision for pupils with BESD. Pupil progress is reviewed regularly to ensure that provision is appropriate to need and progress is being made. YJS & LAC officers also have good links with Social Services ensuring the sharing of information with relevant colleagues. The links between this and the Learning Moderation Panel have been reviewed resulting in a shared time slot for the consideration of pupils whose needs fall into both areas.
- Resourced provision includes a comprehensive Portfolio Pupil Referral Unit (PPRU). This provision is currently under review with the aim being to maximise the opportunities for pupils accessing this. Flexible, short term access has been developed for some centres to support pupils and schools. Support is also provided for schools to develop their own in-house Nurture Groups.

- The positive impact of the Local Authority services and provision can be identified through the following:
 - a continued upward trend in attendance within secondary schools. This represents an improvement from 91.8% in 2006/07 to 93% in 2011/12. Unauthorised absences within the secondary sector have consistently been either the lowest or second lowest recorded for Wales since 2006/07;
 - attendance rates within the primary sector have been consistently above the Wales average since 2006/07 and have shown an improvement from 93.7% (2009/10) to 93.9% (2010/11);
 - Flintshire has a history of low incidence of permanent exclusions. Inclusion Service officers work closely with schools to support preventative strategies to enable pupils to maintain their placements. Local Authority officers are accessible and respond quickly to school / parental queries and requests and this has resulted in a reduction in permanent exclusions from 2007/08 to 2011/12, with Primary numbers reducing from one to zero and Secondary from nine to one pupil(s);
 - there has also been significant reduction in the number of fixed term exclusions in the secondary sector from 927 in 2006/07 to 478 (5 days or less) and from 111 to 31 for six days or more;
 - the number of pupils accessing the PPRU has reduced from 68 (2010/11) to 53 (2011/12);
 - improved pupil attainment at GCSE level has been secured within the Portfolio Pupil Referral Unit. Comparison between 2008/09 and 2009/10 indicates an increase in GCSE attainment as indicated below. Pupils have access to Entry Level qualifications but centres are working on prioritising success at GCSE level and also access to Essential Skills Wales qualifications (2010/11); and
 - the proportion of 16+ pupils not in education or training (NEET) in 2009 was 3.7% which was significantly lower than the Welsh average of 5.7% and ranked third lowest across all Local Authorities. This figure has reduced year on year with the current figure of 2.7%, with Flintshire now being the joint lowest for Wales.

Looked After Children

- The Local Authority has due regard for the Welsh Government guidance Towards a Stable Life and Brighter Future and has a designated officer focused on monitoring and supporting pupils who are Looked After (LAC). Excellent collaborative working has been developed with a range of stakeholders to ensure a coordinated response. An electronic database of LAC is maintained with data being transferred to the education management system (ONE) to ensure shared access of the information. Furthermore, a list of designated teachers is also held in line with the guidance.
- Progress of young people designated LAC is monitored and reported annually to Council Members through Scrutiny Committee Meetings. In 2010/11 66% of Key Stage 2 pupils and 38% of Key Stage 3 pupils achieved the CSI compared to the Welsh averages of 57% and 69%. With regard to Key Stage 4, 93% (14 out of 15 pupils) left with at least one formal qualification with 79% achieving at least one GCSE. These achievements are significantly higher than the Welsh averages of 71% and 56% respectively. The percentage of pupils achieving 5 A* - G stands at 33%, which is around the Welsh average of 35%.
- Pupil success is regularly recognised through the annual Pride of Flintshire Awards
- In 2009/10 no LAC were permanently excluded from school. Fixed Term Exclusions rose and resulted in 51 days in 2008/09 due to 1 particular pupil and have since reduced again.
- In 2009/10, 82% (9 out of 11) of 19 year old Care Leavers were in education, training or employment, making Flintshire the second highest performing authority in Wales. In

2011/12 the percentage was 71% representing 5 out of 7 young people. These figures remain significantly higher than the Welsh average of 52.2%.

- LAC reviews are held in conjunction with SEN Reviews where a pupil has been identified as having special education needs. This ensures that progress is considered by all relevant agencies, progress in all areas is monitored and appropriate provision is made available. Further regular monitoring is facilitated through the fortnightly Behaviour Moderation Group. This is attended by a range of Local Authority officers and other agencies ensuring shared awareness of progress and need.
- All schools (100%) have a designated LAC coordinator. Personal Education Plans (PEPs) are completed for all pupils with support from the school. A comprehensive training programme of training for teachers, social workers and foster carers has been organised and facilitated by the LACE coordinator. Response to this has been positive to date. Additional training opportunities are provided through Social Cares training programme.

English as an Additional Language

- In January 2012 there were 544 pupils identified as EAL within Flintshire. The EAL service provided individual support for 188 of these from April 2011- April 2012. Advisory support and training was available to schools and families of the remaining pupils.
- Despite the escalation in numbers of EAL pupils at Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving the CSI has increased from 50% in 2008 to 66% in 2012. This has remained constant over the last three years (67% in 2011). The largest factor in achieving CSI at this age remains the level of language acquisition with 92% of children at Welsh Government level C and above achieving the CSI. The Service employed an additional bilingual assistant in Sept. 2012 to support curriculum access for those pupils who are at the earlier stages of learning English.
- The upward trend is also evident for Key Stage 3 pupils with the percentage of those achieving the CSI rising from 45% in 2010 to 75% in 2012,
- This is mirrored for Key Stage 4 pupils with 47% (9 out of 19) pupils achieved 5 A*-C in 2012 as compared to only 37.5% (6 out of 16) in 2009/10. Out of the Key Stage 4 cohort 74% achieved 5 A-G*.

Gypsy / Traveller

- The relatively low numbers make year on year comparisons difficult for this group of pupils. In 2012 33% (two out of six) pupils achieved the CSI at Key Stage 2.
- Substantial progress with regard to literacy has been made by many Gypsy Traveller pupils who have been in the area during 2011-2012. Out of the children tested in January 2011 and January 2012, 93% maintained or increased their standardised score in reading accuracy and 62% for spelling.
- At Key Stage 3, 20 % (one out of five) pupils achieved the CSI. Out of the five pupils, a number achieved Level 5 within core subjects, i.e. 60% English, 40% for Mathematics and 40% for Science in 2012. These results represent significant improvement as it is the first year that Flintshire has been able to report results for a number of Traveller pupils at Key Stage 3. The Local Authority has been working closely with the Traveller community to engage pupils on a full time basis at secondary level. This has had a positive impact and numbers have risen from 10 in 2008/2009 to 24 in 2011/2012.
- Teaching sessions have been planned for January 2013 in one high school regarding diversity and inclusion, with specific reference to the Gypsy Traveller community. This is aimed at improving relationships between the settled pupils and the growing numbers of Travellers attending this High School.
- Show Racism the Red Card has agreed to work in one Primary School during the Spring term 2012 as a part of a pilot project.

- In March 2013 the judging for a National Gypsy Traveller competition is to be hosted by a Flintshire Primary school. This is to be judged by the Children's commissioner and will promote positive aspects of Traveller Culture.
- Outreach work with families of Traveller pupils who are not attending has resulted in increased numbers attending Secondary schools.
- A DVD has been created by Traveller pupils to demonstrate positive aspects of their culture and the negative effects of stereotyping. Plans are in place to use this for training officers and school staff in 2012/13.

