

**QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE REPORT
SOCIAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN
COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORATE**

REPORT AUTHOR: HEAD OF SOCIAL SERVICES FOR CHILDREN

REPORT DATE: 28 JUNE 2012

REPORT PERIOD: QUARTER 4 JANUARY – MARCH 2012

Introduction

The report is produced on a quarterly basis and provided to Executive members for review and assurance and will be available for Overview and Scrutiny Committees as part of their Forward Work Programmes.

The report consists of an overview of the key messages to highlight across all work streams in Social Services for Children, which is followed by highlights from each service area. Parts 2 and 3 of the report include an assessment of performance in the quarter from the following sources:

- Improvement Plan Monitoring
- Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges
- Performance Indicators and Outcome Measures
- Improvement Target Action Plan Monitoring
- Key Actions from Service Plan Monitoring
- Internal and external regulatory reports
- Customer satisfaction and feedback
- Awards and accreditations
- Resource Management (HR, ICT, Finance, Assets)

1. Foreword

Report highlights for this quarter are the following items: -

<p>Performance</p>	<p>Of the 13 improvement targets, 5 of these met the target this quarter. However, the RAG status in this report reflects the full year outturn. A detailed analysis of the amber and red targets is presented in Section 3.0 of this report.</p> <p>Performance highlights for Quarter 4 include planning for permanence for looked after children (SCC/001b) which remains at 100%, timeliness of statutory visits (SCC/025) at 86.3%, timeliness of Assessment & Progress Records at 100%, and the average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant (PSR/009a) for children, which has continued to improved since Quarter 2.</p>
<p>Independent Sector</p>	<p>The refurbishment of Arosfa is largely completed. Work is ongoing round the transferring of children, and reregistering with the Inspectorate. It is expected the new Residential Service will become operational May / June 12.</p>
<p>Advocacy tender</p>	<p>The tendering process is complete, and National Youth Advisory Service (NYAS) are the successful applicant.</p>
<p>Young Carers and Looked after children</p>	<p>The launch of the ID card has been postponed to June; event to be attended by the Children’s Commissioner and County Councillors. The Young Carers Strategy went live in Quarter 4 and has now moved into the implementation stage.</p>
<p>Supervised contact arrangements</p>	<p>The external evaluation of Supervised Contact Arrangements has been completed, and an action plan is in place.</p>
<p>Transition</p>	<p>A senior practitioner has been appointed and we are in the process of recruiting to the other posts.</p>
<p>Integrated Family Support Services</p>	<p>The Heads of Service in North Wales are meeting to formulate a project plan to support the rollout of Integrated Family Support Services (IFSS).</p>

Other highlights by service area are as follows: -

<p>Youth Justice Service</p>	<p>Research has highlighted the link between offending behaviour and the lack of education or employment, and improving this provision is one of the most important factors in reducing offending amongst young people in Flintshire.</p> <p>Youth Justice Service Pupil Referral Unit ("Links") continues to provide education opportunities to young people excluded from mainstream education and other Pupil Referral Units. Links is currently offering young people a variety of mainstream subjects to GCSE level, vocational subjects, and programmes focussed on offending behaviour such as the</p>
-------------------------------------	---

	<p>Choose to Change programme that looks at violence within familial or intimate relationships.</p> <p>Open College Network (OCN) qualifications now available to young people involved with the service and with direct support from a dedicated OCN assessor. Areas covered include "Preparation for Work", "Personal Budgeting and Money Management", "Basic Nutrition, Hygiene and Food Skills", "Problem Solving Skills", "First Aid" and other subjects that help young people broaden their skills and prepare for their future.</p> <p>Links Plus provides a transition for those young people leaving school and have been unable to secure education, training or employment through mainstream pathways. Areas covered include Curriculum Vitae development, interview skills and working relationships being forged with local businesses.</p>
<p>Families First</p>	<p>During Quarter 4:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quest continued to offer services to parents to assist in the development of their confidence and to enable them to start the journey towards training/employment. <p>In Flintshire, up to 31 March 2012, the QUEST Project has 46 registered participants.</p> <p>The project continues to build on existing relationships with referring and supporting agencies including JobCentrePlus, Careers Wales, Citizens Advice Bureaux and Barnardo's.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team Around the Family (TAF) are now fully operational. The Team are accepting referrals and they started working with families in March. All referrals made to TAF were accepted, and they are working with 12 children with 6 families; no outcomes have as yet been recorded. • Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and Welfare Benefits Unit continue to provide advice to families who have financial issues such as debt, need access to housing, finance etc. 26 children from 15 families have been raised over the 60% poverty line during the year. • The service continues to receive referrals for community conferencing from Flintshire, Wrexham and Denbighshire. Early indicators suggest very good outcomes reducing complaints, police call outs and anti-social behaviour. During the year 29 families reported a positive impact as a result of a community conference from 31 families.
<p>Complaints & Compliments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16 complaints were received this quarter and 14 responded to (2 were made late in the quarter).

