
**INTEGRATED CHILDREN'S SERVICES
STANDARDS & QUALITY REPORT 2012/13**

Report by Depute Chief Executive, People

SOCIAL WORK AND HOUSING COMMITTEE

5 June 2014

1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 **This report presents the first annual Integrated Children's Services Standards & Quality report. The Standards & Quality report reviews performance across the service for the financial year 2012/13 and identifies the key areas of work emerging from this analysis.**
- 1.2 The ICS Standards & Quality report (Appendix 1) provides an opportunity to reflect on service performance; consider the context in which the service is operating; and identify areas requiring remedial action.
- 1.3 The ICS Standards & Quality report 2012/13 identifies a number of key areas for action. This accompanying paper provides an update on these areas and interim performance data where this is available.
- 1.4 The key areas emerging from the Standards & Quality report are:
 - 1.4.1 Managing and supporting the cohort of Looked After young people exhibiting extreme behaviour resulting from life trauma and requiring a high level of specialist support;
 - 1.4.2 Meeting the challenges of revised legislative duties under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act;
 - 1.4.3 Strengthening services for children Looked After at home; and
 - 1.4.4 Raising attainment and achievement among our most vulnerable learners.
- 1.5 The ICS Standards & Quality report is designed to complement the statutory report required to be produced by all education authorities. The next ICS report will be due in April 2015, with an interim report going to Senior Management in October 2014.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

