



# Children, Families and Education

Portfolio Performance and Resources  
Mid-Year Report 2024/5



Ambitious Stockport, creating opportunities *for everyone*

Date		Version		Approved by	
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# CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION PORTFOLIO HOLDER'S INTRODUCTION



This report provides an overview of key developments relating to the Children, Families and Education Portfolio during quarters 1 and 2 of 2024/25.

Our redesigned model of family help has now been in place for a year. Over the past 12 months, family hubs have been bringing existing help and support services and community offers together to create open access to information, help and support on all aspects of family life. Our next step is to focus on building and developing these networks into sustainable, value-driven support and connection structures within our neighbourhoods.



School transition classes began in most secondary schools from the beginning of the autumn term. These classes aim to help vulnerable pupils adjust to the mainstream school environment during their first year at secondary school. Early indications show a positive impact on reducing exclusions, and we plan to review the impact on attendance and reduction of escalation of need.

We have also been refreshing our social work learning and development offer to ensure that social workers across Stockport Family have the right building-blocks of knowledge and specialist skills to enhance their development. The new offer will be launched in December and will be complimented by 'practice summits' throughout the year focusing on key areas of work.

We are continuing to deliver against our two-year children's homes programme, which includes approval for three new homes. The first new home, 'The Crescent,' opened in September 2024 and an offer has been made against a second home, which we aim to open by autumn 2025. Work is underway to identify a suitable site for the third home.

Very stretching targets for educational attainment were set in support of our ambition for Stockport schools to be "the best in the country with every child included in their success". Outcomes, based on provisional data, show significant improvements in many of the areas outlined in our Covid Recovery Plan, especially in reading, outcomes for boys, outcomes for disadvantaged learners and for children at SEN Support.

These improvements are a result of schools reviewing their curriculum and adapting their practice to meet the needs of their children and young people. We continue to focus on improving outcomes in areas that remain under target.

**Cllr Wendy Meikle,**  
**Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education**

Revenue Budget		Capital Programme
	<b>£000</b>	There is currently no capital programme for this portfolio across 2024/25, 2025/26 and 2026/27.
Cash Limit	62,452	
Forecast Outturn	70,980	
(Surplus)/Deficit	8,528	
<u>Reserves</u> Approved use of reserves balance was £1.282m. Planned draw down at Q2 is £1.126m		

# CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

## 1. DELIVERING OUR PRIORITIES



This report is based on the **2024/25 Portfolio Agreement**, considered by Children and Families Scrutiny Committee on 13<sup>th</sup> June 2024 and approved by Cabinet on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2024. The link to the Agreement can be found by clicking [here](#).

This Quarter 2 (Mid-Year) report includes updates on all **delivery projects, programmes and other initiatives** set out in the portfolio agreement, up to the end of September 2024 where this is available.

Data is reported for all **performance measures** included in the agreement that have been updated since publication of the 2023/24 Annual Reports. These are categorised to reflect the council's influence and responsibility as Council, Partnership or Contextual. These categories are used to determine the type of target used as numerical, comparator, direction of travel or if no target is set. Definitions for these categories and target types are included within the Agreement.

The updated Portfolio Performance Dashboards are published alongside these reports and these can be [found here](#). They contain the latest data across the full set of portfolio measures, including historical trends and comparative data (where available).

The criteria for RAG ratings and direction of travel status are shown below. The rationale for any variations to this will be clearly highlighted within the commentary.

### Key to symbols used in tables

	Red – indicator is performing significantly (>5%) below target.		Getting worse – the year-end position (forecast or actual) for this indicator is less favourable than the previous year-end.
	Amber – indicator is performing slightly (<5%) below target.		Stable – the year-end position (forecast or actual) for this indicator is within 1% either side of the previous year-end.
	Green – indicator is on track or performing above target.		Getting better – the year-end position (forecast or actual) for this indicator is more favourable than the previous year-end.

**GMS** – measure is included in the Greater Manchester Strategy outcomes framework.

**Priority 1: All babies and children are given the very best start in life by their parents and carers and are ready for school at the end of reception**

The reach and timeliness of Healthy Child Programme mandated contacts remain above England and North West averages for quarter 1. This includes the screening of children’s development at 9 months and 2 years.

During quarter 1, 69.4% of 2 year olds screened using the Age and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ3) met age related expectations across all five key domains; communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem solving and personal care. Lower scores in communication remain a specific area of focus for those not meeting age related expectations. Early identification provides the opportunity for intervention through the speech, language and communication pathway and pathways to talking toolkit. This will support more children to be ready for school.

Pregnancy to 2 years continues to be a key focus and we have seen a number of key developments: -

- Enhanced maternity pathway - independent evaluation is well underway. The evaluation is collecting data relating to referrals and the number of joint midwife and health visitor visits completed (and those that are not completed), along with feedback from practitioners, parents and other colleagues. We are on target for 30-40 families to have received a joint visit during the evaluation period across the 7 family hub areas.
- The Start Well Intervention Working Group is prioritising the implementation of EPEC Baby and Us and the training of early years workers in the use of the Solihull online parenting resource. This will support early years workers to have a greater impact when working with parents in the home and support intervention readiness. Both of these approaches leverage the parent infant relationship to support communication and language development.
- Dad Matters (delivered by Home-Start HOST, commissioned by SMBC) – the focus has shifted from building a presence and an understanding of the offer to the engagement of Dads into the offer and receipt of referrals. Dad Matters works with Dads in the perinatal period and aims to support attachment and bonding, mental health and access to services. Since the start of the project we have received 25 referrals, 18 of these are live referrals; 515 universal engagements; and 461 professionals are engaged in supporting the development of ‘dad friendly’ practice. Feedback from participants has been positive: -

“I thought I knew about bonding with my baby girl, but after talking to you I now realise how important it actually is and I can’t wait to get home and talk to her even more” quote from a participant in the Dad Matters programme.

In relation to early years entitlement and provision, two year old take up remained high during the summer term at 92.1%. The national take up was 74.8% and the Greater Manchester take up 77.3%. We have not seen any detrimental impact on take up following the introduction of the expanded funded entitlements. We will continue to monitor take up rates closely and we aim to maintain our performance.

In relation to the expanded funded entitlements, we have successfully rolled out phase 1 (April 24 – 15 hour entitlement for working parents of 2 year olds) and phase 2 (Sept 24 - 15 hours entitlement for working parents of 9 month - 2 year olds).

In relation to digital developments, Essential Parent funding has been secured until March 2026. This provides opportunity to further test and evaluate the intervention and library of evidence based information and support for parents and carers.



A family hubs app is also being developed, which will translate Essential Parent information into 75 languages and provide push notifications to increase awareness of key milestones and dates.

### Measuring Performance and Reporting Progress

Performance data on measures relating to this priority that have been updated since publication of the 2023/24 Annual Reports is summarised in the table below. Commentary on any measures that have a “Red” RAG rating, as well as those rated “Amber” with a deteriorating trend, is set out beneath the table.