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Of the 14 complaints responded to, 12 were responded to within the statutory 10 day timescale (85%) • 2 requests were received for independent Stage 2 investigations and they will commence next quarter • 1 Stage 2 complaint was responded to. Of the 3 elements to the complaint, 1 element was upheld and 2 elements were partly upheld. • 9 compliments were received about the work of staff. Comments included: <i>"The social worker has clearly put a lot of effort into this case which is reflected in the outcome. The Local Authority is also to be commended..."</i> <i>"Thank you so much for being kind, helpful, patient and understanding with our family. We won't forget you".</i> <i>"Thank you very, very much for your help. I have said it before but I mean it, we would have been lost without you and we were before you came along."</i>
Care & Social Services Inspectorate Wales Inspection	<p>Frontline Fieldwork services were inspected over a period of two weeks in March. Early indications are that we will receive a positive report from the Inspectorate.</p>

2. Performance Summary

2.1 Improvement Plan Monitoring

KEYS

Progress RAG – Complete the RAG status using the following key: -

R	Limited Progress - delay in scheduled activity; not on track
A	Satisfactory Progress - some delay in scheduled activity, but broadly on track
G	Good Progress - activities completed on schedule, on track

Outcome RAG – Complete the RAG status using the following key: -

R	Low - lower level of confidence in the achievement of outcome(s)
A	Medium - uncertain level of confidence in the achievement of the outcome(s)
G	High - full confidence in the achievement of the outcome(s)

Council Priority	Target Date	Progress RAG	Outcome RAG	Commentary
5.0 To make our communities safe and to safeguard the vulnerable, with children and older people being priority groups.				
5.1.1 Develop robust commissioning arrangements for out of county placements.	Sept 2012	A	G	See Section 3.1
5.2 Ensure that the whole Council works positively as a Corporate Parent to support looked after children and care leavers to achieve positive outcomes in life.	Ongoing	G	G	
5.3 Further raise awareness and monitor safeguarding activity through the joint (with Wrexham) LSCB.	Dec 2012	G	G	See Section 3.1.
5.5 Implement the Integrated Family Support Services initiative (also 7).	June 2013	G	G	See Section 3.1.
6.0 To protect and grow the local and regional economy, to be a prosperous County and to provide help and support for those vulnerable to poverty.				
6.9 Implement the Families First initiative (also 5).	30/09/2012	G	G	See Section 3.1.
7.0 To promote independent, healthy and fulfilled living in the community with the highest quality personalised and supportive social and health care services.				
7.3 Develop a range of temporary accommodation and independent living options for care leavers (also 8).	Mar 2013	G	G	

2.2 Strategic Assessment of Risks and Challenges (SARC)



The table below summarises the position of SARCs at the end of the reporting period.

KEY

R	High Risk
A	Medium Risk
G	Low Risk

Commentary is included in section 3 for those SARCS: -

- that are showing a Red RAG status
- where the RAG status has changed since the last reporting period
- where the Green Predictive Date has changed since the last reporting period
- where there has been considerable change or additions of secondary risks and activity

SARC – CD23 Procurement of Independent Sector Placements for Looked After Children	Previous RAG Status	Current RAG Status	Green Predictive
Budget pressures created by the cost of procuring independent sector placements that provide specialist care or education to meet the unpredictable needs of looked after children.			TBC

2.3.1 Performance Indicators and Outcome Measures


Key







R	Target missed
A	Target missed but within an acceptable level
G	Target achieved or exceeded



The RAG status of the indicators for the year are summarised as follows:





Graphs and commentary are included section 3 for those indicators shown with a RAG status of either Amber or Red. An asterisk (*) indicates that the indicator is an *improvement target*.

Indicator	Current Quarter Target (Q4)	Current Quarter Outturn (Q4)	Previous Annual Outturn (2010/11)	Annual Target (2011/12)	Annual Outturn (2011/ 12)	RAG	Annual Change (Trend) e.g. Improved / Downturned
*SCC/030a The percentage of young carers known to social	80%	100%	72.73%	80%	100%		Improved

services who were assessed.							
*SCC/030b The percentage of young carers known to social services who were provided with a service.	80%	100%	84.85%	80%	100%		Improved
*SCC/016 The percentage of reviews of child plans for children in need carried out in accordance with the statutory timetable.	70%	83.3%	62.85%	70%	85.9%		Improved
*SCC/042a The percentage of initial assessments completed within 7 working days.	89%	88.4%	88.36%	89%	90.2%		Improved
*SCC/042b The average time taken to complete initial assessments that took longer than 7 working days.	Below 10.5 days	19.4 days	15.26 days	Below 10.5 Days	16.4 Days		Downturned
*SCC/028 The percentage of Looked After Children who had a fully completed and updated Assessment and Progress Record at their third review.	70%	100%	40.54%	70%	66.7%		Improved
*SCC/039 The percentage of health assessments for Looked after Children due in the year that have been undertaken.	75%	54.1%	51.49%	75%	61.2%		Improved
HTH/001 The percentage of Health Assessments appointments	Not set	65.6%	N/A	N/A	80.8%	N/A	Not Applicable

requested within timescales.							
*SCC/025 The percentage of statutory visits to looked after children due in the year that took place in accordance with regulations.	93%	86.3%	87.01%	93%	80%		Downturned
*SCC/001b For those children looked after whose second review (due at 4 months) was due in the year, the percentage with a plan for permanence in place.	100%	100%	100%	100%	91.2%		Downturned
*SCC/024 The percentage of children looked after during the year with a Personal Education Plan within 20 school days of entering care or joining a new school.	80%	71.4%	41.67%	80%	73.3%		Improved
*SCC/033c The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19.	75%	71.4%	61.54%	75%	71.4%		Improved
*PSR/009a The average number of calendar days taken to deliver a Disabled Facilities Grant	350 days	283 days	297.6 days	350 days	307 days		Downturned

(DFG).							
*PSR/006 Timing of low cost adaptations not funded by a Disabled Facilities Grant (Children's cases only).	88 days	75 days	171.77 days	88 days	102 days		Improved
SCY/001a The percentage change in the average number of hours of suitable education, training or employment children and young people receive while within the youth justice system by children and young people of statutory school age	6%	7.9%	5.05%	6%	7.9%		Improved