Quality Indicator: 2.3.2 Promoting Social Inclusion and Wellbeing – promoting attendance and keeping children and young people in education, employment and training

- The Council has a highly effective range of services and strategies which support and promote attendance and support pupils to maintain their educational placements.
- The Inclusion Welfare Service (IWS) has a history of extremely effective partnership working with schools to ensure a whole school approach to reducing absenteeism which include Attendance Strategy Meetings, Electronic Truancy Call, First Day absence calls and weekly monitoring. The IWS works very closely with the Behaviour support Team and pupils struggling to access school are further supported through targeted Behaviour Planning / Management Meetings. This has ensured that attendance in schools across Flintshire has been consistently above the national average since 2006/07 with attendance figures for secondary schools being within the top 2 for Wales since 2007/08.
- Flintshire is looking to build on this good practice to bring attendance figures in line with the UK benchmarks. To support this training has been held for school Governors to reinforce the importance of pupil attendance. A conference has also been scheduled for schools in November 2012 to promote good practice and explore ways of moving forward.
- Monthly monitoring reports for attendance are shared with all key officers within the Directorate including the Director and Cabinet Member for Education.
- The IWS has developed a comprehensive tracking system to monitor the impact of officer involvement. This is currently being reviewed and early indications suggest that it has supported more targeted interventions by the service.
- The Welsh Government reviewed the actions of Local Authorities with regard to support for attendance. Flintshire was highlighted as an example of effective practice.
- Clear guidance regarding policies and protocols are in the Local Authority Behaviour and Attendance Policy. Half termly meetings are held for secondary school representatives to discuss and review policy and appropriate strategies. Officers also contribute to the Inclusion Service ALNCo training and termly meetings.
- The Local Authority been working to support the reduction of exclusions within our schools. Monthly reports on exclusions are issued to Inclusion service managers to ensure appropriate action can be taken. The Managed Moves protocol is fully implemented and is operational within both primary and secondary schools.
- There are effective procedures in place to reintegrate pupils back into school including Pastoral Support Programmes and reintegration meetings. Officers work hard to enable pupils to retain their current placements or to settle into new ones. Performance Indicators relating to the reduction of permanent exclusions are set within the Inclusion Services and these are being achieved -
- The number of permanent exclusions has reduced in both the primary and secondary sector. Primary numbers have reduced from one in 2007/08 to zero in both 2010/11 and 2011/12. Secondary numbers have reduced from nine in 2007/08 to zero in 2011/12. The

number of fixed term exclusions of 5 days or less has also reduced in the secondary sector from 786 in 2007/08 to 509 in 2011/12.

- The needs of all young people supported through the Youth Justice Service (YJS) are met from a multi agency perspective. A teacher is seconded as an education officer into the service and this supports the service to meet the education needs of vulnerable young people who are at risk of offending or who have offended. This officer monitors the educational achievement of these individuals. All Year 11 pupils known to the service have completed formal accreditation in 2010/11. Close links are in place with colleges to ensure effective transition procedures. All young people undergo an assessment - ONSET or ASSET which includes Education Training Employment (ETE) issues or concerns. Any issues highlighted would be referred to the Flintshire YJS ETE Panel which contains multi-agency representation including the education officer. Young people's needs are addressed and allocated to staff accordingly.
- YJS in conjunction with the Inclusion Service have established 'LINKS', a PRU which supports young people involved with YJS who have disengaged from education provision. LINKS operates two days a week and has successfully engaged young people back into education. This was highlighted as an example of good practice in the YJS inspection.
- The YJS Chair the Prevent and Deter Panel, a multi agency panel which discusses young people at risk of offending or who have anti social behaviour. The purpose of the panel is to identify appropriate support packages, prevention programmes and monitor the impact of these. The education officer, along with three Inclusion Welfare Officers, regularly attends these panel meetings. The YJS and Young People's Drug and Alcohol Team work closely with the School Liaison Officers in delivering appropriate targeted interventions in schools. Pupils within the Portfolio PRU have been identified as a priority for support and regular sessions have been provided to this group.
- The YJS Parenting Officer supports the Local Authority in preparing Court Reports in relation to Parenting Orders instigated by the Authority. Tailored intervention packages are also identified to meet individual needs from the assessment.
- There is a need (with partners) to continue to protect continuity of support for YJS provision through national changes in funding.
- Local Authority officers have established good working relationships with the North Wales Police Service. Community Policing Teams work closely with officers and schools, attending meetings where required. School Liaison Officers provide invaluable support, in particular with regard to restorative justice.
- Effective multiagency working under the leadership of the Local Service Board and Children and Young people's Partnership, involving tracking and appropriate interventions have resulted in the proportion of 16+ pupils not in education or training (NEET) reaching the joint lowest in Wales in 2012 at 2.7%. Unemployment 18-24 remains stubbornly high and therefore the LSB has sponsored a project deploying similar techniques to promote EET opportunities for the older age range.

Quality Indicator: 2.3.3 Promoting Social Inclusion and Wellbeing – Youth Support and Personal Support

- Young people have access to a range of support services provided by a number of agencies. This is effectively overseen by the Children and Young People's Partnership Board.
- Monitoring of the Authority's Youth Service continues via an Internal Quality Assurance team. This includes young people and has been aligned with the Estyn Inspection Framework. Over the period of 2011/12, six 'full inspections' and 11 unannounced visits

have taken place. Out of the 6, 3 were awarded a grade 1, two gained a grade 2 and one gained a grade 3.

- The Local Authority provides additional personal support through grant funded services (14-19 Network & Families First grants). These are examples of effective multi-agency collaboration as the services have representation from Careers Wales, Youth service and Flintshire Local Voluntary Council. Young people who are at risk or have become disengaged with education are targeted, tracked and supported.
- The 14-19 Personal Support Service is an effective provision which has had a very positive impact on disengaged Year 11 pupils. This has directly impacted on the Local Authority's securing the equal lowest percentage of NEETs in Wales for the first time (2.7% in 2011/12).
- The Cymorth funded Achievement Support Programmes (ASP) have continued to support pupils from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 pending creation of the new Families First services. The ASP team supporting Key Stage 2/3 have worked with 131 Year 6/7, 111 Year 8 and 190 Year 9. As part of this programme the young people have access to a range of activities and were also offered the chance to attend a summer school focused on developing their confidence, communication skills, team building skills and problem solving. Some of the young people have also been encouraged and supported to attend the D of E and Youth Forum sessions in the evenings. All pupils are required to complete a self-evaluation and 98% felt that they had improved as a result of access to the programme. This was backed up by supporting evidence from the staff and also the significant number of pupils who exited the programme, no longer needing support (301 out of 432).
- The 14-16 ASP focuses on providing additional informal and non formal education opportunities for those not in main stream education in order to increase their life chances and opportunities for employment. This project has formed working partnerships with a wide variety of community, voluntary and statutory organisations with very positive outcomes for young people, e.g. enhanced individual skill levels, wide range of experiences and improved educational attendance patterns which have linked to improved career prospects. During the 2011/12 the team worked with 73 individuals of which 59 were new to the project. There was a high level of success with 95% of the young people leaving the project with a portfolio of positive achievements as indicated -
 - 40 young people gaining Millennium Volunteer awards, six gaining John Muir Awards, eight gained OCN level 2 in a variety of ICT units and 42 young people gaining in house awards for WKS; and
 - through the Youth Service pupils have accessed the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and the following have been awarded in 2011/12: Bronze Award: Male - 61, Female - 57; Silver Award: Male - 8, Female - 12; Gold Award: Male - 0, Female - 3. The Duke of Edinburgh scheme is experiencing growth following agreed participation of every Secondary school.
- The Youth Service continues to work in partnership with John Summers High School. Two Youth workers work alongside school staff to support Year 10/11 pupils with pupils who are at risk of disengagement or self exclusion. The target was 100 pupils with 7 different projects run during the year. Out of those involved, 24 participants gained a Youth Challenge award. PASS surveys scores for these pupils also showed an improvement. All of the participants were deemed to have made improvement in speech and language development with improved confidence and motivation.
- The youth service continues to expand its partnership working with schools and now supports the delivery of a variety of awards such as 21 Asdan Youth Activities Awards in Maes Hyfryd and St David's High School sixth form and nine Asdan Peer Mentoring Awards. There have also been 14 Millennium Volunteer Awards for running a summer playschool for primary aged children which developed a variety of skills such as