Indicator Name	Good Perf.	2yr Prev. (YE)	Prev. Year End	Values	Forecast	Target		
CFE 5: % of 2 year olds benefiting from funded early education	High (Council)	91.2 %	91.9 %	92 % (30/09/2024)		87 %	G	→
CFE 9(i): Early Years Attainment	High (Council)	65.5 %	67.6 %	68.9 % (30/09/2024) 2239 / 3251		68 %	G	↑
CFE 9(ii): EYFS - GLD (FSM)	High (Council)	44.3 %	47.2 %	43.3 % (30/09/2024) 182 / 420		Maximise	R	↓
CFE.1: % Mothers smoking at delivery	Low (Partnership)	7.7 %	4.5 %	4.3 % (30/06/2024) 30 / 704		6.5 %	G	↑
CFE.2: % Mothers breastfeeding (6-8 wks)	High (Partnership)	49.7 %	54.6 %	58.3 % (30/06/2024) 410 / 703		51.5 %	G	↑
CFE.65: % children achieving at least the expected level in communication and language skills at the end of EYFS	High (Council)	80.4 %	80.5 %	80.8 % (30/09/2024) 2627 / 3251		81 %	A	→
CFE.66: % CIN achieving at least the expected level in communication and language skills at the end of EYFS	High (Council)	52 %	52 %	60 % (30/09/2024) 48 / 80		N/A	N/A	↑
CFE.67: % FSM achieving at least the expected level in communication and language skills at the end of EYFS	High (Council)		47.2 %	63.3 % (30/09/2024) 266 / 420		N/A	N/A	↑

### Commentary on performance

Please see priority two for commentary on educational attainment measures.

## **Priority 2: All children and young people can access and engage in education and achieve the best they can**

The Stockport Schools Strategy has been discussed with school leaders and governors. Academisation is a key aspect of the discussion. A new local trust with 4 schools initially, opened in September 2024; a further primary school joined an existing trust in September and a further school will join an existing trust in January 2025. Two additional primary schools have made an application to the DfE and are in the process of conversion into existing trusts.

We have continued to lead the One Stockport Careers Education Forum. Meetings take place every half term and provide an opportunity for careers leads and practitioners to hear about and discuss latest offers and share good practice.

We are working with the pledge team to launch the Stockport Pledge which will bring employers and education and training providers together to increase the exposure of young people to the world of work, in line with the Gatsby Benchmark requirements.

We have commissioned a post-16 careers week which will provide extensive careers education, information, advice and guidance through a range of online resources and events covering both academic and vocational pathways and options -- [Stockport Council and Stockport Jobs Match gear up for Post-16 Careers Week 2024 - Stockport Council](#)

The UKSPF community grants are funding a range of local providers to offer education, training and employability support for young people to get into employment in sectors such as care, construction, hospitality, music and performance.










In addition a new manager has been recruited through GM UKSPF grant funding, to support young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET). This targeted work will coordinate and manage the provision and offer for NEET young people to maximise effectiveness and help get more young people into a pathway to sustainable employment.

A new approach to work and skills is being developed through a new skills plan for Stockport, led by the Director for Education, Work and Skills. The Stockport Skills Plan is a partnership plan and is key to securing a more productive, sustainable, inclusive, and diverse local economy that is growing and which benefits everyone.

### **Measuring Performance and Reporting Progress**

Performance data on measures to this priority that have been updated since publication of the 2023/24 Annual Reports is summarised in the table overleaf. Commentary on any measures that have a "Red" RAG rating, as well as those rated "Amber" with a deteriorating trend, is set out beneath the table.

Educational attainment

Indicator Name	Good Perf.	2yr Prev. (YE)	Prev. Year End	Values	Forecast	Target		
CFE 12(i): Attainment - KS2 Reading	High (Council)	77.4 %	75.7 %	77.4 % (30/09/2024) 2803 / 3623		Maximise		
CFE 12(ii): Attainment - KS2 Reading (CIN)	High (Council)	54 %	49 %	51 % (30/09/2024) 61 / 120		Maximise		
CFE 12(iii): Attainment - KS2 Reading (FSM)	High (Council)	58.1 %	58.8 %	63.5 % (30/09/2024) 545 / 858		61%		
CFE 15: KS4 Attainment (9-5)	High (Council)	52 %	46.8 %	49.9 % (30/09/2024)		56%		
CFE 16(i): KS4 - Attainment 8 Score	High (Council)	50	47	48.6 (30/09/2024)		58		

**Commentary on performance**

Please note all key stage 2 measures have been updated with provisional data for 2024. The final revised data will be published by the DfE in December and will be included in the annual PPRR.

We established very stretching targets for this priority in support of the ambition outlined in our Schools Strategy for our schools to be “the best in the country with every child included in their success”. With this in mind, whilst our outcomes show significant improvements in many of the areas outlined in our Covid Recovery Plan (especially outcomes in reading, outcomes for boys, outcomes for our disadvantaged learners and for our children at SEN Support), in some areas red RAG ratings remain as we are still below our very stretching targets.

Key highlights include: -

- Stockport is in percentile 41 compared to all local authorities nationally for GLD, rising 8 places between 2023 and 2024
- Stockport is in percentile 28 compared to all local authorities nationally for Year 1 phonics expected standard. Stockport has risen 19 places since July 2023.
- Stockport is in percentile 31 when compared to all local authorities nationally for the percentage of children reaching the expected standard in reading at the end of Key Stage 2. Stockport has risen 4 places since July 2023.
- Stockport is in percentile 30 compared to all local authorities nationally for the expected standard in reading, writing and maths. This is a rise of 13 places since July 2023.

The improvements in outcomes are as a result of schools reviewing their curriculum and adapting their practice to meet the needs of their children and young people as they have presented post-pandemic.

For key stage 4, we currently only have access to GCSE results day data for Stockport. The DfE is due to publish key stage 4 provisional data in November. North West and national comparator data for 2024, will also be available in November, so the comparator data is currently for 2023.

Key stage 4 attainment data for the children in need and free school meals cohort is not collected as part of the GCSE results day data collection. Updated data for these cohorts will be reported at quarter 4.