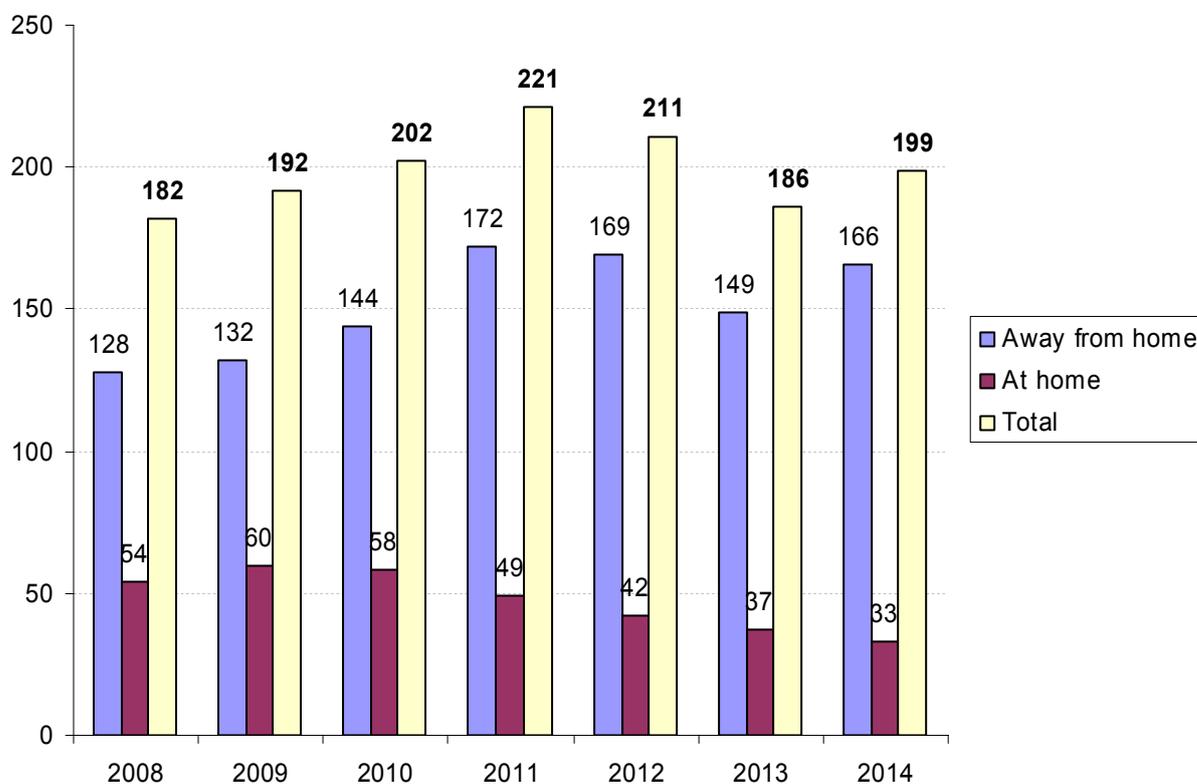
2.1 I recommend that the Committee:-

- (a) Note the content of the Standards & Quality Report;**
- (b) Note the areas for action identified by the Standards & Quality report, and the updated information presented here; and**
- (c) Approve the proposed actions to address these areas.**

3 KEY AREAS FOR ACTION

Looked After Children

3.1 The number of children Looked After by the authority has risen slightly in 2014. The table below shows the number of children Looked After at home and in accommodation provided by Scottish Borders Council at 31 March each year.



3.2 The number of Looked After Children aged 0-5 years has dropped from 54 at 31 March 2010 to 44 in 2013 and 46 in 2014. While there is as yet no way to prove this, there may be a positive correlation between the reduced number of very young children becoming Looked After and the early intervention ethos of Integrated Children's Services.

3.3 The age profile of the Looked After Children population is a factor in the level of need and the type of placement individual children and young people may require. It is rare for primary aged children or younger to require residential schooling which is not linked to severe and complex disabilities. The age profile of Looked After Children in the Scottish Borders has changed in the last 12 months, with the number of children aged 12-15 in the system rising from 27% of the total LAC population in September 2012 to 34% in August 2013 and 37% at 31 March 2014.

3.4 A cohort of young people emerged in 2012/13 who have experienced significant trauma and exhibit extreme behaviour, with a corresponding rise in the resources required to meet their needs. While some of these young people have been previously Looked After or otherwise involved with Integrated Children's Services, all have demonstrated a significant escalation in their behavioural issues. This is placing pressure on both the placements budget and the overall budget for ICS.

- 3.5 A managerial Looked After Children Overview Group was established in response to this, and meets monthly to review individual cases. There have been some notable improvements for individual children and young people, including the successful transition of two of the three young people who required secure care out of secure care and into supported placements.
- 3.6 The ongoing pressure on the placements service is unlikely to reduce in the short to medium term. Early and effective intervention by its nature takes time for its effects to be realised. Further, it is the nature of the children and young people who need this service that significant or quick reductions in the level of support required are unlikely to be achieved. This means that continuing pressure on this budget can be anticipated for some time. Regular updates are being provided to Corporate Management Team through the ongoing performance reporting process.

Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014

- 3.7 The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act was introduced to Parliament in April 2013 and received Royal Assent in March 2014. It makes various provisions for the wellbeing of children and young people, which will have a significant impact on children's services provided by local authorities as they come into force. A report on this matter was presented to the Social Work & Housing Committee in January 2014.

Strengthening services for children Looked After at home

- 3.8 Children and young people who are subject to a Supervision Requirement under the Children (Scotland) Act 1995, but who remain in the care of their parent(s) or guardian(s) are deemed to be Looked After at home. These children and young people receive direct support from the local authority under the terms and conditions of their Supervision Requirement but these do not include a condition to be looked after away from home.
- 3.9 Statistically, children Looked After at home have less positive outcomes not only compared to their peers who are not Looked After, but to children and young people who are accommodated. In particular they tend to have lower levels of school attendance and attainment. Scottish Borders Council is following a national trend which has seen the proportion of children Looked After home compared to those Looked After away from home drop year on year since 2009 (see chart at 4.1).
- 3.10 The Corporate Parenting Strategy 2014-18, currently in final draft stage with the Corporate Parenting Action Group and due to be presented to the Corporate Parenting Strategic Group in June, identifies improved outcomes for children Looked After at home as a priority area and outlines strategies for achieving these improvements.