2.3.2 Improvement Target Action Plan Monitoring

Key - ✓ on track, ✗ behind schedule, C completed

Ref	Action & Planned Completion date	Progress
*SCC/030a	Monitor progress against the Young Carers Strategy Action Plan.	✓
	Joint protocol to be strengthened using ADASS / ADCS report.	✗ (see Section 3.3)
	Young carers Professionals Pack to include 'Think Family' focus.	✗ (see Section 3.3)
	Paris to include the revised young carers assessment fields to record the reasons for assessments being declined and actions taken, eg. signposting to other agencies.	✓
*SCC/030b	Actions as above.	✓

*SCC/016	Develop a flagging system in Paris to remind social worker when reviews are becoming due (Performance Manager, by September 2012).	✓
*SCC/042a	It has been agreed and implemented that Social Workers will now sign off their own assessments, with managerial oversight provided at the point of transfer or closure. The Performance Team will continue to flag up unauthorised assessments.	C
*SCC/042b	It has been agreed and implemented that Social Workers will now sign off their own assessments, with managerial oversight provided at the point of transfer or closure. The Performance Team will continue to flag up unauthorised assessments.	C
*SCC/028	This indicator is no longer collected nationally or regionally, and members agreed for it to be deleted for 2012/13.	C
*SCC/039	A process of continuous scrutiny and overview remain central to our internal activities. As noted in previous action plans we remain limited in our response to Health activities and deadlines. We continue to have a dialogue with Health Representatives both in the North Wales area and other Health colleagues when children are placed out of county about time frames and standards.	C
	Notifications of new placements are being sent by the Performance Team to the Looked After Children (LAC) Nurse to speed up the booking process.	C
	Development of a new local PI to capture appointments requested within timescales.	C
*SCC/025	Continue to measure the impact of increasing capacity within CYAST and the flagging system for due dates of forthcoming visits on a quarterly basis, and raise at Social Services for Children Senior Management Team if remedial action is required.	✓
*SCC/001b	Discussions have taken place with other authorities around the definition of a plan for permanence and a Flintshire definition has been agreed.	C
*SCC/024	Adoption of the All Wales Personal Education Plan (being developed through the revision of the Education of LAC guidance).	✓
	Amend the Care Procedures Manual to the effect that when a child comes into care or changes school, a notification is sent from the social worker to the IRO and the Performance Team so that the need for a Personal Education Plan (PEP) can be logged and chased.	C
	LACE coordinator to contact staff in Permanency Team (CYAST) to ensure that they are aware of their responsibilities around meeting with school staff and completing the PEP within the timescales.	C
*SCC/033c	We have a group looking at access to Ordinary National	✓

	Certificate qualifications for care leavers.	
	Possible work placement opportunity for a care leaver with Flintshire County Council.	✓
*PSR009a	Actions are included in the Social Services for Adults Quarterly Performance Report.	
*PSR006	Actions are included in the Social Services for Adults Quarterly Performance Report.	

2.4 Key Actions from Service Plan Monitoring and ACRF

The following table shows the progress made against key areas of improvement/actions identified in the Planning service plan. A ✘ indicates those areas which have incurred slippage or have been subject to a revised timetable and references the page number where commentary can be found to further explain the slippage/revised timescales: -

Key - ✓ on track, ✘ behind schedule, C completed

Improvement Area	On-track?	Commentary
Major and minor adaptations	✓	
Transition Service	✓	
Identifying and supporting young carers.	✘	See Section 3.3
Supporting looked after children and care leavers	✓	
Regional collaboration	✓	
Regional integration	✘	See Section 3.3
Improve safeguarding arrangements	✓	
Develop Integrated Family Support Service	✓	
Apply LEAN principles	✓	
Welsh Language compliance	✓	
Monitor and reduce staff absence	✓	Robust monitoring processes are in place across service areas.
Service user and carer involvement	✓	
Reduce dependency on the independent sector and improve commissioning process	✓	
Develop the Families First Initiative	✓	
Prevent offending by children and young people	✓	

2.5 Internal & External Regulatory Reports

Frontline Fieldwork services were inspected over a period of two weeks in March. Early indications are that we will receive a positive report from the Inspectorate.

3. Exception Reporting

3.1 Improvement Plan

5.1.1 Develop robust commissioning arrangements for out of county placements.

Robust mechanisms for procuring and managing independent sector placements will ensure that looked after children are appropriately placed and best value is achieved. In order to achieve this, changes have been made to existing processes and guidance issued regarding the new Options Appraisal forms for all future submissions to the Out of County Placement Panel.

In addition, we have signalled our intention regarding the purchasing of bedspaces at the Bryn Awel unit in Denbighshire. The respective Heads of Service are due to meet in May to discuss the detail of costs.

Changes to the target dates for the Council Priorities

Timescales for the completion of a number of the Council Priorities reported against in section 2.1 have been revised to take account of further actions to be completed which will support the deliver of the outcomes.

3.2 Improvement Targets

The following indicators have a RAG of either red or amber when the annual performance is compared against the annual improvement target. A detailed commentary is provided on each indicator below.



SCC/042b

The average time taken to complete initial assessments that took longer than 7 working days.



SCC/028

The percentage of Looked After Children who had a fully completed and updated Assessment and Progress Record at their third review.



SCC/039

The percentage of health assessments for Looked after Children due in the year that have been undertaken.



SCC/025

The percentage of statutory visits to looked after children due in the year that took place in accordance with regulations.



SCC/001b

For those children looked after whose second review (due at 4 months) was due in the year, the percentage with a plan for permanence in place.



SCC/024

The percentage of children looked after during the year with

a Personal Education Plan within 20 school days of entering care or joining a new school.