### Attendance and exclusions

Indicator Name	Good Perf.	2yr Prev. (YE)	Prev. Year End	Values	Forecast	Target		
CFE 20(i): Persistent absentees	Low (Partnership)	11.9%	20.1%	18% (31/03/2024) 6981 / 38868		19%	G	↑
CFE 20(ii): Persistent absentees (CIN)	Low (Partnership)	33.5%	39.5%	44.5% (31/03/2024) 1080 / 2426		Minimise	R	↓
CFE 20(iii): Persistent absentees (FSM)	Low (Partnership)	27.2%	40.7%	37.3% (31/03/2024) 3136 / 8407		35%	R	↑
CFE 23(i): Fixed period Exclusion/ Suspension Rate	Low (Partnership)	4.28%	7.79%	5.99% (31/03/2024) 2458 / 41035		5%	R	↑
CFE 23(ii): Fixed period exclusions/ Suspension – CIN	Low (Partnership)	25.54%	15.72%	19.25% (31/03/2024) 609 / 3163		Minimise	G	→
CFE 23(iii): Fixed period exclusions/ Suspension – FSM	Low (Partnership)	9.66%	17.75%	14.18% (31/03/2024) 1226 / 8645		Minimise	G	↑

### **Commentary on performance**





Attendance and exclusion data is collected through the school census and is therefore collected one term in arrears. Data for the summer term will be collected through the autumn census and will be reported in the next PPRR.

Current in year data (autumn 2024) shows improvements in absence and suspensions. This reflects our improved inter-team working, a redesign of teams and services and improved process and support for the transition to high school. Attendance and suspensions in Year 7 are particularly improved.

Whilst we have had data from only one half term of the new school year, this is an encouraging position and is reflective of significant effort in schools and at local authority level.



Post 16 education, employment and training

Indicator Name	Good Perf.	2yr Prev. (YE)	Prev. Year End	Values	Forecast	Target		
CFE.25: Young People (16-18) in emp, edu or training	High (Partnership)	96.3 %	95.8 %	95.9 % (30/06/2024) 6429 / 6703		97%		
CFE.28: Young People (16-18) Apprenticeships	High (Partnership)	4.7 %	5.8 %	6.3 % (30/06/2024) 421 / 6703		5%		

**Priority 3: Children and families with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) receive the best possible support at the right time to ensure that the best possible outcomes are achieved**

The Success at SEN Support programme was paused over the summer holidays and from 1st September a new school effectiveness structure commenced. The new structure brings together the School Improvement team and School Inclusion Service to enable the delivery of the pathfinder across the borough. We are currently in phase 2, which has seen the launch of the second footprint areas. Early indications show improvements in the way children are being supported at SEN support as a result of the process.

School transition classes commenced in the majority of secondary schools from the beginning of the autumn term. These classes aim to help vulnerable pupils adjust to the mainstream school environment during their first year. Plans are in place to review the impact of the classes on attendance, reducing exclusions and reducing escalation of need to the point where a specialist setting is required.

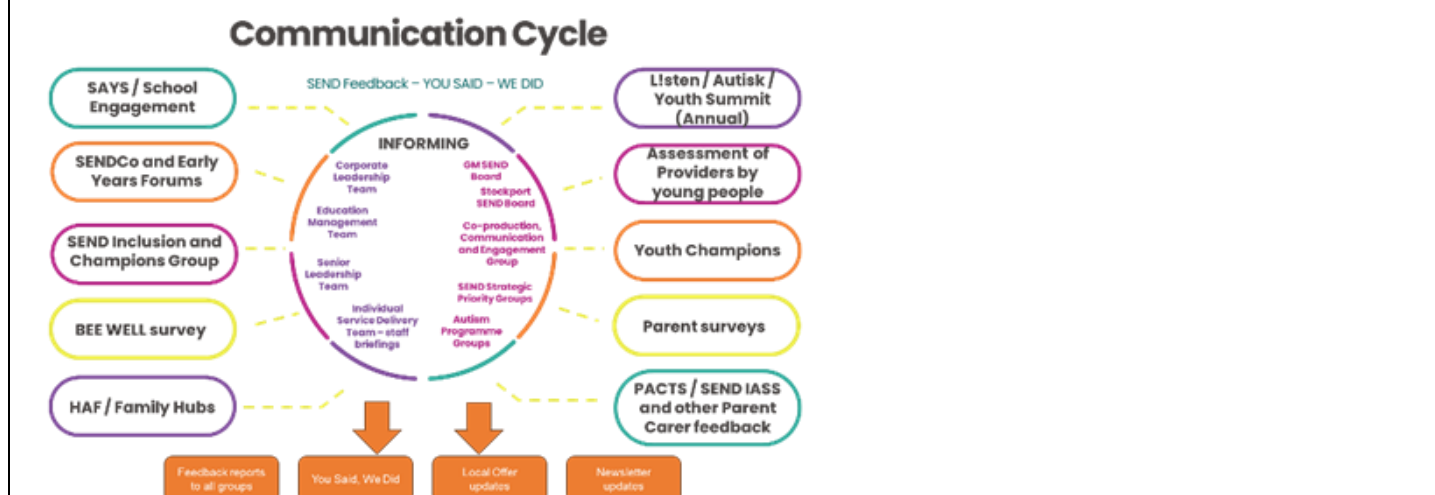
A new delivery model for speech and language therapy also commenced at the beginning of the autumn term. Initial feedback is very positive.

A neurodevelopment team has now been launched following the restructure of the autism team. The new team will be based at three family hubs. A review of the SEND newsletter is currently underway. The local offer directory for SEND has been launched and a communication cycle feedback loop drafted.

In addition, the Joint Commissioning Strategy shared by education, health and care has been agreed and will underpin the delivery of the SEND Strategy.

Education, health and care services will now complete a drafted self-evaluation template to assess the quality of services and identify gaps in provision. This will support our preparation for inspection, our Ofsted Annual Conversation and regional peer challenge sessions.

In line with increased demand we have significantly increased the number of specialist and resourced places in Stockport, by nearly 600 - from 973 in 2020 to 1570 by September 2025. The SEND Sufficiency Plan has been drafted and will be discussed at the Place Planning Board in October.



### Measuring Performance and Reporting Progress

Performance data on measures relating to this priority that have been updated since publication of the 2023/24 Annual Reports is summarised in the table below. Commentary on any measures that have a “Red” RAG rating, as well as those rated “Amber” with a deteriorating trend, is set out beneath the table.

Indicator Name	Good Perf.	2yr Prev. (YE)	Prev. Year End	Values	Forecast	Target		
CFE 62: Education, Health and Care Plans	-(contextual)	4.8	5.2	5 (31/08/2024) 2188 / 43852		N/A		
CFE 63: EHCP issued on time	High (Partnership)	26.8%	8.4%	6.1% (30/09/2024) 35 / 573		63%		

### Commentary on performance

The number of referrals for Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) has increased over time, which has increased a longstanding backlog. On average 65 referrals are received per month, with a significant increase in referrals coming from parents and young people. Year on year increases seen in Stockport are in line with national trends, however Stockport has a higher than average number of EHCPs. If equivalent to the national rate, Stockport would have 267 less children with an EHC Plan. The number of new requests for plans aren’t matched by the number of plans to be ceased, which is increasing the number of plans that require maintaining.

An increase in capacity, through use of the wider team and digital changes has impacted positively on the number of assessments moving to plans. However timeliness continues to be impacted as a consequence of work to reduce the backlog. The number of plans cleared from the backlog will have a negative impact on CFE.63 ‘EHCP issued on time’, though a very positive impact on reducing families waiting for their plans. Currently, 484 assessments are in progress, down from a peak of 635 at the end of March 2024.