Raising attainment and achievement of vulnerable learners

- 3.11 As stated above, outcomes for Looked After children lag behind those of their peers. It is a key priority in the Children's Service Business Plan 2014-17 to improve the attainment and achievement of our most vulnerable learners, including Looked After Children. A new requirement for schools to produce an outcomes-based action plan linked to deprivation funding was agreed at the Education Committee in November 2013, along with a requirement for Learning Communities to develop a multi-agency plan for tackling deprivation and inequality at a local level.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

4.2 Risk and Mitigations

The report describes all the elements of risk that have been identified in relation to this project and no specific additional concerns need to be addressed.

4.3 Equalities

The Standards & Quality report seeks to improve services, including their relevance to and impact on performance on equalities groups. Equalities Impact Assessments have been or will be carried out on the actions identified as required.

4.4 Acting Sustainably

No economic, social or environmental effects are anticipated as a result of the recommendations in this report.

4.5 Carbon Management

No effects on carbon emissions are anticipated as a result of the recommendations in this report.

4.6 Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation

No changes are required to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in this report.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Chief Financial Officer, the Monitoring Officer, the Chief Legal Officer, the Service Director Strategy and Policy, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Chief Officer HR, the Service Director Interim Capital Projects and the Clerk to the Council have been consulted on this report and their comments have been incorporated into the final report.

Approved by

Jeanette McDiarmid,
Depute Chief Executive, People

Signature

Author(s)

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Background Papers:

PROPOSED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (SCOTLAND) BILL

Report by Acting Director of Social Work, Social Work & Housing Committee, 16 January 2014

“CLOSING THE GAP” – Improving Attainment and Achievement for All

Report by Director of Education and Lifelong Learning, Education Committee, 26 November 2013

Previous Minute Reference:

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Diana Potter can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

Contact us at:

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Appendix 1:



Integrated Children's Services

Standards and Quality Report

April 2012 – March 2013

INTRODUCTION

Integrated Children's Services (ICS) combines the Children and Families elements of the Social Work service with the Additional Support for Learning aspect of the Education service. The key objectives of the service are:

- Emphasis on providing support at the earliest possible opportunity
- Minimising bureaucracy in order to maximise the amount of time staff spend in direct contact with children, young people and their families
- Inter-agency collaboration within a 'single system' of assessment and intervention, including the implementation of the concept of forming a 'team round the child' as set out in the Scottish Government key foundation document Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)
- Co-location of staff from different agencies both locally and centrally

Integrated Children's Services are delivered through a combination of local and centralised services. The goal is for the majority of children to be helped and supported in their own communities through local service delivery. There are five Integrated Children's Services locality offices:

- Berwickshire (Duns)
- Cheviot (Kelso)
- Eildon (Galashiels)
- Teviot & Liddesdale (Hawick)
- Tweeddale (Innerleithen)

There are also a number of specialist services which operate Borders-wide, including the Child Protection Unit, the Early Years Assessment Team, and services for children with Complex Needs and Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs.



PURPOSE OF THE STANDARDS & QUALITY REPORT

This report gives an overview of the work of Integrated Children's Services: key achievements; the national and local context in which we are working; priority areas for the future; and our performance against agreed indicators. The report is designed for anyone who has an interest in services for children in the Scottish Borders, including elected members, service partners and other local authorities.