***SCC/033c**

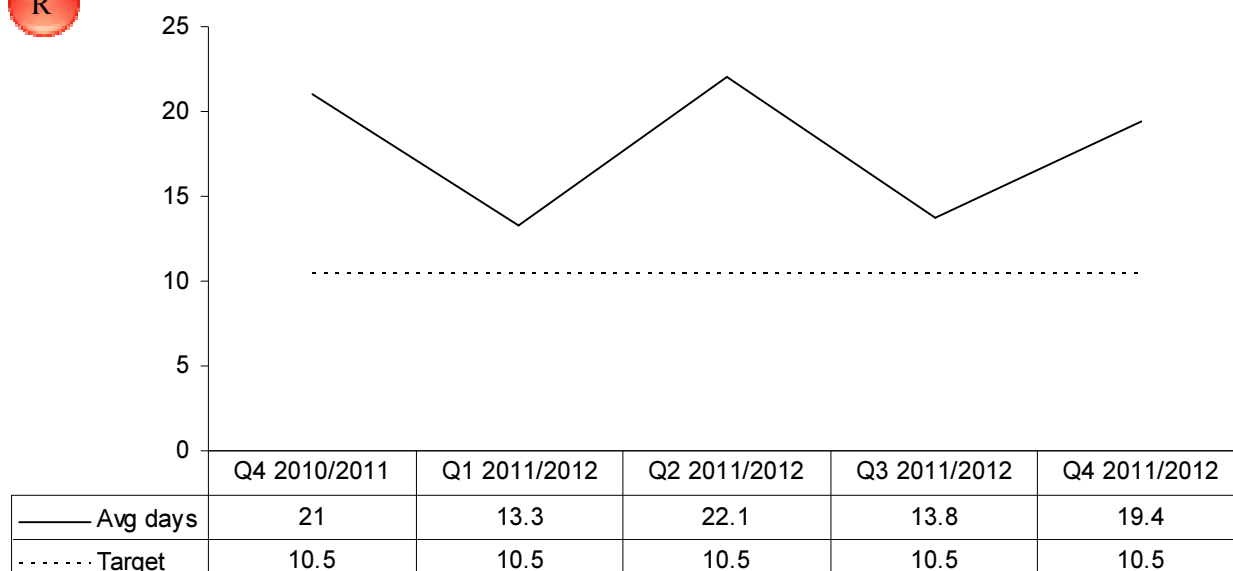
The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19.



PSR/006

Timing of low cost adaptations not funded by a Disabled Facilities Grant (Childrens cases only).

SCC/042b The average time taken to complete initial assessments that took longer than 7 working days.



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

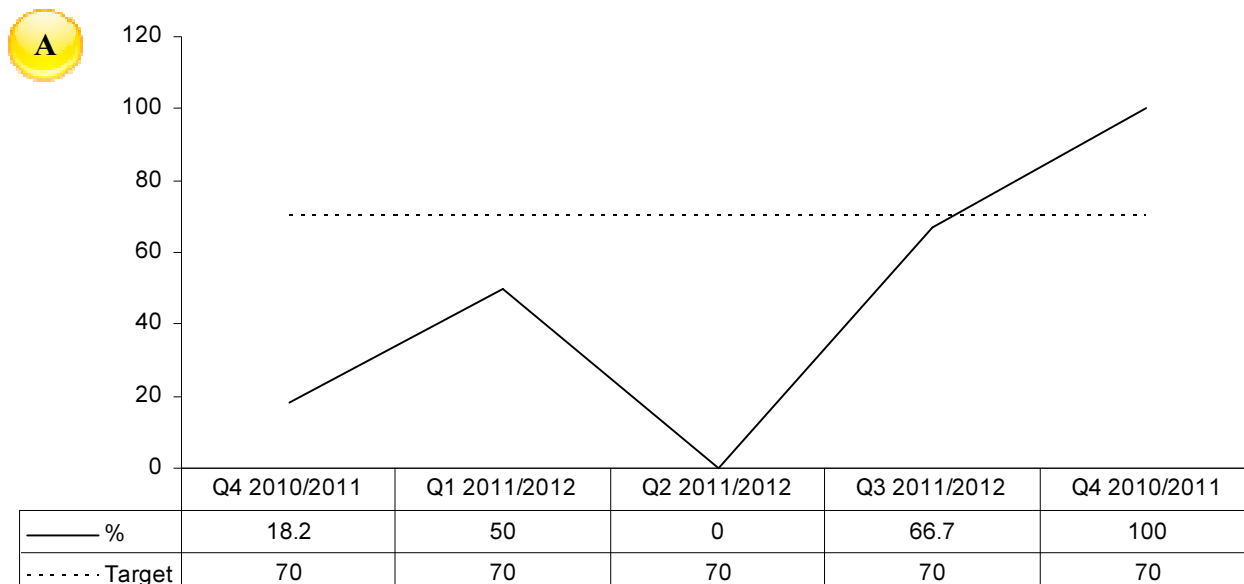
In Quarter 4, 13 initial assessments were completed outside the statutory timescale of 7 working days. 10 of these were allocated late because of insufficient capacity in the Duty & Assessment Team to carry out the assessment. Where there is a capacity issue, referrals are prioritised according to need. Low level referrals that cannot be allocated immediately are recorded as “unmet need”, and are regularly reviewed until such time as they can be allocated or closed. The rise this indicator in Quarter 4 reflects the level of unmet need in the Duty & Assessment Team between January and March, prior to additional capacity being created.

Two assessments were conducted at the service user’s pace, the longest taking 12 days, and one was delayed in the best interests of the child, to enable the Health Visitor to attend the assessment visit.