teamwork , problem solving peer mentoring, CV writing and interview skills for Employment College and University.

- In partnership with Maes Hyfryd and Flintshire Local Voluntary Council, the Youth Service wrote an OCN level 1 in Volunteering which enabled 20 young people who worked in the Buzz café in Flint to achieve accreditation for their involvement in this project. This has served to increase the young people's employability and team working/ problem solving skills
- The Youth Service also promotes young people's wellbeing through a comprehensive Sex and Relationships Education Service, which includes a C-Card Scheme. The C-Card Scheme is seen as sector-leading, and the Flintshire Youth Service is being commissioned by the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board to run the Scheme across North Wales. There are now 26 outlets which offer the C card scheme with 407 new cards being issued in 2011/12 financial year. There were 832 visits by males and 377 by females with a total of 9265 condoms being issued
- The Gypsy and Traveller community is able to contribute locally and nationally through their own forum group, Flintshire's Gypsy and Traveller Youth Forum. The group regularly attends the national Gypsy and Traveller forum events facilitated by Save the Children. They have also produced a DVD highlighting the effects of stereotyping and racism and a training pack to be delivered within Flintshire using the DVD as the basis is being developed. Two representatives from the group also attend weekly meetings of Flintshire's County Youth Forum. The representatives are fully integrated into the group's activities, taking part in all of the projects of the County Youth Forum and it's partnership activities, for example Youth Inspectors, Young Flintshire Editorial Group, Theatre Forum and Youth Are Funders (Youth Bank).
- The County Youth Forum has amongst its membership young people who are homeless or who have been homeless. Up until recently Flintshire Equalities Representative with Funky Dragon (Young People's Assembly for Wales) was a young person from Clwyd Alyn's Llys Emlyn Homeless Hostel who to represent young people from minority groups with the specific knowledge base he brought from having experienced homelessness The County Youth Forum continues its partnership work with Clwyd Alyn Housing association. Also a number of young people from Save the Family (an organisation that provides hostel living accommodation to families facing homelessness) attend the County Youth Forum and are members of the Youth Are Funders project. They regularly attend events and consultations enabling them to represent the issues of young people and their families facing homeless.

Quality Indicator: 2.3.4 Promoting Social Inclusion and Wellbeing – Safeguarding Arrangements

- The Local Authority fulfils its legislative requirements and responsibilities under the Children Act 2004 and Education Act 2002 in accordance with the guidance laid down in the All Wales Child Protection Procedures 2008. Partnership working is well established between Lifelong Learning, Health, Police and Social Services. Wrexham and Flintshire Local Safeguarding Children's Boards have recently merged ensuring a coordinated approach across North East Wales. Lifelong Learning is represented on the LSCB Executive Board and also has particular involvement on the following to ensure due consideration and monitoring of educational establishments:
 - Training Subgroup
 - Development Subgroup
 - Performance Quality Assurance Audit Group

- Since 2009, the authority has made good progress in improving the referral and monitoring systems for training in safeguarding. The Local Authority has a very experienced named lead officer responsible for Safeguarding. There is a clear safeguarding policy. At the time of the inspection, there were effective systems and guidance in place to provide CRB checks and to offer appropriate and comprehensive safeguarding and child protection training to all education staff.
- Every educational establishment has a copy of the All Wales Child Protection Procedures for reference purposes and further information regarding a school's responsibilities for Safeguarding is available to all staff via the Council's Moodle site.
- Officers and staff within educational establishments attend and contribute to Child Protection Case Conferences, Core Groups and Section 4 meetings as part of their role.
- The Local Authority has a team of experienced staff who provide Child Protection training at all levels. Officers from the Public Protection Unit and social services also contribute to the training ensuring staff gain understanding from a wide perspective.
- There is an effective system in place for monitoring and ensuring all employees within educational settings have accessed the Basic Awareness training. Child Protection guidance leaflets are issued as part of the training.
- All schools have a named coordinator and governor with responsibility for child protection. These all receive level 2 training to ensure secure understanding of their role and responsibilities.
- All employees within the Local Authority and schools irrespective of their role who have contact with children have to undertake criminal record Bureau checks and are issued with child protection guidance information on appointment. This is an integral part of the corporate recruitment policy and practice.
- The Local Authority reviews inspection reports as part of the monitoring process and follows up any recommendations relating to safeguarding with the school.
- The Local Authority has a policy for Children Missing Education which has been ratified through the LSCB Executive. This ensures collaborative working within Flintshire and with other Authorities.
- Through their role, the Inclusion Welfare service monitors and supports other vulnerable groups of children and young people, e.g.:
 - a designated officer works closely with the Gypsy Traveller community.
 - a designated officer is responsible for the checking , licensing and Child Protection training of all Chaperones/Matrons in accordance with legislation
- Licences are issued for Children in Employment. Inclusion Welfare Officers investigate any referrals of young people working without these and assist the Local Authority in presenting a case for legal action against any employer who does not abide by the legislation and Byelaw.

Quality Indicator: 2.4.1 Access & School Places – The Provision of an appropriate range and number of school places

- Flintshire County Council has an appropriate range and number of school places, with effective monitoring and planning for future needs. The incoming Administration has moved quickly to take key decisions on addressing surplus places. Actions have included issuing statutory proposals on closure of the smallest primary school, together with accelerating the formula review and area school review programmes.
- The primary school level of surplus places is currently 17.93% (average September 2012) whilst the secondary school surplus is 15.71% (average September 2012). In 2011 (the last available benchmarking) Flintshire's figures were the 9th lowest in primary and

7th lowest in secondary in Wales. 20 primary schools and 3 secondary schools have more than 25% surplus places. The Council has plans to address these issues within its School Modernisation Strategy through reorganisation and alternative use of school premises.