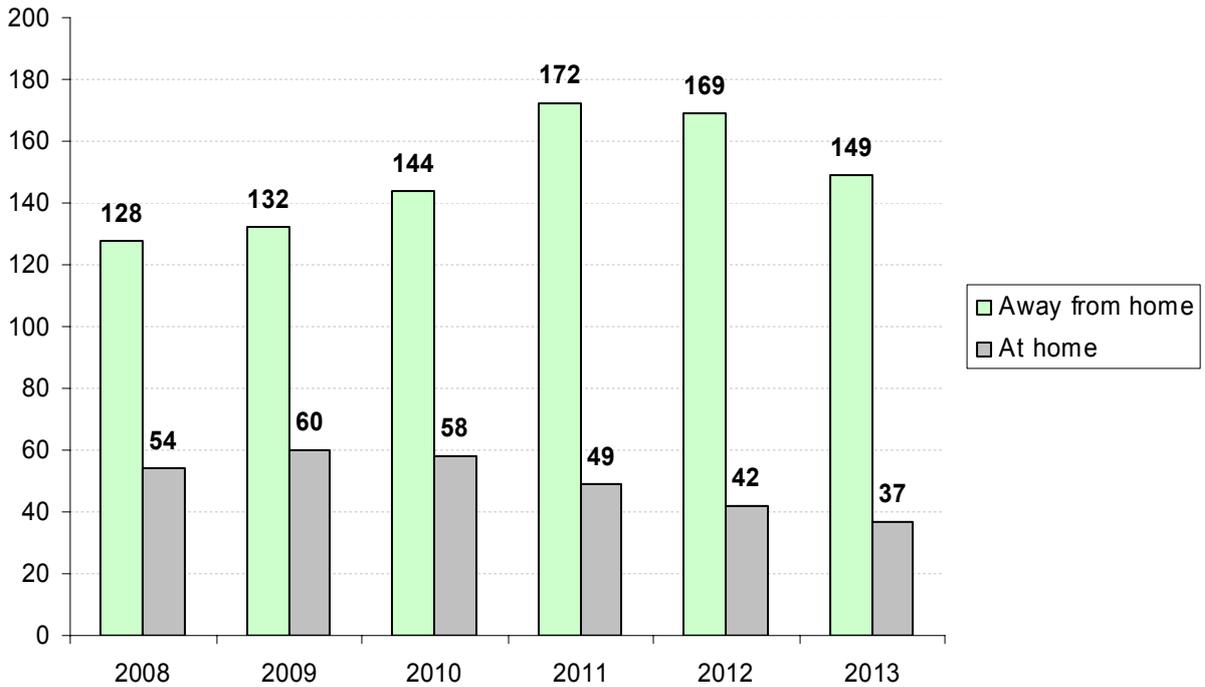
This, our first report, covers the 12 months from April 2012 to March 2013. Please note that due to the nature of the work Integrated Children's Service carry out, some performance indicators relate to the financial year and some relate to the school year. The most recent data available, including some figures for 2013/14, is provided in the tables at the back of the report. However the review focuses on the period April 2012 to March 2013 to ensure continuity with the statutory education Standards & Quality report, and the full context for analysis.

KEY STATISTICS

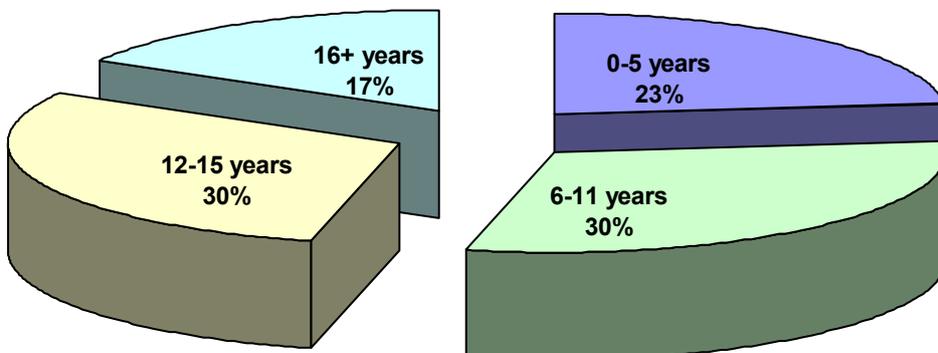
Looked After Children at home/away from home

One of the key statutory duties of ICS is Looked After Children; those children who require statutory intervention and support. Children can be Looked After at home, or Looked After away from home, ie, accommodated by the local authority.