Overall this year, we have succeeded in completing 90% of our initial assessments within the statutory timescales, but we still have a few which take longer than our ambitious target

of 10.5 days. However, we are performing consistently better than the All Wales average in both parts of this indicator.

SCC/028 – The percentage of Looked After Children who had a fully completed and updated Assessment and Progress Record at their third review.

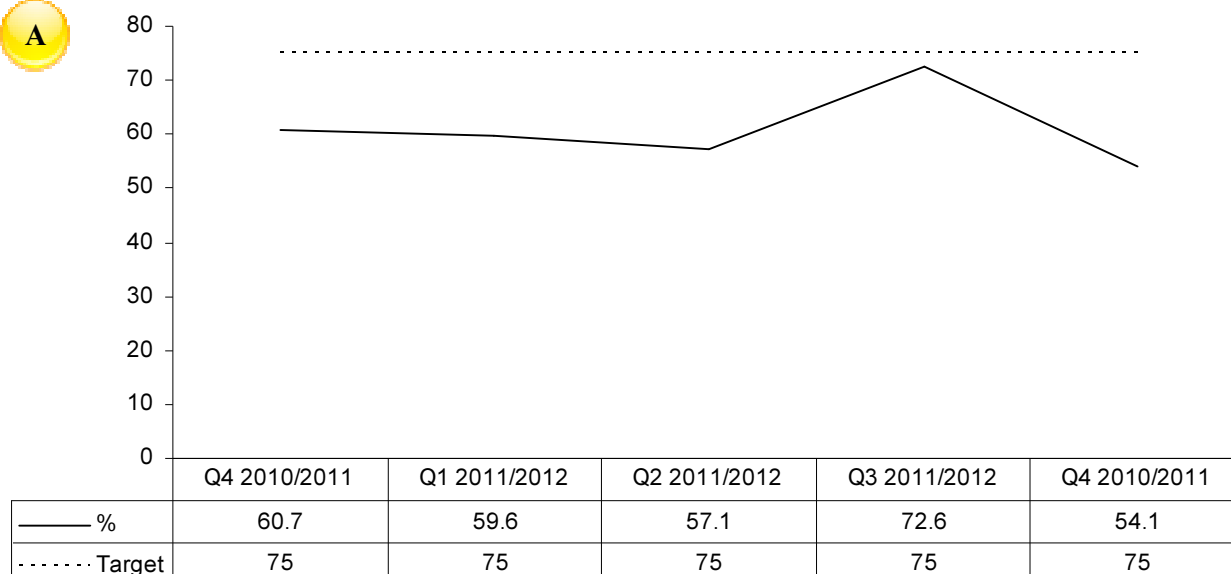


A upward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

In Quarter 4, all Assessment and Progress Records (APRs) that were due were completed within the statutory timescales. Overall for the year, performance was 66.7%, against a target of 70%. The All Wales average, however, was 24.8% for this indicator.

We have recently implemented an electronic report that can be run by social workers at any time to identify which APRs are becoming due, and this is working well so far. We will continue to monitor the timely provision of Assessment and Progress Records through the independent reviewing process for looked after children.

SCC/039 – The percentage of health assessments for Looked after Children due in the year that have been undertaken.



A upward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

A process of continuous overview and scrutiny remain central to our internal activities. As noted in previous action plans we remain limited in our response to Health activities and deadlines. We continue to have a dialogue with Health Representatives both in the North Wales area and other Health colleagues when children are placed out of county about time frames and standards.

There has been an increase in the number of children becoming looked after in Quarter 4. All children require their first health assessment within a month of becoming looked after and this has had a significant impact on the outturn this quarter. 13 health assessments were out of timescales due to the Health nurse's capacity.

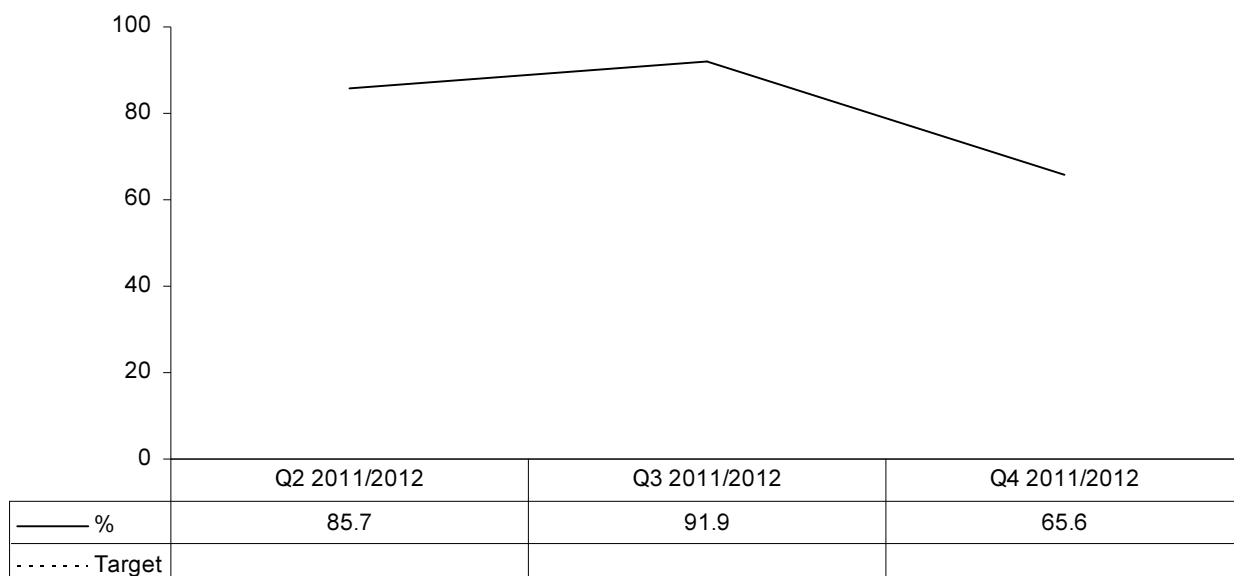
The actions to notify the LAC nurse of new placements, and to develop a new local performance indicator to capture appointments which were requested to Health within timescales, have both been completed. We were seeing an improvement in Quarter 3, but the large number of children coming into care in Quarter 4 has had an impact on the final year outturn, which is below target, but better than last year.