- Primary school surplus places have reduced over the last three years from 18.20% to 17.93% due to fewer Year 6 pupils leaving than the number of reception children starting school. Pupil numbers are expected to increase in future years due to an increasing birth rate and planned housing developments. This is already being evidenced with an increased reception intake in September 2012. 49 additional children were in the reception classes of local schools compared with September 2011.
- Secondary school surplus places have increased over the last three years from 12.76% to 15.71% due to fewer Year 7 pupils arriving than young people leaving secondary education. Pupil numbers in Year 7 are expected to decrease in future years until September 2015-16. All secondary schools with more than 25% surplus places are subject to reviews which have reached preferred option for change stage.
- Flintshire County Council determines the capacity of schools in accordance with Welsh Government guidance. The Council works with schools to develop strategies for the reorganisation of school accommodation to meet current and future needs, e.g. short-term 'mothballing' of class bases in schools where pupil numbers are expected to increase in future or reorganisation of Additional Learning Needs provision.
- The 2011 inspection concluded that the Authority's asset management planning is good and information on condition, sufficiency and suitability of school buildings is accurate and regularly updated. Budgets are closely matched to where there is the greatest need. Work undertaken is on time and to budget.
- School suitability surveys were carried out in 2008, which added to existing condition survey data held on all premises. The findings of the school estates surveys informed the 21st Century Schools Programme strategic outline plan published in December 2010. The suitability surveys are currently being reviewed and are on-going.
- In recent years, the Council has opened new purpose built primary schools at Greenfield and Connahs Quay. A new primary school is currently being developed at Shotton which is on target for opening in September 2014. Following five completed or current consultations, the County Council is on schedule to complete its infant/junior amalgamation programme by September 2013, providing better opportunities and continuity for learners. The Council has also issued a statutory proposal for closure of its smallest primary school (at Rhos y Cae) with planned closure in August 2013.
- The 16-18 Strategic Outline Case approved by the Welsh Government, ensures delivery through collaboration between schools, Deeside College, work-based learning providers and training providers. All key partners are represented on the Flintshire Learning Network. The Network was inspected in 2011 securing the best ever result in Wales with good outcomes and prospects.
- Flintshire County Council is proactive in developing provision for Welsh-medium education. Flintshire is able to plan its provision on parental demand surveys, which are currently being renewed. Partnerships with Mudiad Meithrin and Menter Iaith are active. Primary provision is well distributed across the County, but with an opportunity to grow additional provision in Deeside as part of current organisational change. At secondary level, Ysgol Maes Garmon had received considerable investment in recent years to meet anticipated demand in a high quality learning environment. There are plans at Ysgol Maes Garmon to expand current Dosbarth Trochi immersion provision.
- The County Council has invested in new award-winning specialist primary and secondary specialist schools in Flint, co-located with mainstream schools. This development reflects the County Council's commitment to ensure pupils have their needs met locally and that resources are managed effectively and efficiently. The Authority continues to look to

develop new service provision to reduce the need for “Out of County” placements.

- The County Council makes good use of contributions from housing developers (Section 106 funding) to provide additional capacity by re-modelling school sites appropriately. Broughton Primary school has benefited from this source of funding to support additional places and Flintshire currently have section 106 applications to the value of £1,529m.
- Flintshire is also leading the development of the regional procurement framework for 21st Century Schools programme delivery to secure value for money as well as community benefits including training, apprenticeships and employment opportunities.
- The County Council has been proactive in ensuring that emergency planning and business continuity management are in place at service level. This has also been rolled out across schools with workshops, guidance and templates providing a framework for updating emergency arrangements and building resilience at school level for incident and risk management.

Quality Indicator: 2.4.2 Access and School Places - Admissions to schools

- The 2011 inspection concluded that “the Authority co-ordinates admissions arrangements effectively. The Authority provides clear and transparent information on the admission procedures to parents. The admissions forum is effective and meets almost all parental preferences. Appeals are dealt with appropriately”. This position has not changed.
- Supported by an effective School Admissions Forum, all admissions to maintained schools are processed within published timescales and adhere to the Welsh Government statutory Admissions Code of Practice. Statutory school appeals are efficiently handled, complying fully with equal opportunities legislation.
- The Authority meets parents’ preferences where possible, whilst ensuring that school published admission numbers are adhered to for primary and secondary schools. In cases of oversubscription, applications are ranked in accordance with the admissions criteria.
- Looked After Children are prioritised for school placements within admissions arrangements. The Looked After Children Education Officer liaises with the Admissions Team and schools to facilitate matters when moves take place within the authority. The County Council promotes continuity of education wherever practicable.
- All parents seeking Welsh-medium education for their child are offered a place.
- There is good liaison between the Inclusion team and the school organisation team to ensure that the arrangements for phase transfer for pupils with Statements of Additional learning Needs are effective.
- The Managed Moves protocol is owned by Headteachers, with a commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all young people. The panel has full senior management representation from all Secondary Schools, with County Council officers providing support, advice and guidance. The panel ensures that there is robust dialogue and a clear exit pathway for the young people discussed, and that re-integration following short term interventions at the Pupil Referral Units are managed and monitored effectively to ensure success.

Quality Indicator: 2.4.3 Access and School Places - Coordination of early years and play to ensure sufficiency

- Flintshire has an appropriate range of early years and play provision, which is effectively coordinated, monitored and planned through the Children and Young People's Partnership structure.
- Officers review the quality and sufficiency of early years and play provision effectively. Overall, it meets the needs of children and their families. The authority has good procedures in place to monitor and improve the quality of this provision.
- There are approximately 862 high-quality early years places across Flintshire available to children taking up part-time education sessions the term after their third birthday. A relatively large percentage of children in Flintshire receive their part-time early years place in non-maintained County Council settings. There are 87 such providers across Flintshire that receive funding from the County Council to provide nursery education.
- The CYPP monitors the capacity of early years places, both in the maintained and non-maintained sector so that all children exiting Flying Start settings can be offered an early years education place. This facilitates forward planning in identifying potential shortfall of places.
- Children within Flying Start areas are offered 12.5 hours of free quality childcare. The take up of Flying Start childcare fluctuates. During 2010-2011 the percentage take up began to be monitored from Quarter 2. The take up was – Quarter 2 – 72%, Quarter 3 – 54% and Quarter 4 – 63%. All Flying Start children are offered an intensive health visiting programme from 0-4 years which includes distribution of home safety equipment, nutritional advice and baby massage.
- Language and Play within the two year old Flying Start settings has become an integral part of family intervention. Transition sessions are being delivered in Flying Start areas to support the transition of both the parents and children into nursery. Parents have also gained Agored (OCN) units at appropriate levels in line with the adult basic skills level. Parents in Flying Start areas are offered opportunities to improve their parenting skills. The Incredible Years parenting programme is offered to all Flying Start parents.
- The Community Parents project runs parent groups supported by free childcare. A high percentage of parents (70%) attending in 2010/11 achieved accreditation in OCN through Basic Skills in conjunction with Community Learning.
- The Play Development Team works well with community facilities to provide play opportunities during the school holidays and during term time in areas of deprivation. Numbers attending sessions have exceeded targets set locally.
- During the three years since the publication of Flintshire's Leisure Strategy, the number of visits to our leisure centres, where the visitor has participated in physical activity, has increased from 1,239,666 in 2009/10 to 1,310,685 in 2010/11 to 1,357,751 in 2011/12. The team are also proud of innovative access programmes and initiatives, including the Plus One approach.
- Clybiau Plant Cymru has increased the number of out of school childcare places in Flintshire from 2078 in 2008 to 3472 in 2011, however the number of clubs has reduced. This increase has been facilitated by a variety of funding sources, including Community Focused Schools start-up grants.