We have an agreed recovery plan which is underpinned by a review of demand and capacity. This has involved workflow mapping of processes, including EHC needs assessment, EHC annual review, pre-cessate process, key phase transfer process, and EHCP mediation and appeals. Each process has been carefully mapped and each touchpoint timed to assess how long a workflow typically takes.

We will use this detail to calculate the optimum size of the team to clear workload within statutory deadlines. This involves also reducing the time taken to complete workflow by altering processes, practices and developing digital ways of working to reduce capacity requirement and associated costs.

The recovery plan also includes the need to work with the wider system and in particular advice givers to avoid misinterpretation of advice. The work will also benefit from strengthening the offer at SEN Support so that more children can thrive without the need for a plan or a specialist placement.

Educational attainment

Indicator Name	Good Perf.	2yr Prev. (YE)	Prev. Year End	Values	Forecast	Target		
CFE 9(iii): EYFS - GLD (EHC Plan)	High (Council)	8.7 %	2.5 %	6.2 % (30/09/2024) 8 / 129		Maximise	G	↑
CFE 9(iv): EYFS - GLD (SEN Support)	High (Council)	23.9 %	24.9 %	27 % (30/09/2024) 72 / 267		Maximise	G	↑
CFE 12(iv): Attainment - KS2 Reading (EHCP)	High (Council)	17.2 %	26.7 %	20.3 % (30/09/2024) 32 / 158		78%	R	↓
CFE 12(v): Attainment - KS2 Reading (SEN Support)	High (Council)	45.5 %	47.9 %	49.5 % (30/09/2024) 253 / 511		46%	G	↑
CFE 15(i): KS4 Attainment (9-5) - SEN	High (Council)	25.8 %	23.5 %	26.3 % (30/09/2024)		25%	G	↑
CFE 16(iv): KS4 - Att 8 Score (EHCP)	High (Council)	17.5	16.4	25.2 (30/09/2024)		52	R	↑
CFE 16(v): KS4 - Att 8 Score (SEN)	High (Council)	36.6	35.1	36.6 (30/09/2024)		Maximise	G	↑

Attendance and exclusions

Indicator Name	Good Perf.	2yr Prev. (YE)	Prev. Year End	Values	Forecast	Target		
CFE 20(iv): Persistent absentees (EHCP)	Low (Partnership)	34.2 %	35.7 %	33.7 % (31/03/2024) 606 / 1798		Minimise	G	↑
CFE 20(v): Persistent absentees (SEN)	Low (Partnership)	21.3 %	32.5 %	29.2 % (31/03/2024) 1505 / 5154		Minimise	G	↑
CFE 23 (iv): Fixed-period exclusions/ Suspension (EHCP)	Low (Partnership)	12.05 %	24.02 %	16.51 % (31/03/2024) 319 / 1932		Minimise	G	↑
CFE 23 (v): Fixed-period exclusions/ Suspension (SEN Support)	Low (Partnership)	12.06 %	19.26 %	17.81 % (31/03/2024) 978 / 5491		Minimise	G	↑



**Commentary on performance**

Attendance and exclusion data is collected through the school census and is therefore collected one term in arrears. Data for the summer term will be collected through the autumn census and will be reported in the next PPRR.

Current in year data (autumn 2024) shows improvements so far this term. Whilst we have had data from only one half term of the new school year this is an encouraging position and is reflective of significant effort at school and local authority level.

### Priority 4: All children, young people and families have access to a clear and inclusive early help offer

It has been almost a year since we opened our first family hub sites and launched our first family hub networks and virtual family hub. Our vision is that family hubs will support families with children aged 0-19 years (up to 25 for young people with special educational needs and disabilities) to start well, live well and thrive.

Over the past 12 months, family hubs have been bringing existing help and support services and community offers together to create open access to information, help and support on all aspects of family life. Access for families can be virtual, physical and via outreach.

We have achieved our initial goal to launch seven family hub networks. The next crucial step is to focus on building and developing these networks into sustainable, value driven support and connection structures within our neighbourhoods.





During the first two quarters of 2024/25, we have redesigned Stockport’s early help assessment based on family and practitioner feedback. The revised document is currently being trialled by partners before going live in January 2025.

We are also working on creating QR codes which can capture child, young person and parental feedback after they have received a service from the MASSH (Multi Agency Safeguarding and Support Hub) and following a family help intervention.

The Early Help Strategy is under review and will be presented to Scrutiny in November.

### Measuring Performance and Reporting Progress

Performance data on measures relating to this priority that have been updated since publication of the 2023/24 Annual Reports is summarised in the table below. Commentary on any measures that have a “Red” RAG rating, as well as those rated “Amber” with a deteriorating trend, is set out beneath the table.

Indicator Name	Good Perf.	2yr Prev. (YE)	Prev. Year End	Values	Forecast	Target		
CFE.71: Family Early Help Assessments completed within 45 working days	High (Council)		69.1%	69.5 % (30/09/2024) 474 / 682		80%	<span style="background-color: red; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px;">R</span>	
CFE.72: Percentage of Early Help Episodes closed in period with a successful outcome	High (Council)	77.3%	76 %	76.8 % (30/09/2024) 215 / 280		N/A	<span style="background-color: gray; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px;">N/A</span>	
CFE.73: Re-referrals to Early Help within 12 months of a previous episode	Low (Council)	13 %	13 %	16 % (30/09/2024) 76 / 479		N/A	<span style="background-color: gray; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px;">N/A</span>	
CFE.74: Percentage of Early Help episodes closed in period stepped up to Children’s Social Care	Low (Council)	14.7 %	13.4 %	14.4 % (30/09/2024) 65 / 452		N/A	<span style="background-color: gray; color: white; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px 6px;">N/A</span>	

### **Commentary on performance**

In relation to CFE.71 'Family Early Help Assessments completed within 45 working days', whilst the cumulative data initially indicates a reduction in timeliness, quarterly analysis reveals a positive trend, with timeliness improving to 62% in quarter 1 and 77% in quarter 2 of 2024/25, representing the highest increase within this period. This improvement aligns with the introduction of practice standards for the workforce, focused efforts by the Family Help leadership team and a newly created operational data dashboard. There is now a need to extend this approach to include all partners.

Feedback received from families and professionals has prompted a review of the early help assessment template, along with related training and guidance materials. This revised approach is currently in a testing phase, with an anticipated rollout in the new year. We expect these updates to improve timeliness.

### **Priority 5: All children, young people and families enjoy good physical and emotional health and wellbeing and can access coordinated robust and timely support pathways based on need**

Funding has been secured for a project to embed the whole school approach for mental health and wellbeing. A small project team has been established to ensure this resource complements and adds to existing practice.