All reasons for late health assessments are given below, together with the age bands of the children.

Reason Health Assessment did not take place within timescales					
	Under 1	1-4	5-9	10-15	Over 16
Appointment provided within timescales but family failed to attend		1	3	4	2
Appointment provided within timescales but foster carer couldn't make date					1
Awaiting out of county information			1	2	
Health Visitor diary commitment		1			
Late due to LAC nurse capacity	3	4	2	2	
Requested late to Health	1	1			
Total	4	7	6	8	3

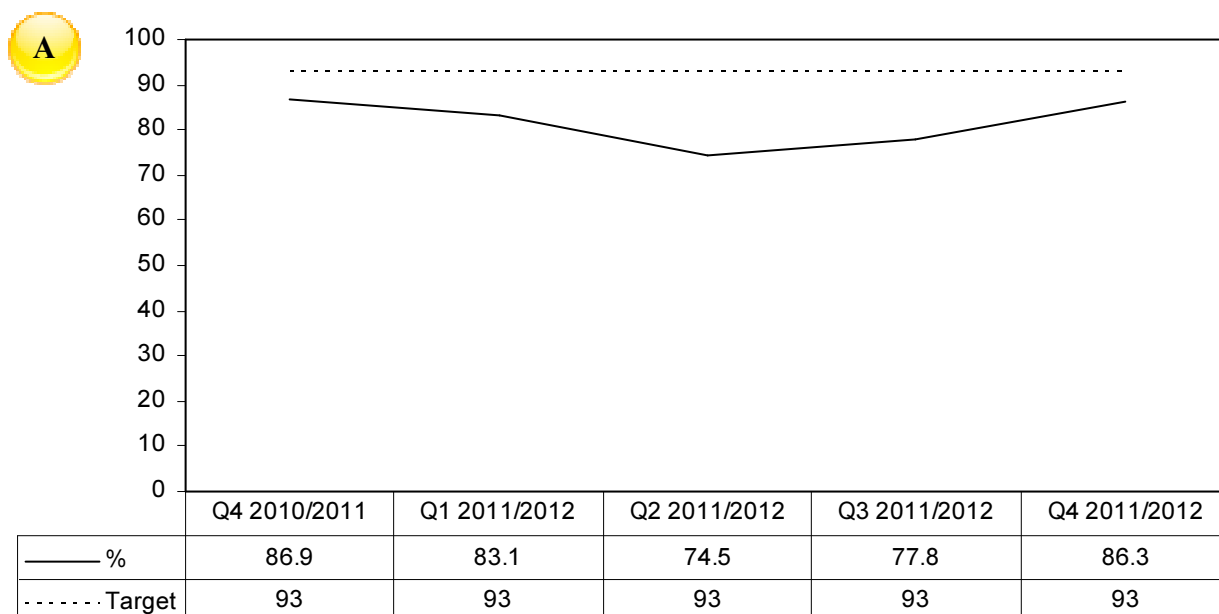
The local indicator measures the percentage of Health Assessments which were requested within timescales:

NEW LOCAL PI HTH/001 – The percentage of Health Assessments appointments requested within timescales.



In Quarter 4, performance was down to 65.6%, from 90% earlier in the year. This was due to the unusually large number of children coming into care at the end of the year.

SCC/025 – The percentage of statutory visits to looked after children due in the year that took place in accordance with regulations.



A upward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

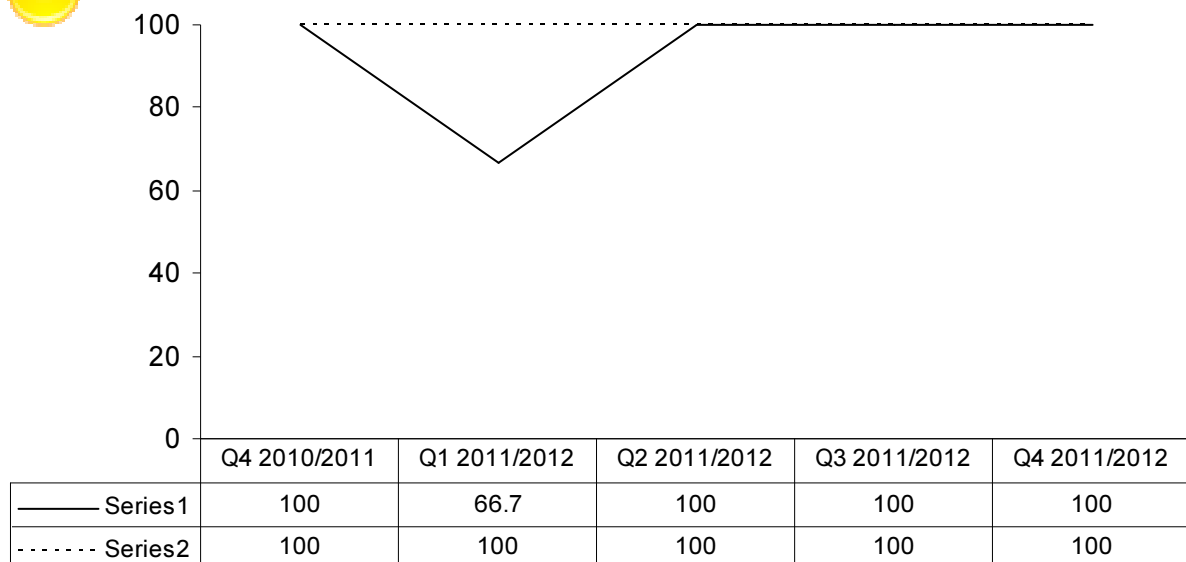
This year, all Statutory visits have had to be recorded on Paris in order to be counted in the Performance Indicator. This has meant that the outturn for the year has been slightly lower