Quality Indicator: 2.4.4 Coordination of youth support services to ensure access to entitlements

- The 2011 14-19 inspection recognised that Flintshire has a good range of Youth Support Services delivered through collaborative delivery projects which have traditionally been funded via Cymorth funding. However, with effect from 1st October 2012 much of this support will be funded through the Families First Programme (see attached Families First programme chart). Services and organisations coordinated by the Children and Young People's Partnership, which support young people to access their entitlements, have embedded participatory practice in to all newly commissioned Families First programme projects.
- The Children and Young People's Partnership Performance Management Framework is used to monitor performance against the priorities within the Children and Young People's Plan (developed from the Unified Needs Assessment) and actions that support the development of Youth Support Services are included within Core Aims:
 - Action area 1 – Children and young people are cared for
 - Action area 2 - Children and young people are ready, able and encouraged to learn
 - Action area 3 - Children and young people have a healthy lifestyle
 - Action area 4 - Children and young people have time and space to play, and to participate in activities
 - Action area 5 - Children and young people are respected in all areas of their lives
 - Action area 6 - Children and young people are safe
 - Action area 7 - Children, Young People and Families have the resources they need to maximise their opportunities
- The Children and Young People's Partnership structure also coordinates the provision of Youth Support Services through a range of core aim sub-groups, including the information and involvement sub group, the Families First management board and the Families First programme ownership board which is made up of all the leads of the delivery projects.
- The Children and Young People's Partnership supports the delivery of a range of Youth Support Services across sectors through a Young People's Participation Officer who works within the partnership framework in Flintshire.
- The Children and Young people's Partnership has undertaken a service mapping exercise to support the development of the Families First model, commissioning and procurement arrangements in Flintshire. This will reduce unnecessary duplication of services.
- The Youth Service ensures youth work support is available to young people via community, school and mobile based teams. The Youth Service Revenue grant also supports additionality within the third sector e.g. the Urdd Gobaith Cymru/ Menter Iaith Welsh Language provision youth officer.
- Flintshire's Youth Service works to promote the emotional and social wellbeing of young people 11-25 years old, via curriculum and project delivery, for example youth fora, healthy living programmes, substance misuse groups, virtual parenting groups, community allotments and implementing the mental health toolkit.
- Participation in physical activity amongst under 18s at our leisure centres has increased from 445,457 in 2009/10 to 501,930 in 2010/11 to 559,865 in 2011/12.
- The total number of recorded attendances at school-based and club Dragon Sport sessions (7-11 years of age) has increased from 11,107 in 2009/10 to 24,774 in 2011/12.
- The total number of recorded attendances at leisure centre-based Dragon Sport summer camps has increased from 1,992 in 2010 to 4,731 in 2012.

- *Active 8-16*, the physical activity on referral initiative for young people aged 8-16 years with social, emotional or physical difficulties, saw a 52.5% increase between 2010/11 and 2011/12 in the number of clients completing the referral period or taking up other activities.

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KEY QUESTION 3 - HOW GOOD ARE LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Quality Indicator: 3.1.1 Leadership – The impact of Leadership

- Leadership is good and is having a significant impact on service design, delivery and increasingly outcomes. However, it can only normally be graded as adequate (although with positive prospects) due to the linked judgement descriptions of the current inspection framework. Collective and distributed leadership across the Council and its partners underpins improving learner opportunities and outcomes. Recent willingness to take key decisions in relation to school organisational change and service re-design give improved prospects for further improvement.
- Within the Council, strategic leadership by elected members and officers has realised steady improvements in pupil outcomes over the past five years, particularly at Key Stage 4. This has been achieved against a background of change in political and officer leadership of the Council and alongside increased turnover of school leaders. Improving distributive leadership and management structures created sustainability through resilient succession planning and induction training, making a firm base for improving learner outcomes.
- The Council's strategic plans for education have for the last four years closely reflected the priorities of the Community Strategy, the Council's Improvement Plan, the Children and Young People's Plan, the Health and Wellbeing Plan and the Community Safety Plan. The continued improvements in achievement, attainment and wellbeing are a key indicator that planning has identified the correct priorities.
- However, the Council and its partners also recognise that there is further to go in securing consistently high quality provision in all primary schools and in realising the benefits of implementing the 14-19 Strategic Outline Case.
- The Leader of the Council provides effective community leadership as an effective communicator on current issues and priorities. He is also Deputy Leader of the Welsh Local Government Association. The Cabinet Member for Education and Chairman of Scrutiny both bring extensive experience to the work programme from lifetimes' work in school and local government leadership.
- Strong council leadership has led to elected members recently making difficult but key decisions, e.g. prioritising investment in 21st century schools, school reorganisation, Welsh Education Strategic Plan and reform of the Youth Service to make service provision more sustainable, effective and responsive to children and young people's needs.
- Elected members have made the decision to undertake the integration of schools improvement services across North Wales, providing economies of scale whilst maintaining effective challenge and support schools to improve outcomes. Flintshire County Council leads for the region on integrating management information systems and on 21st Century Schools development and procurement.
- Clear lines of accountability exist between all levels of planning across the council. This is evidenced in the way that top level strategic plans relate to more detailed team plans and to individual officer appraisal targets. The continued improvements in learner outcomes in Flintshire reflect the close links between service targets and learner/ provider needs.
- The performance management system provides good support for staff to improve performance and for co-ordinated identification of officer training needs. Supervisory, management and leadership programmes developed in partnership with Deeside College are having a positive impact on capacity and understanding of issues across the Council. Recent investment in training and capacity within Lifelong learning has also focused on

project management and the quality of service planning and appraisal.

- Strong strategic leadership prioritises the needs of vulnerable groups of young people across the council and its partnerships. The Corporate Parenting Strategy, Young Carers Strategy and the NEETS Strategy are successful examples. The Council's strategies improved attainment of young people who are looked after and those who belong to the BME community, including high quality work with the Gypsy, Traveller and Roma communities (Estyn, 2011).
- The Chief Education Officer is lead Director for Inclusion & Partnerships within the region. He is also Chairman of the Association of Directors of Education in Wales and of the Virtual Staff College (Cymru). Many other officers also provide leadership to and derive benefit from regional and national networks, appropriately applying learning to the Flintshire context. e.g. School Modernisation and North Wales consortium School Improvement Strategies.