In addition to the children's mental health pages already developed on the Healthy Stockport website, we have developed padlets (an online virtual pinboard) for schools and colleges, parents / carers and young people to bring together links and resources to support mental wellbeing. These have been shared with schools and colleges via the termly mental health in education newsletter. Both padlets and the newsletter use the iThrive framework and language.

Maternal mental health and its impact on the infant remains a priority. Women are screened in pregnancy and postnatally for anxiety and depressive symptoms, using validated tools. The perinatal mental health pathway ensures timely support to the right level of intervention, from advice through to getting help, getting more help and risk support in line with the iThrive Model.

In addition, we also recognise the importance of mental health wellbeing for all parents and Dad Matters (delivered by Home-Start HOST, commissioned by SMBC) is now well established in Stockport. Please see the priority 1 update for further information about this programme.

The health and wellbeing of school age children is overseen by the School Nurse Service, working through the Team Around the School model. A drop in service is available for high schools to ensure students have access to a school nurse on a weekly basis. The School Nurse Service offers the National Childhood Measurement Programme screening and is involved in the development of a healthy weight pathway for 0-19 year olds. In addition school nurses provide sexual health support for schools and a new video is in development to support young people .

School nurses also support mainstream schools to develop individual healthcare plans ( IHPs)and support medical action plans for students with a range of medical needs, to support school attendance and learning wherever possible.

We also have a dedicated team of school nurses to support the health needs of children and young who have a child protection plan. In quarter 2, 98% of children were offered a health assessment within 10 working days of a child protection conference, 100% of health assessments were completed within 60 days of the conference, and 92% of children in our care review assessments were completed within 12 months of previous assessment.

During quarter 2 we recruited a joint youth justice and complex safeguarding nurse to work with children and young people through the local authority teams. We also recruited a specialist MASSH health practitioner to support information sharing, and decision making on level of need for children and young people referred into the MASSH.

### **Measuring Performance and Reporting Progress**

Performance data on measures relating to this priority that have been updated since publication of the 2023/24 Annual Reports is summarised in the table below. Commentary on any measures that have a "Red" RAG rating, as well as those rated "Amber" with a deteriorating trend, is set out beneath the table.



Indicator Name	Good Perf.	2yr Prev. (YE)	Prev. Year End	Values	Forecast	Target		
CFE.3: Overweight Children - Reception	Low (Partnership)	26 %	18.9 %	20.9 % (31/03/2023) 685 / 3285		24 %	G	↓
CFE.4: Underweight Children Reception	Low (Partnership)	0.63 %	0.98 %	0.87 % (31/03/2023) 55 / 6335		1 %	G	↑
CFE.31: Conceptions 15-17	Low (Partnership)	9.9	11.4	11.6 (30/06/2022)		13	G	↓
CFE.33: Overweight Children - Yr 6	Low (Partnership)	37.2 %	35.9 %	34.2 % (31/03/2023) 1140 / 3330		35 %	G	↑
CFE.34: Underweight Children - Yr 6	Low (Partnership)	1.04 %	1.23 %	1.15 % (31/03/2023) 75 / 6535		0.7 %	R	↑

**Commentary on performance**

In relation to measure CFE. 34 ‘underweight children’, caution is required when interpreting annual data when cohort numbers are so small. The actual number of Year 6 pupils classified as underweight still represents a decrease from 40 pupils in 2021/22 and Stockport’s rate (1.1%) remains comparatively favourable against the England average (1.6%). For pupils identified as underweight and seeking further support, referral to the ABL Health Family Weight Management Service or Paediatric Department at Stepping Hill remains available where appropriate

**Priority 6: Children and young people live safely and happily within their families, and where this is not possible, they are supported to have stable loving homes and achieve positive outcomes wherever they live**

We have been working to refresh our social work learning and development offer to ensure that social workers across Stockport Family have the right building blocks of knowledge and specialist skills to enhance their development. This is due to be launched in December and will be complimented by “practice summits” throughout the year focusing on key areas of work with children and families. Our model has been developed in line with the DfE’s work around the early career framework in children’s social care, which Stockport has contributed to as a pilot area.

Focused work on reviewing our social work career pathway and salary scale is also nearly concluded to ensure we can attract and retain our workforce. Recruitment and retention remain a challenge at times but there is ongoing focus on this and the implementation of the GM Pledge, now nearly a year in place, has supported our conversion of agency workers to permanent and reduced the numbers of workers leaving for agency roles.

New Beginnings have now recruited an additional two social workers who joined the team at the beginning of September. The new pilot will be based on NSPCC reunification research and enhanced by Stockport Family services, including Stockport Families First (SFF) and family group conferencing.

Six families have been identified to take part in the reunification pilot and the team have recently started working with these families. The aim is to support parents through the trauma informed approach of New Beginnings and intensive support from SFF - to work towards children returning to their care.

In relation to family group conferencing (FGC), we have completed recruitment and now have a fully staffed team of one team leader and four FGC co-ordinators. All staff have completed FGC accreditation training with the Family Rights Group.

The FGC policy has been revised and re-launched and associated pathways on Liquid Logic are complete. Plans to develop a data dashboard are underway. This will enable us to provide up-to-date performance data and will assist with the measurement of impact.

All families are asked to provide feedback at the end of the FGC process. To date, feedback has been very positive, with parents rating the service as 4.5/5. We are looking to develop mechanisms to capture feedback from children and young people.

Significant communication and publicity of the refreshed service has also taken place, and caseloads are beginning to rise – although are yet to reach capacity.

In relation to fostering, the number of connected carers has continued to increase, with 32 in assessment and 73 approvals. We have continued to deliver support during school holidays, including fostering outreach support and activity clubs.

We continue to be part of the Greater Manchester fostering hub and are monitoring the number of enquiries received. The number has been comparatively low but we are expecting this to increase as the hub is embedded. We have secured approval for a new home makers scheme to support new extensions and conversions utilising existing carers homes to increase bed capacity. In

addition our Fostering Independent Reviewing Officer has now started in role and is focusing on review and improving quality with our approved foster carers.

We are continuing to deliver against our two year children's homes programme, which includes approval for three new children's homes. The first new home, 'The Crescent,' opened in September 2024. An offer has been made against a second home, which we hope to open by autumn 2025; and work is taking place to identify a suitable site for the third home.

We continue to work in partnership with schools and education colleagues to improve school attendance, support with learning and development, and school achievement for children in our care and care leavers. We work closely with the Virtual School team to provide a range of support with post 16 education including volunteering, internships, the jump start scheme and supported apprenticeships. We also continue to work in partnership with post 16 education providers and employers to improve the education, training and employment opportunities to support the children in our care and care leavers to achieve their career goals.

In relation to youth justice, the Youth Justice Plan has now been approved through full council and the national Youth Justice Board has confirmed that it meets the terms and conditions of the Grant. Youth justice performance is carefully monitored and first time entrants (FTEs) initially increased and are now fairly stable. The custody and remand rate is low. Reoffending is showing as higher for quarter 1 (there is always a data lag on reporting) but this is based on relatively low numbers so subject to fluctuations.