Looked After Children at 31 March

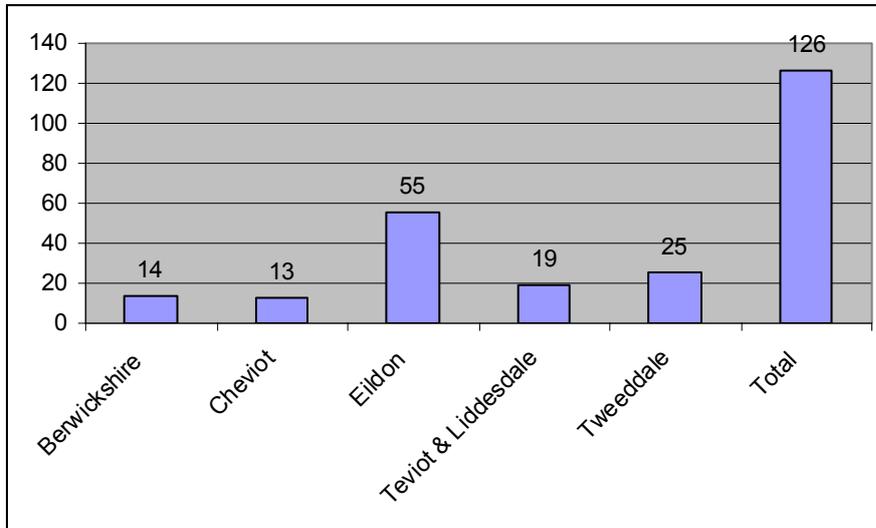


Looked After Children age range at 31 March 2013



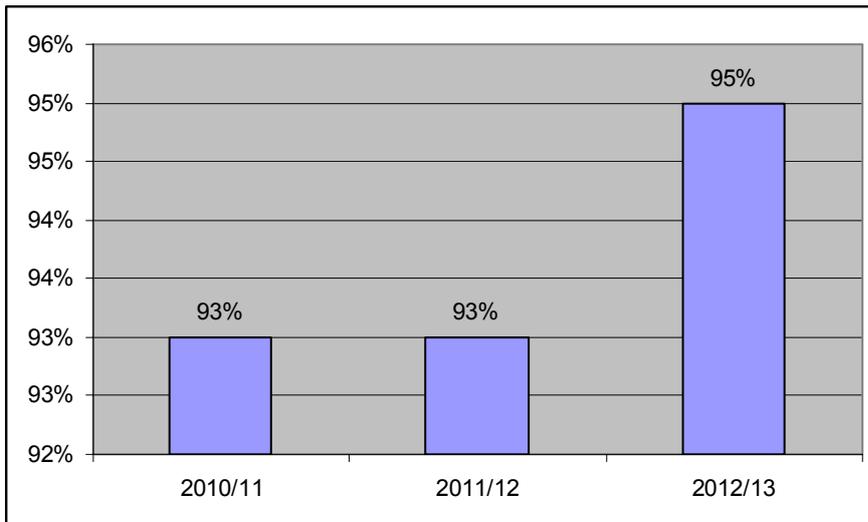
Co-ordinated Support Plans by Locality at 31 March 2013

A Co-ordinated Support Plan is a statutory support plan for children with significant, ongoing needs which require multi-agency additional support to make the most of their education.