Quality Indicator: 3.1.2 Leadership - Strategic direction and meeting national and local priorities

- Flintshire County Council works well to meet the national priorities of literacy and numeracy, together with prioritising reducing the impact of deprivation on learner outcomes.
- Flintshire's vision for learners is underpinned by nine statements which together summarise our aspirations for all learners within Flintshire, regardless of their age or setting. They encourage all those involved in learning to focus on developing and fostering those skills which enable young people to build their self-esteem and confidence; increase their achievements; acquire a deeper understanding of themselves as learners and continue to lifelong learning. Our aspirations are that all learners will:
 - work in a physical and emotional environment which enhances learning;
 - learn with their mind, body and emotion;
 - have full meaningful learning experiences;
 - experience learning in a variety of different situations both structured and unstructured;
 - experience learning which matches their individual needs (academic, emotional, social and cultural);
 - have lifelong learning skills and attitudes integrated into learning activities (modelled and used);
 - have an opportunity to be involved as partners in learning within the wider community (class, school, local, national, global);
 - have the broadest range of their achievements valued and recognised; and
 - have their range of achievements assessed in a constructive way
- The new Children and Young People's Plan was developed following extensive needs analysis and consultation processes with children and young people, parents, and a wide range of stakeholders. More than 170 children, young people and families were involved in the engagement exercise to inform and develop the outcomes for the final plan, "Making a positive difference" 2011/14.
- The Council's priorities for education are clearly communicated by Corporate Directors and Heads of Service at Council Management and Leadership Team meetings. There is no Directorate in the council that does not provide some level of support to education provision. The on-going priority that has been given to identifying and meeting learners'

needs has contributed to the continued improvement in standards of attainment.

- The NEETs Strategy has reduced the numbers of people who are NEET albeit from a high baseline in 2008. There has been full engagement of stakeholders in developing strategies resulting in a reduction from 7.2% to 2.7% in 2012. Implementation plans are monitored by LSB, Scrutiny, Cabinet members and the Council Management Team. Reaching the best outcomes in Wales in 2012 is not enough. Whilst seeking to maintain our present position on young people 16-18, the programme has moved onwards to securing more opportunities for employment and training for 16 to 25 year olds to ensure successful progression.
- The transformation programme for 14-19 education has been actively developed in partnership with schools and Deeside College. Partnership arrangements secure compliance with the requirements of the Learning and Skills Measure. The arrangements (praised by Estyn in 2011) result in widening options available to learners and the consistent application of rigorous quality assurance processes. The work continues with development of consolidated hub provision alongside the Dee estuary, to better organise provision around learners' needs.
- The Council prioritises its Welsh in Education Strategic Plan, with effective shared leadership (with partners) of the Welsh Education Strategic Forum. The Authority is building on demand surveys with plans to create appropriate additional provision where there is unmet need. Opportunities to improve service access through restructuring or partnership working continue to be taken (for example through the development of the regional school improvement service and through partnership early years and youth service provision).

Quality Indicator: 3.1.3 Leadership - Elected members and other supervisory boards

- Elected members have a good track record of prioritising improving learner opportunities and outcomes. In recent times, they have shown increasing willingness to take key decisions to secure and safeguard opportunities and outcomes for the future. The Local Service Board is increasingly ambitious in its programme in support of local learners and communities.
- Flintshire County Council's vision is based on extensive knowledge of national and local priorities and performance data. Members engage in these priorities in regular seminars and in annual Cabinet and Scrutiny programmes for the discussion of policy and performance. Members scrutinise standards of attainment and school performance.
- The Scrutiny work programme provides robust challenge and support for the improvement of learner outcomes. The Cabinet Member attends each meeting to address questions and explain policy decisions. On-going monitoring of standards and provision, together with scrutiny of 14-19 and school modernisation programmes are examples of how Scrutiny has helped to develop and enhance the implementation of council priorities.
- Evaluation of the delivery of the previous Flintshire Children and Young People's Plan and the development of the new plan have been fully jointly scrutinised by both Lifelong Learning and Social Care & Health Scrutiny Committees.
- A standing group involving both the Chair and Vice Chair of Scrutiny and the Cabinet Member oversees work to support individual schools facing difficulty. They monitor the usage of the Authority's statutory school improvement powers. They are particularly effective in working alongside governing bodies to help them recognise both the need to change and to support them through improvement journeys. This group builds on the

earlier work undertaken by the Chair of Scrutiny and Cabinet Member, but allows for wider engagement of elected members.

- All elected members are engaged in workshops to challenge officers in the development of performance targets and in monitoring performance outcomes. Scrutiny reviews progress on individual targets and key indicators on a quarterly basis.
- The Local Service Board has embraced the principles of Results Based Accountability, developing a Community Strategy Delivery Plan and detailing the performance indicators that will be the measure of success for the partnership. It regularly monitors the work of key projects, e.g. Education, Employment and Training for Young People and School Modernisation.

Quality Indicator: 3.2.1 Improving Quality - Self-evaluation, including listening to learners and others

- Flintshire has an established cycle of rigorous self-evaluation and feedback from learners and stakeholders. It uses this to inform its forward planning.
- Rigorous quarterly and end of year service delivery reviews take place across the Council. The latter involve service teams in evaluating their performance against their team plan targets. Managers work to challenge and moderate each other's team evaluation judgements across Lifelong Learning and wider Council services.
- The Lifelong Learning self-evaluation is shared with Headteachers, Governing Bodies, Children & Young People's Partnership partners including voluntary sector representatives, and representative groups of learners and parents. Their evaluative comments and priorities influence the development of self-evaluation recording and service planning. Examples include the Children and Young People's Partnership and Health and Wellbeing Partnership and the relevant sub groups and networks. e.g. the Families First leads delivery board.
- The Chief Executive, Director of Lifelong Learning and senior Directorate Managers meet regularly with stakeholders. They meet on a scheduled basis with Headteacher Federations, school governors, trade union representatives and wider groups of partners. They meet with the Flintshire Youth Council and with school councils and groups of learners during their programme of visits. Many successful strategies have developed from these meetings. Examples include the Wellbeing strategy and the participation programme for engagement.
- The Local Authority also undertook a perception survey of schools in July 2011 with positive outcomes. The areas surveyed were support for school improvement, support for additional learning needs, social inclusion and wellbeing, access and school places and leadership.
- The Commissioner for Inclusion consults with parents, young people, Headteachers and ANCOs in the development of the inclusion strategy and evaluation of previous strategic developments.
- Flintshire County Council is proactive in the way it approaches underperformance in schools. This has led to significant improvements in schools and in key performance indicators. The Cabinet Member, Chair of Scrutiny and Member Working Group rigorously review all school inspection reports. They also scrutinise and actively monitor improvement plans and other actions in relation to schools causing concern to the Authority. This involves working closely with school leadership teams and governing bodies.
- Scrutiny challenges the Cabinet Member and senior officers on standards of attainment and school performance. Systematic monitoring by scrutiny has focused attention on continuous improvement.

- The Children and Young People's Partnership encourages a wide range of learners, stakeholders and partners to provide evaluative feedback through a range of mechanisms including consultation workshops, events and surveys and by utilising social media. The high level of engagement in the development of the current Children and Young People's Plan and the emerging Families First programme are examples of this. Other examples of learners influencing strategic developments include:
 - Respect fest/ Respecting Others;
 - Speak Out and Youth Conference Reports / development of social media use for virtual youth conferences in 2012;
 - Young Flintshire participation levels;
 - 21st Century Schools;
 - Child Poverty Strategy;
 - BIG Picture;
 - Families First;
 - National Outcomes and disability scoping with parents of disabled children;
 - Young at Heart (intergenerational project); and
 - participation in recruitment and in consultation for Team around the Family posts, participation posts and 3rd sector posts.