The Youth Justice Service was selected by HMI Probation to have a pilot full-service inspection at the end of October 2024. This was based on the new HMI framework standards that are due to come into effect from February 2025.

Youth Justice and Complex Safeguarding have merged under one management structure and therefore there has been a significant amount of focus on workforce development to move towards a model of joint working and aligned with the principles of the Adolescent Safeguarding Framework (see below)

Work is also being developed about the future of the youth work offer (particularly in relation to Detached Youth Work) as this is currently funded through the Serious Violence VRU funding, and current posts are confirmed to March 2025.

In relation to the Adolescent Safeguarding Framework, the past quarter has focused on starting to expand the model from complex safeguarding to a model of early intervention and implementation of the Adolescent Safeguarding Framework.

Training on 'working with adolescents has been developed to deliver across Stockport Family.' This will be delivered over 4 sessions between November 2024 and March 2025 and will include the 'Adolescent Safeguarding' principles.





















Over the summer, joint activities were carried out with young people at risk of child criminal exploitation open to complex safeguarding and/or youth justice. Referral processes for Complex Safeguarding have been amended to better capture the use of consultations and track young people through the system.

Over the next quarter, there will be a focus on replacing the current 'Phoenix' assessment with a screening tool which will feed into consultations.

## Measuring Performance and Reporting Progress

Performance data on measures relating to this priority that have been updated since publication of the 2023/24 Annual Reports is summarised in the table below. Commentary on any measures that have a “Red” RAG rating, as well as those rated “Amber” with a deteriorating trend, is set out beneath the table.

### Social care





Indicator Name	Good Perf.	2yr Prev. (YE)	Prev. Year End	Values	Forecast	Target		
CFE.75: Children Social Care repeat referrals – children with a previous referral within 12 months of their latest referral	Low (Council)	21 %	19 %	20 % (30/09/2024)		22%		
CFE.78: Percentage of children placed in foster care	-(Council)	72.5 %	70 %	64.4 % (30/09/2024) 333 / 517		N/A		
CFE.79: Percentage of children in own provision	-(Council)	66 %	64.2 %	59.2 % (30/09/2024) 306 / 517		N/A		
CFE.80: Percentage of children placed with parents	-(Council)	7.7 %	7.3 %	10.1 % (30/09/2024) 52 / 517		N/A		
CFE.81: Child Protection Plans starting in period who have been subject to a previous plan (ever)	Low (Council)	20 %	20 %	27 % (30/09/2024)		Minimise		
CFE.82a: Aspire outcomes - In stable accommodation	High (contextual)	50 %	100 %	100 % (30/09/2024) 5 / 5		maximise		
CFE.82b: Aspire outcomes - formed a trusted relationship	High (contextual)	100 %	85.7 %	100 % (30/09/2024) 5 / 5		maximise		
CFE.82c: Aspire outcomes - re-engaged in education	High (contextual)	100 %	57.1 %	40 % (30/09/2024) 2 / 5		maximise		
CFE.82d: Aspire outcomes - missing episodes have reduced	High (contextual)	0 %	100 %	100 % (30/09/2024) 2 / 2		maximise		
CFE.83: Children assessed as requiring children’s social care support	-(Council)	57 %	57 %	57 % (30/09/2024)		N/A		

### Commentary on performance

We continue to see a fluctuating picture in relation to repeat child protection plans (measure CFE.81). Although in real terms, this figure concerns a relatively small group of children, it is one that is closely monitored. A new procedure has recently been introduced to enhance oversight of this cohort. The procedure promotes strong managerial review as well as collaborative partnership thinking and is intended to add rigor to existing child protection processes.







In relation to measure CFE.82c 'Aspire education outcomes', there was a very small number of young people at point of closure, so we expect some fluctuations in the data (this was based on 5 young people, 2 of whom re-engaged with education).

Indicator Name	Good Perf.	2yr Prev. (YE)	Prev. Year End	Values	Forecast	Target		
CFE.76: Missing episode in period, percentage of return home interviews offered within 72 hours (of those offered)	High (Council)	84.1%	92.9%	87.2 % (30/09/2024) 396 / 454		80%		
CFE.77: Missing episodes in period, percentage of Return Home interviews accepted (of those offered)	High (Council)	70.8%	63.4%	45.8 % (30/09/2024) 208 / 454		65%		














### Commentary on performance

In relation to measure CFE.77 'missing episodes, percentage of Return Home interviews (RHI) accepted', the number of RHI offered remains high at 91%; however, RHI accepted has reduced significantly mainly due to 2 young people, who account for over 22% of all missing episodes in quarter 2, declining the majority of RHIs. Both children have extensive support from children's social care, police and other agencies working to reduce the risks, but do not want an independent return home interview. The RHI accepted does not reflect the continued efforts of the Missing team to offer and engage with young people but does reflect the complexity of some of the situations for specific young people currently experiencing high levels of reported missing.

### Youth Justice

Indicator Name	Good Perf.	2yr Prev. (YE)	Prev. Year End	Values	Forecast	Target		
CFE.42: YOS - Custodial Sentences - per 1,000 10-17 yr olds	Low (Partnership)	0.21	0.07	0.03 (30/06/2024)		0.23		
CFE.70: Young person's open to YJS aged 10-17 years who are ethnically diverse (disproportionality)	Low (Council)	17.2	18.3	20.8 (30/09/2024)		N/A		

Children in care and care leavers

Indicator Name	Good Perf.	2yr Prev. (YE)	Prev. Year End	Values 	Forecast	Target		
CFE.29: Care Leavers in education, training and employment (19-21)	High (Partnership)	55.6 %	57.1 %	54.6 % (30/09/2024) 89 / 163		70 %		
CFE.53: Care Leavers in suitable accommodation (19-21)	High (Partnership)	94.8	95.9	93.9 (30/09/2024) 153 / 163		95		
CFE.54: Care Leavers the local authority remains in touch with (19-21)	High (Partnership)	96.5	97.3	95.7 (30/09/2024) 156 / 163		95		
CFE.55: Care Leavers living with their former foster carers (aged 19-20)	High (Partnership)	44	44	52 (31/03/2023) 12 / 23		Maximise		
CFE.58: CLA with 3 or more placements in 12 months	Low (Council)		15.2 %	15.1 % (31/03/2023) 73 / 483		Minimise		
CFE.59: CLA in the same placement for at least 2 years	High (Council)		72.5 %	68 % (31/03/2023) 124 / 183		Maximise		

**Commentary on performance**

Stockport’s care leaver performance is consistently strong against comparators. The targets set in the 2024/25 portfolio agreement however did not take into consideration our most recent benchmarks and historical performance overall. Despite consistently outperforming comparators therefore, ‘red’ and ‘amber’ RAG ratings continue to be reported.