than that recorded last year. Furthermore, capacity problems due to sickness in the Permanency Team (CYAST) have impacted on the recording of statutory visits to looked after children. Additional capacity was provided on the team towards the end of the year, and this is illustrated by the improved performance in this Indicator in Quarter 4.

This improvement target is set well above the national average, because we recognise the important role that the statutory visit process plays in care management for looked after children, and we will continue to work to improve the timeliness of visits in the forthcoming year. We have recently implemented an electronic report that can be run by social workers at any time to identify which visits are becoming due, and this is working well so far.

SCC/001b

For those children looked after whose second review (due at 4 months) was due in the year, the percentage with a plan for permanence in place.



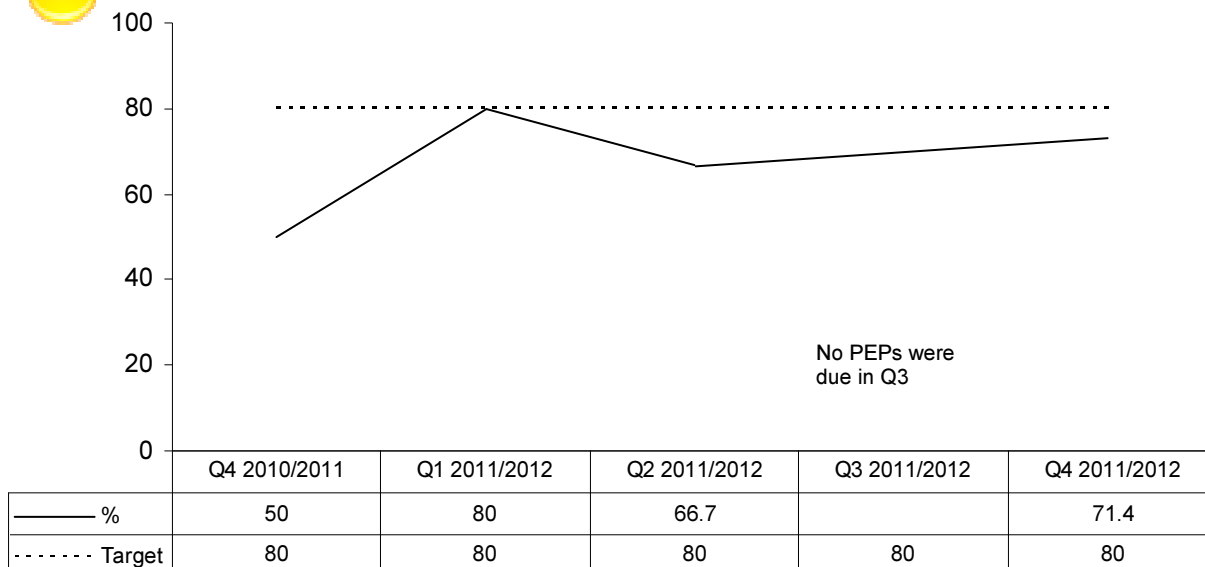
A upward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

In Quarter 1, three children did not have plan for permanency by the time of their second review, because their cases were subject to ongoing court proceedings and the plans could not be agreed until the judge had made a decision. This meant that we were not able to meet the 100% target for the year, although all other permanency plans were agreed within timescales.

Planning for permanence is monitored through the independent reviewing process for looked after children, and the Independent Reviewing Officers are aware of the reasons for any child not having a permanency plan after 4 months of being looked after.

SCC/024

The percentage of children looked after during the year with a Personal Education Plan within 20 school days of entering care or joining a new school.