Quality Indicator: 3.2.2 – Improving Quality – Planning improvement

- Data informs decision making, target setting and self-evaluation. Planning is increasingly carefully matched to resources through the Medium Term Financial Planning process.
- There have been significant improvements in the Authority's performance management arrangements. Increased consistency across the Council has enabled easier mobilisation of capacity and challenge across the organisation.
- The revised performance management framework established by the Children and Young People's Partnership is comprehensive and fully involves all partners in the process through Core Groups and the overarching Partnership Board.
- Lifelong Learning's performance management arrangements work well with those of the Children and Young People's Partnership. These allow officers, members and partner representatives to reflect on performance on a quarterly basis and to discuss areas for improvement with Heads of Service. Teams work well to evaluate performance and ensure that service developments are owned by all members of staff. Exception reports evidence how the performance management process follows up on priorities and targets that are at risk of falling behind. The drive to improve performance and outcomes for learners is evident in all service areas and has led to improvements in many different areas, e.g. literacy and numeracy at each key stage, increased provision for excluded pupils and pupils at risk of exclusion.
- Central education services have had to face budget and staff reductions. Service strategy focuses on dedicating resources to schools for raising standards of literacy and numeracy and reducing the impact of deprivation and other factors on achievement and attainment. In particular, further work on raising standards of achievement, attainment and attendance of FSM pupils and vulnerable groups is being set in place and complemented by increasing our work to support the more able and talented.
- A systematic approach has been taken to ensuring that action and impact is secured against all recommendations made in Local Authority Estyn inspection reports. For example, revised support, monitoring and intervention frameworks have been introduced

by School Improvement and Inclusion services, improvements have also been made in analysis of data for vulnerable groups to target support to secure improvements in outcomes.

Quality Indicator: 3.2.3 Improving Quality - Involvement in professional learning communities (PLCs)

- Flintshire County Council piloted the development of professional learning communities on behalf of Wales and the Welsh Government. All schools are involved in at least one active community, with some schools actively engaged in several relevant communities. Local Authority officers are also actively involved with action research and action learning sets through joint leadership programmes with Deeside College. Where PLCs are working effectively they are grounded in seeking improved outcomes for learners using a focused collaborative research-based enquiry approach.
- Although the model is school led, the local authority in conjunction with Higher Education Institutions, has led in developing and facilitating a network between schools within Flintshire and beyond. The work is being recognised as leading practice nationally. The lead officer has been seconded to develop Local Authority and school practice nationally.
- The evaluation of Flintshire Schools' involvement in PLC work demonstrates excellent impact on standards in a significant number of schools as referenced in recent Estyn school inspection reports. External evaluation by the London Institute of Education assesses PLC work as sector leading practice.
- School professional development action plans, in support of the application of the School Effectiveness Grant (SEG) appropriately address planned improvement and identified outcomes, in key areas of literacy, numeracy and reducing the impact of economic disadvantage
- Flintshire County Council staff are extensively engaged in collaborative working to promote education improvement both within the Authority and in conjunction with other local Councils and external agencies. Cross Local Authority networking at a number of levels together with strong representation at national level has ensured that officers have maintained and further developed their levels of expertise and professional knowledge which in turn has allowed for the continuing development of improved standards in schools.

Quality Indicator: 3.3.1 Partnership Working – Strategic Partnerships

- Strategic partnerships are secure, inclusive and supported by a wide range of partners to contribute to sustained improvements in outcomes for young people in Flintshire.
- The Children and Young People's Plan has good links with the main strategic partnerships through the LSB and the Community Strategy, including the LSCB, Health Social Care and Wellbeing Partnership, Community Safety Partnership and the 14-19 Learning Partnership. There is a systematic and comprehensive approach to the identification and development of partnership planning evidenced through development documentation.
- The CYP Plan has a clearly articulated vision, reflecting Council and community strategic plans, for improving outcomes by pooling resources. The 2008/11 plan raised learners' attainment across all key stages and led to improved attendance. It supported improvement across groups of vulnerable learners, e.g. LAC and EAL.
- Children and young people's planning in Flintshire is implemented effectively through

focused operational team plans for each service area and each aim of the Children and Young People's Plan. The plans follow an agreed template and are linked to SMART targets for teams and partners that have directly led to improved learner outcomes (see 3.2.2).

- There is a strong partnership between the education service and Flintshire schools. Schools are clear about the challenge and support categories into which they fit. The overwhelming majority of schools buy into the Council's SLAs. Partnership continues to be the foundation for the improvements in pupil attainment and wellbeing outlined in 1.1 and 1.2.
- The Work Based Learning Provider Network and Post 16 NEET group effectively reduced the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training in Flintshire from 7.2% in 2007 to 2.7% in 2012, which is the best outcome in Wales.
- The development of the 14–19 Learning Partnership to co-ordinate and strategically plan and manage all post 14 learning provision in the County has led to improvements in attainment at key stage 4, especially for vulnerable groups of young people and those who prefer to learn outside the school environment.
- Providers worked hard to ensure that a collaborative and compliant post 16 option menu and timetable across all County providers is operating from September 2011. Quality assurance and value added monitoring procedures have been set in place by the partnership group. This has increased the number of options available to students, and increased retention rates.
- Flintshire School Improvement officers work closely with all Local Authority Officers in North Wales to raise standards in identified areas of weakness. There are measurable outcomes linked to this work.
- Flintshire has played an active role in the development of the North Wales Consortium and School Improvement Service. There is a clear commitment to work that adds value, ensures common approaches, raises pupils' achievement and improves services to learners with ALN.

Quality Indicator: 3.3.2 Partnership Working - Effectiveness of joint planning, resourcing and quality assurance

- Flintshire has maintained and enhanced the working arrangements that led Estyn in 2011 to conclude that the Authority had good partnership arrangements in place to deliver its education services. It works effectively with the health board, youth justice system, youth service, community safety groups, Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), 14-19 network and the third sector.
- The Children and Young People's Partnership structure is well established with a strong performance management framework in place and with well evidenced improvements secured for children and young people. The greater maturity of this RBA based framework reflects collective Focus on the recommendation at the last inspection.
- The Performance Management Framework is based on detailed data analysis to evaluate the effectiveness of joint planning. Plans are monitored in the core aim group meetings and reported to the Coordinating Group chaired by the Corporate Director. This process has allowed the Partnership to concentrate on areas for improvement, e.g. commissioning of integrated family support arrangements and school modernisation.
- Evaluations of the first Children and Young People's Plan 2008-11 demonstrate significant improvements for children and young people. Examples include:
 - the participation and engagement of children and young people and families for the

Facilities First Commissions;

- the development of the Team Around the Family (TAF) approach/service;
- the development of the A2A Card;
- The development of the Flintshire Parenting Strategy e.g. engagement in the National Occupational Standards (NOS).
- The Children and Young People's Partnership manages the Families First grant and this funds a range of projects. Each project under Cymorth and Families First has been subject to a detailed SLA and quarterly performance and budget reviews. As of 1st October 2012, the new portfolio of Families First commissioned projects has been live.
- The Flintshire LSB has commissioned a review of all Partnership work and the structures that support it to ensure a consistent focus on priorities, the measurement of their effectiveness and reduction of duplication.