Whilst the Care Leavers Service wishes to remain ambitious with the services provided to young people (and their associated targets), it is appropriate to acknowledge the excellent levels of service already being delivered by reducing targets to better reflect performance levels across statistical neighbours and nationally. The following changes to targets are therefore proposed:

- CFE.29 (Care leavers (19-21) in education, employment or training) reduced from 70% to 60%.
- CFE.53 (Care leavers (19-21) in suitable accommodation) reduced from 95% to 90%

Had these proposed targets been adopted in the portfolio agreement, CFE.29 would still be RAG rated ‘red’. CFE.53 however would be RAG rated ‘green’ rather than ‘amber’.

# CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION

## 2. FINANCIAL RESOURCES AND MONITORING



### 2.1 Revenue – Cash limit

#### Current Budget at Q2:

	Budget at Q1 £000	Increase / (Reduction) £000	Budget at Q2 £000
Education	8,592	0	8,592
Children and Family Services	53,860	0	53,860
<b>Cash Limit</b>	<b>62,452</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>62,452</b>

#### Budget Changes since Quarter 1: n/a

#### Outturn Forecast

The service is forecasting a net £9.654m deficit (before deployment of reserves) against the budget of £62.452m in 2024/25 which is 15.45% of the net cash limit budget. The deployment of reserves at £1.126m reduces this deficit to £8.528m, which is 13.66% of the net cash limit budget.

	Net Cash Limit Budget	Forecast Net Expenditure	Covid Scarring Allocations	Forecast Net Appropriations from Reserves	Forecast Net Expenditure after Scarring & Reserves	Forecast (Surplus) / Deficit Q2	Forecast (Surplus) / Deficit Q1
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Education	8,592	10,098	0	(342)	9,756	1,164	564
Children & Family Services	53,860	62,008	0	(784)	61,224	7,364	3,915
<b>Total</b>	<b>62,452</b>	<b>62,106</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(1,126)</b>	<b>57,691</b>	<b>8,528</b>	<b>4,479</b>

#### Education:

There is a forecast deficit at Q2 of £1.164m on Education.

This deficit continues to be a reflection of the ongoing demand, challenges and cost pressures associated with the statutory requirement to provide SEN transport support to our most vulnerable pupils across the borough.

- The demand for specialist school provision placements over the last 12 months continues to rise and put pressure on the system despite a budgetary uplift via the MTFP process.
- The number of eligible pupils has risen from c.785 in May 2022 to c.880 in July 2023 to now over 1,000 pupils on various SEN transport support/routes, of which a large number of said routes relate to pupil placement in other OLA/External provision and/or now new routes required as new pupils attending new schools and/or schools we don't currently have operational SEN transport support to.

**Summary information:**

Narrative	FYC £m	Pupils	Routes (incl. PB's)	PB's	OOA Routes
<b>24/25 Q2</b>	<b>7.9</b>	<b>1,066</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>24/25 Q1</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>51</b>
Jan 24	6.8	988	340	116	50
Nov 23	6.7	974	339	114	47
June 23	5.7	880	303	98	39

The service continues to review all costs and options available on a regular basis and as part of the strategic cost avoidance plan for the future is assessing all personal budgets options, increasing independent travel training numbers and seeking to reduce costs where parental preference/choice has been activated and had a negative impact on LA costs.

**Children & Family Services**

The financial resources deployed to Children and Families Services total £53.860m and the forecast outturn as at Q2 is a deficit of £7.364m.

**Children Looked After (CLA):**

The largest area of deficit is in CLA placements and has a forecast deficit of £5.177m accounting for 70% of the total reported deficit.

All efforts continue to be made to ensure that our internal residential provision is at full occupancy whilst also ensuring that the matching of children within homes is appropriate to meet all children's needs safely and in line with regulatory standards.

CLA Categories	Forecast Deficit £m
External residential placements	5.466
External Foster care placements	0.111
Internal Children's Homes	(0.188)
Internal Foster care and Staying Put	(0.212)
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.177</b>

**External Provision**

Securing placements for young people remains challenging. The numbers of young people with extremely complex needs and mental health needs continues to place a pressure on the budget with some significantly high placement costs experienced.

The forecast for current placements as at 25th of September is a deficit of £0.111m in External Foster care (Independent Fostering Agency (IFA)) placements and a deficit of £4.630m on External residential placements.



In addition to this is an estimate of £1.200m for new placements over the remaining 26 weeks of the year. The Q1 position included a forecast for the remainder of the year of £1m, however the actual increase in commitments has far outstripped this resulting in the forecast for the remainder of year being increased at Q2 rather than a reducing forecast as would be expected.

There were 39 new placements in Q1 and Q2 (net increase in financial terms excluding those turning 18, the forecast for which is accounted for from the start of the year). The forecast of £1.2m allows for a further 18 young people arriving steadily throughout the remaining 26 weeks of the year at an average cost of £5,117 per week.

The recovery plan has delivered savings of £0.740m in external placements to date. This positive impact has been far outstripped by the rate of young people coming into external placements.

Previous reports have cautioned that the lack of capacity in internal provision both internal foster care and internal children's homes was likely to have an impact going forwards with young people with less complex needs potentially needing to be placed externally. We have started to see this at Q2: it has been noted that 2 of those young people new to external residential could have been placed internally had an internal foster care match been available.

There are 14 out of a total of 43 (33%) registered children's homes placements where the weekly cost is above the GM Residential Framework contract average cost of £5,581 per week:

- 2 between £5,581 and £6,000
- 5 between £6,000 and £7,000
- 2 between £7,000 and £8,000
- 3 between £9,000 and £10,000
- 2 above £10,000

There are currently 9 placements out of the total 101 in external residential placements that are joint funded (8.9%).

The Senior Management Team continue to progress with plans to address the issues outlined above through the recovery plan put in place in 2022/23. Further to this a full finance review of Children's Services as requested by Cabinet has been carried out and provided assurance that the 4 key lines of enquiry specific to children's social care identified are being progressed:

- system approach to children's health and social care including the funding of placements,
- internal placements sufficiency,
- foster carer retention and growth and
- recruitment and retention of social workers (business case approved)

Further to the above an independent review of Children's Social Care has been commissioned the aim of which is to review practice to ensure it supports the aims of the recovery programme and to identify further opportunities to meet the future MTFP requirements to address the deficit. The review will conclude in December 2024.

## **New Internal Children's Homes**

The reported surplus on the internal children's home provision of £0.188m relates to the delay in the opening of The Crescent for which full year budget was provided in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) with the expectation that the home would be open from the start of the financial year. Despite the home still not having full OFSTED registration the anticipated saving is not as much as maybe expected due to staff needing to be appointed to enable OFSTED registration of the home.

At budget setting it was forecast that the internal children's home would be open for the full year and would reduce demand for external placements. Delays have caused a pressure of c£0.680m.