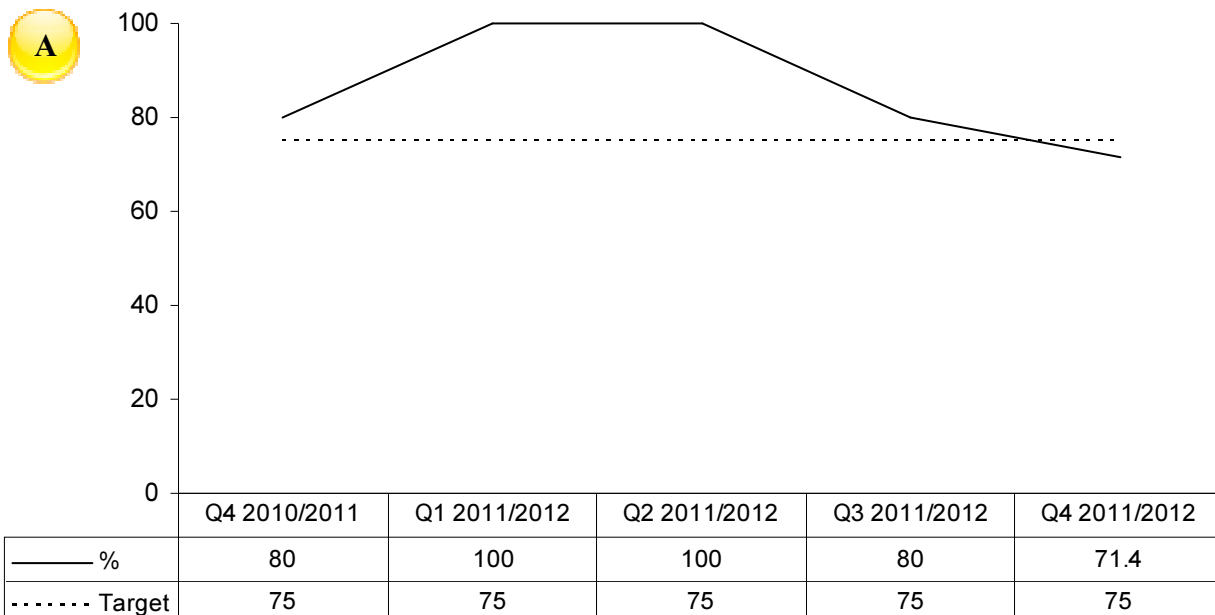
A upward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

15 looked after children entered care or started a new school in the year, and 11 of them had a Personal Education Plan (PEP) agreed within 20 days (73.3%). This was an improvement on last year's outturn, but missed the target of 80%. The provision of a Personal Education Plan is monitored through the independent reviewing process for looked after children, and the Independent Reviewing Officers will make recommendations at the first review for outstanding plans to be completed, but this is often too late to meet the timescale of the PI.

We have recently implemented an electronic report that can be run by social workers at any time to identify which PEPs are becoming due, and this is working well so far.

SCC/033c

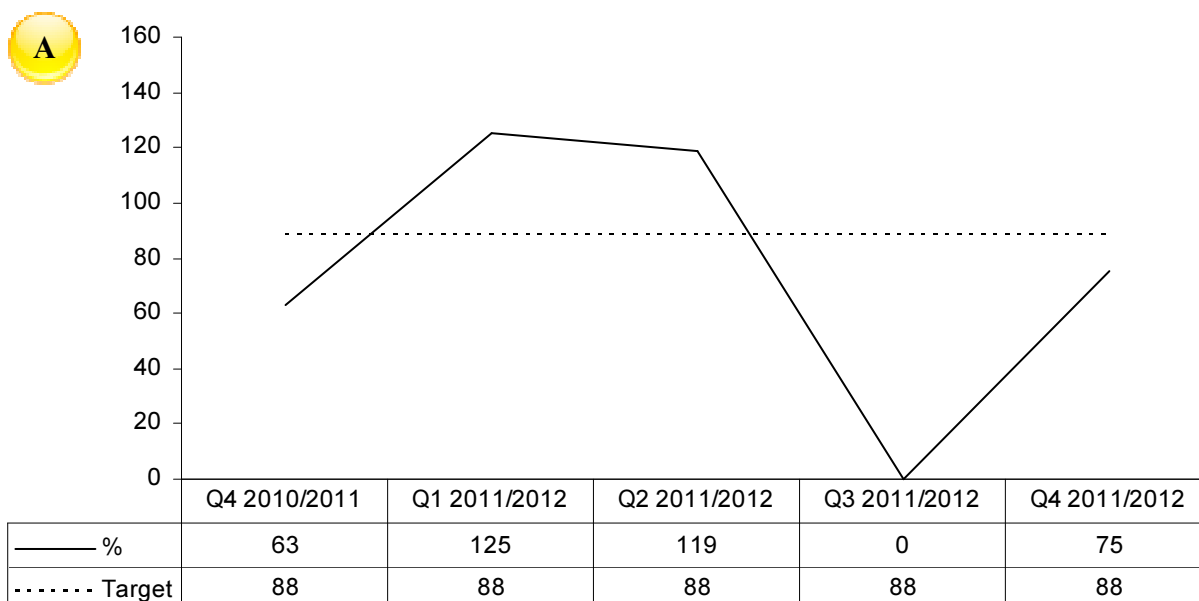
The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the authority is in contact, who are known to be engaged in education, training or employment at the age of 19.



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

PSR006

Timing of low cost adaptations not funded by a Disabled Facilities Grant (Children’s cases only).



A downward direction of travel in this graph represents an improvement.

Although we have reported 102 days which was over target for year end, there has been an improvement in performance this quarter. All minors were completed within timescales. The

closure process has been strengthened to identify when a low cost/minor adaptation has been completed on site and cases are being closed in a more timely manner.

3.3 Head of Service Plan

Improve our methods for identifying and supporting young carers

Young Carers Strategy implemented. Subgroup to review progress and report to Carers Strategy Group and Social Services for Children Senior Management Team (SSCSMT). The ID card launch has been re-scheduled for June 2012; plans are underway and the Children's Commissioner for Wales is attending.

We have identified the need to amend the Young Carers Professionals pack to include a 'think family' focus and this action will be included in the 2012/13 Head of Service Plan. In order to improve the identification and support given to young carers we will be exploring the feasibility of a consistent young carers assessment for SSA / SSC / Barnardos during 2012 / 13.

Regional Collaboration - Work with Wrexham to integrate respective Children's Integrated Disability Services (C.I.D.S.), enabling a more efficient and effective use of resources to improve service delivery for disabled children and their families

The issue of collaboration with Wrexham is now on hold although both Flintshire and Wrexham are working together regionally on the Families First and Integrated Family Support Services projects.