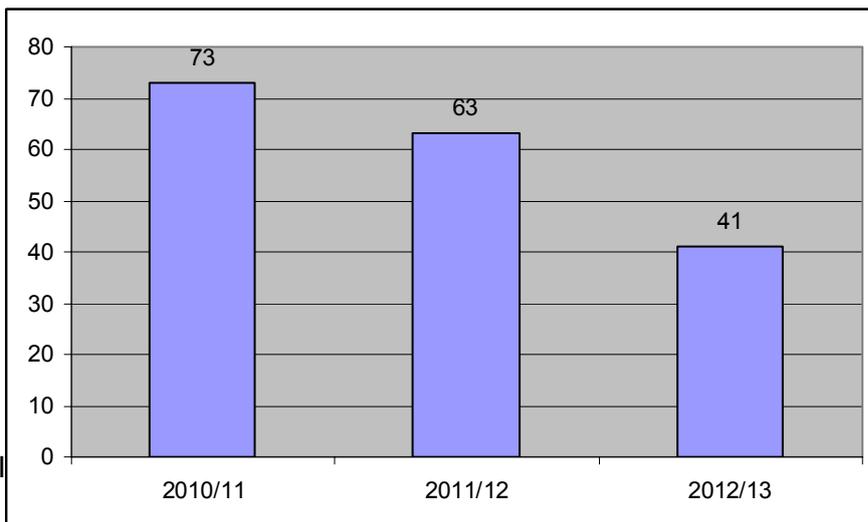
School attendance for Children Looked After at home

School attendance is a key proxy indicator for a child's general wellbeing. Please note additional data on attendance is given at p23.



Incidents of school exclusion for children Looked After away from home

School exclusions are another proxy indicator for a child's wellbeing.



ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2012/13

- The number of Looked After Children aged 0-5 years has dropped from 54 in 2010 to 44 in 2013. While there is as yet no way to prove this, there may be a positive correlation between the reduced number of very young children becoming Looked After and the early intervention ethos of Integrated Children's Services.
- Ten new carer households were approved as foster carers between December 2012 and October 2013, an increase of 19%.
- An Additional Support for Learning joint policy with Education & Lifelong Learning was created.
- Proposals have been developed for a simplified Framework information system, with the first user testing to be carried out January 2014.
- A review was made of the operation and future development of Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs services (see Business Transformation).
- A renewed partnership arrangement between Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders and Aberlour Options Borders was established to provide respite services for children affected by a disability.
- The legal status of children with Complex Needs who are placed outwith the Scottish Borders was confirmed to ensure consistency of service and recording.
- Services were restructured to establish a Resources Team to support alternative forms of accommodation, with a new post from within the team to aid in the recruitment of carers.
- A Managerial Overview Group was established to monitor placements outwith the family home.
- Work was undertaken with partner agencies to develop and trial a shared outcomes framework (the Wellbeing Web).
- We contributed to the Children and Young People's Planning Partnership's review of the Integrated Assessment Framework paperwork and processes, with the revised paperwork now being used by all ICS staff.
- An audit of training needs for support staff based in schools was carried out and informed the development of specific training for these staff groups on the INSET days in November 2012. Feedback from this change was positive and we will continue to develop and improve training for this group of staff.
- New methods of training, including e-learning, have been developed for multi-agency use.
- A moderation project around the new National 1 and 2 awards was successfully completed.
- The practice standards for case file audits were reviewed and clearer guidance issued.
- The Early Years Assessment Team were awarded joint third prize in the Team of the Year category at the British Journal of Midwifery Awards and a bronze COSLA award for addressing health inequalities.

NATIONAL CONTEXT AND POLICY

A number of key legislative and policy developments influenced service operation and development in 2012/13, and will continue to have an impact in coming years.

CHILDREN'S HEARING ACT

The **Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011** went live on 24 June 2013. The Act aims to strengthen and modernise the Children's Hearings system and brings into one place most of the children's hearings related legislation. The main **structural** elements of the Act include:

- the creation of the role of the National Convener;
- a dedicated national body, Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) to support the National Convener in the delivery of her functions associated with the recruitment, selection, training, retention and support of panel members;
- the dissolution of local authority panels and the creation of a national children's panel supported by local area teams; and
- the creation of a national Safeguarding panel to improve consistency and standards and improve understanding within the system of the role.