Quality indicator: 3.4.1 Resource Management – Management of Resources

- There is adequate and improving performance management and financial management of Council resources and grants, which ensures value for money and allocation of resources to its key priorities. The mapping of all resources across the partnership is an area for development for the CYPP.
- The Council has a good corporate planning framework which describes how the organisation's resources are used within a framework of organisational values, roles and responsibilities.
- The Council has robust systems for the allocation, monitoring and control of finance. These systems involve Elected Members at an early stage of planning the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The strategy is considered by the Cabinet, Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and service scrutiny committees.
- The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is a critical part of the Council's overall Governance plan. It sets out the financing resourcing strategy by which the Council will deliver its vision and strategic objectives over the medium term. The strategy enables the Council to plan ahead by identifying where new investment is required, where activity will increase or decrease and which new policies or targets will affect the organisation.
- The Council has given key commitments in relation to education funding. They include protecting spend per pupil, increasing delegation (from 74.2% in 2010/11 to 80.1% in 2012) and completing a review of education funding methodology.
- The core principles embodied in the strategy are: -
 - the full integration of financial planning with strategic and service planning, and decision making for Council Fund Services on a medium to long term basis;
 - engagement with key stakeholders in the financial planning process;
 - management of spending within available resources; and
 - recognition of individual and collective responsibilities for financial management and values.
- A detailed analysis of budget pressures and savings is set against the Corporate Directorate priorities. The allocations of capital resources are considered by the Corporate Asset Management Group in accordance with a scored list of priority projects. Heads of service are challenged individually with regard to identified pressures.
- Following a wider finance review, which ensured that capacity is in place to deliver a full review programme, the Authority has also commissioned a review of Education Funding,

focused on extending delegation to schools.

- Directorate plans (including Lifelong Learning) have been produced for 2012/13 which are underpinned by individual service plans for each area, led by the relevant Head of Service. Updates on the financial forecasts are provided to members through the County Council's Executive and Lifelong Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- All financial expenditure is monitored closely, including grants, and carefully related to planning priorities. Teams have robust monitoring methods to ensure resources are used effectively and efficiently to improve learner outcomes, e.g. the successful literacy and numeracy intervention and secondary school attendance strategies. This is carried out in two fora: the monthly budget monitoring and the All Our Business performance management group. The Education Service also provides regular analyses of key risk areas that could adversely affect financial performance to the Council Management Team.
- All schools under the Financial Services Service Level Agreement have access to individual high quality advice and support on the financial management of their school budgets. It has also recently launched a development focused Bursars & Business Managers Group.
- The Council has introduced revised arrangements for the management of school balances following an inspection recommendation in 2011. A new policy has been developed following extensive consultation with Heads Federations, Schools, School Budget Forum, and Trade Unions. The level of school balances has reduced from £3,124k in 2011/12 to £2,928k in 2012/13.
- The CYPP directly manages the £1.7m Families First grant funding a range of wellbeing projects for children, young people and families. Detailed, outcome focused SLAs underpin the work of each project and performance is monitored against these outcomes on a quarterly basis. Finances of each project are monitored quarterly and the SLA specifies that the Partnership can re-allocate resource where it is not being utilised or where the requirements of the SLA are not being met. Each project is aligned to a Core Aim of the CYPP and is supported by the Partnership Lead for each Core Aim.
- There is a 100% buy-back for the provision of non-statutory personnel services to schools through Service Level Agreements. Casework is well-supported and advice is technically reliable. Audit Commission Schools' Surveys 2007 and 2009 place the quality of professional personnel advice and casework in the first quartile for all participating councils in Wales. Highly positive responses were also secured in the 2011 local survey.
- Building on developing good practice in job role and organisational design, it will be important to complete implementation of single status to secure organisational resilience, sustainability and morale.
- In the Wales Audit Commission Survey 2009 the Council's support to schools for both ICT Technical Support and ICT Curriculum support were deemed to be between 'good and very good'. The ICT service delivers a 'one stop shop' for support services for ICT covering MIS, Curriculum, Technical and administrative support. Proposed regional and national ICT support services assume a similar managed service approach to deliver best value for money.
- Within the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Asset Management Plan, the Authority maintains up to date information on sufficiency and suitability of buildings for learners. This information is used to develop both school organisation and investment programmes. The medium term financial Strategy and service plans provide a reference for prioritising capital investment and improvement in learning environments. Lifelong Learning projects form 41% of the County Council's capital programme in 2012/13. Following new schools in Connahs Quay and Shotton, the Council is committed to a further programme of £64m investment through the 21st Century Schools programme.

Quality Indicator: 3.4.2 Resource Management – Value for Money

- There is adequate and improving work in relation to value for money. The Authority is committed to a targeted programme of improvement and efficiency through the Flintshire Futures Programme. Flintshire Futures is our own framework for organisational change. The framework aims not only to establish best value for money, but to make the organisation more lean, modern and efficient, whilst aiming for the highest possible standards of public service. Project and programme disciplines are applied to each review. We use benchmarking information to assess service provision in relation to other Authorities. We learn from good practice in other authorities and sectors e.g. the Out of County Placements review and the Regional School Improvement Service project.
- An enabler in the programme is the introduction of lean systems. Key staff have received training in the process to ensure best value. The scope of the lean systems is its application to Local Authority provided services and identification of value and waste.
- The County Council has recently reviewed arrangements with regard to Out of County Placements to maximise value for money with successful outcomes and improved practice (with £500k in efficiencies secured over the last two years). The Authority is currently reviewing arrangements on development of ALN resources to extend delegation and maximise the opportunity for young people to be supported in local schools and communities through early intervention.
- Facilities Management services are subject to independent review by APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence). The focus of this review is the cost effectiveness of all facilities management services currently provided by the Council.
- A programme of reviewing the Flintshire Funding Formula, agreed with the Flintshire Schools' Forum, is on-going, for implementation of revised arrangements from 2013/14. These moves are designed to improve efficiency of funding delivery to maximise funding for schools to utilise on educational delivery to improve learner outcomes.
- Flintshire spends an above the Wales average amount on centrally funded school services. This reflects the priority for investment in Inclusion Service provision as agreed by schools. The level of service delegation has traditionally been agreed by the School Budget Forum.
- The Authority and the School Budget Forum successfully met the challenge to extend delegation to levels aspired to nationally by the WLGA and central government. The effectiveness of provision is measured against costs, which has led to strategies to reduce central costs in key areas of central provision such as provision of transport, ICT services and School Improvement Services. Efficiencies in these areas are being sought by regional collaboration, involving neighbouring Authorities.
- As a whole, the Flintshire education system is effective in securing good outcomes for learners and value for money. Outcomes on key indicators at Key Stage 3 and 4 are consistently amongst the highest in Wales compared with a gross schools budgeted expenditure of £5,280 per pupil and the Wales average of £5,520. Nevertheless, we also recognise that there is further to go to secure similar outcomes and value for money in the primary sector.