The overall progress on the development of the new internal children's homes approved as part of the recovery plan has been slower than hoped due to issues with identifying and purchasing of properties. However, a second property has now been purchased and it is hoped that a further provision will be open in the new financial year.

### **Internal Foster Care**

The reported surplus on internal foster care and staying put comprises of a surplus of £0.483m and a deficit of £0.271m respectively. The forecast for both is based on current packages as at the end of August with an additional forecast for new packages during the year based on trends of the past 12 months. The internal foster care figure also applies dampening of £0.195m to the forecast based on the expected impact of the investment in Family Group Conferencing (FGC) built into the MTFP. The deficit on staying put is also inclusive of a reduction in the Department For Education grant supporting staying put placements. The surplus at Q2 in Internal foster care therefore does not indicate an availability of internal foster placements but is a reflection of the increase in staying put and also Special Guardianship Order (SGO) conversions.

### **Non – CLA:**

#### **Avoid Need to Accommodate**

There is a forecast deficit of £0.608m on avoid need to accommodate and CLA maintenance payments.

There are four high-cost therapeutic support packages funded from Section 17 (S17) to keep children with complex needs at home and prevent family breakdown resulting in the children needing to become looked after. The cost of these packages is £0.156m which equates to 26% of the total forecast spend. Although high cost in terms of S17 support these packages are arguably preventing family breakdown and placement at a far higher cost of £0.260m per placement at average residential cost.

Support funded through S17 is reviewed monthly and packages lasting longer than 3 months are discussed with Service Leads. The forecast is based on the most up to date information provided on likely duration of current packages of support.

#### **Disability Service**

There is a forecast deficit of £1.583m across the Children with Disability (CWD) service. This comprises of deficits of £0.672m on Direct Payments, £0.799m on Respite and £0.107m on section 17 spend within the CWD cohort. This has been dampened by £0.100m for a review of spend and reduction of support costs.

There are currently 123 Direct payments packages, 112 level 3 respite packages and 147 level 2 support packages. Of the 112 respite packages 25 have an annual cost above £0.020m and account for 66% or £1.113m of the total projected spend of £1.688m. These packages are supporting young people with complex needs and disabilities who would otherwise be in high-cost residential placements with the service having received requests from families in respect of 12 young people to place in full time care. An external placement search for one of these young people returned an offer of placement at £7,500 per week, £0.390m per annum. As all of these young people have significant complex needs it would

be likely that all searches would return offers of a similar cost. Therefore, although the CWD service is over spending it is preventing far higher costs of circa' £4.680m for these 12 young people alone.

The service has also seen an increase in demand and requests for support following the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) review which has resulted in an increase in Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and in turn requests for social care support.

A full and comprehensive review of the service is currently underway lead by the Director of Children's Services to better understand both the present and future requirements of the service.

### **Youth Offending Service**

There is a deficit in the Youth Offending Service of £0.207m solely related to the spend for young people on remand. This is uncontrollable spend through the Youth Justice court process. It cannot be met through the Youth Justice Board (YJB) main grant.

The 'cost of remand' has increased significantly post-Covid, due to lags across the criminal justice system (including court, police investigation, CPS etc.) and also the increased complexity of offending. Therefore, children being remanded are often younger, the remands are longer, and they are often multi-handed, sometimes with adults, which all builds delay into the system. Also, the bed night cost of the secure placements has risen significantly.

## 2.2 Earmarked Reserves

The majority of earmarked reserves are held at a corporate level and services produce a business case to drawdown funds, which is approved through Corporate Leadership Team and Members. This strategic approach is designed to provide financial resilience for the council and to ensure that council reserves are used on an invest-to-save basis and to support council priorities. The exceptions to this are ringfenced reserves and the Directorate Flexibility Reserve.

The table below reflects planned use of reserves at Q2:

### Transfer from reserves:

Reserve Category	Reserve Narration	To be used for	Reserve / Approved Use Balance £000	Approved use of Reserves £000	Balance of Reserve £000
<b>Directorate Reserves</b>					
Directorate Reserve	Directorate Flexibility Reserve	FGC Co-ordinator	23	23	0
<b>Corporate Reserves</b>					
Corporate Reserves	Legislative and Statutory Requirements Reserve	Funding remaining for serious case reviews -	79	79	0
Corporate Reserves	Third Party Monies Reserve	NW Partnership monies	156	0	156
Corporate Reserves	Revenue Grant Reserve	ASC SW Development Grant	28	28	0
Corporate Reserves	Revenue Grant Reserve	CYP SW Development Grant	19	19	0
Corporate Reserves	Revenue Grant Reserve	CYP ASYE Grant	43	43	0
Corporate Reserves	Third Party Monies Reserve	LSCB, Local Safeguarding Children's Board	103	103	0
Budget Resilience Reserve	Children's Reserve	Foster carer support	100	100	0
Strategic Priority Reserve	Cabinet Positive Investments	Targeted Youth Support	39	39	0

Budget Resilience Reserve	Children's Reserve	WD Staff (Formerly PIP) – 23/24 approved reserves	47	47	0
Reserve Linked to Budget	Transformation - Invest to Save Reserve	GM House Project	68	68	0
Budget Resilience Reserve	Children's Reserve	PIP	37	37	0
Reserve Linked to Budget	Transformation - Double Running Reserve	Phased Savings	198	198	0
Strategic Priority Reserve	Cabinet Positive Investments	Free School Meals Widen Eligibility	342	342	0
	<b>Total</b>		<b>1,282</b>	<b>1,126</b>	<b>156</b>



## 2.3 Corporate Savings Programme

N/A

## 2.4 Dedicated Schools Grant

The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) is made up of four blocks (Schools, early years, high needs and central school services), the schools delegated budgets are considered spent at the point of delegation as individual school budgets are managed at school level with the governing body.

The remaining budgetary resources are the Centrally Held Budget (CHB) is managed by the local authority on behalf of schools and consists of a range of services to schools and pupils.

The total DSG allocation which is centrally held is £83.323m (which is largely Early Years at £36m and the high needs block (£40m) in support of our most vulnerable pupils)

The Q2 forecast outturn position provides an in-year deficit at £5.5m in addition to the planned original budget deficit set at c £12.4m in April 2024, thus totalling a total year-end deficit forecast at £18.002m

The significant cost pressure within the overall DSG Q2 forecast are the continued cost increase and demand in the high needs block pertaining to:

- More pupils in mainstream schools accessing HN top-up support funding;
- Requirement to increase local specialist capacity further for SEN placements;
- Increase in placements in high cost external/independent providers; and
- Increase in occupational health and speech and language support contracts for the increased special school pupil cohort.

The above deficit will be carried forward as part of the overall cumulative deficit (estimated at £41.8m for 31 March 2025).

The LA continues to be part of the DfE delivering better value (DbV) support program and will be working with the project team to review our spend and deploy resources to ensure a sustainable budgetary position going forward.

## 2.5 Capital Finance Update and Outlook

There is currently no capital programme for this portfolio across 2024/25.