The Act strengthens and promotes **children's rights** putting the child at the centre of the hearings system by:

- providing for the development of an advocacy service for children in the hearings system; *
- amending the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act to ensure that offence grounds accepted or established in children's hearings (other than for certain serious offences) are no longer classed as a conviction; *
- providing the hearing with the power to withhold information from a person when it considers that its release to that person would place the child's welfare at risk;
- taking steps to ensure that the views of children are taken into account at children's hearings;
- introducing a legal representation scheme to be run by the Scottish Legal Aid Board, replacing local authority administered arrangements, to ensure that those who need help but cannot afford it can participate effectively in a Hearing;
- introducing transparency to the decision making process around placement into secure accommodation; and
- introducing a 'feedback loop' to permit information sharing about the implementation or non-implementation of compulsory supervision orders.

** These provisions are not yet in force.*

The 2011 Act makes various changes to the hearings process including new warrants and orders, modernising the reasons (grounds) for referral and providing for a national scheme for state funded legal representation in children's hearings and associated court proceedings and introduce new rights of appeal.

Although the 2011 Act introduces a number of important changes to the system, the same broad processes continue to form the framework for action by Children's Reporters and children's hearings.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (SCOTLAND) ACT

The Children and Young People (Scotland) Act was introduced to Parliament in April 2013 and received Royal Assent in March 2014. It makes various provisions for the wellbeing of children and young people, which will have a significant impact on children's services provided by local authorities. These include:

- a duty on the Scottish Ministers to keep under consideration and further the rights of children and young people, and on the wider public sector to report on actions taken to forward the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC);
- increasing the amount and flexibility of free early learning and childcare from 475 hours a year to a minimum of 600 hours for three and four year olds; and certain vulnerable two year olds;
- a duty on local authorities to assess a care leaver's request for assistance up to and including the age of 25;
- provision for additional support to be given to kinship carers;
- provision for families in distress to access appropriate family counselling;
- placing Scotland's Adoption Register on a statutory footing;
- a clear definition of corporate parenting and the bodies to which it will apply;
- a new right to appeal a local authority decision to place a child in secure accommodation; and
- procedural changes in the areas of children's hearings support arrangements and school closures.

The Act will formalise through legislation key aspects of **Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC)**, the overarching policy framework for children's services in Scotland.

The Act will:

- Ensure that all children and young people from birth to 18 years old have access to a Named Person;
- Put in place a single planning process to support those children who require it;
- Place a definition of wellbeing in legislation; and
- Place duties on public bodies to coordinate the planning, design and delivery of services for children and young people with a focus on improving wellbeing outcomes, and report collectively on how they are improving those outcomes.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS – BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION

The greatest challenge Integrated Children's Services faces is the continued pressure on public spending. Significant savings require to be found to meet the commitments made over the next three years.

A Children's Services Transformation project has been established in partnership with Education & Lifelong Learning to help meet this challenge. The key workstreams for ICS are:

- *Social, Emotional and Behavioural Needs*
Building on the review carried out last year, this workstream will identify savings to be made through the implementation of new ways of working.
- *Complex Needs*
Provision has been made within the capital budget for a new Complex Needs centre. A working group has been convened to lead this project.
- *Transport*
A thorough review of all ICS-funded journeys, along with a review of policy and practice, was undertaken with the goal of reducing this spend. Since 2010, the budget for Additional Needs Transport has been reduced by 40%. Sustained effort on the part of the management team to reduce costs achieved savings of £406k. Following the savings made, this budget will be resized to fit the service need.
- *Further integration*
Work with staff and partners is being carried out to look at where services for children can be delivered differently and more effectively, within the locality model, with the goal of reducing costs.

Other key strands of work

Looked After Children make up 1.5% of the total 0-18 population in Scotland. In the Scottish Borders, the Looked After population makes up approximately 0.8% of all children. While Scottish Borders has historically kept the Looked After population below the national average, the continuing economic pressure on families and the changing demographics of the Borders means this is likely to change in future years.

Further work is required with Education & Lifelong Learning (E&LL) to meet our duty as Corporate Parents and address the key barriers to attainment for Looked After children and young people. This is now a joint action in the ICS and E&LL business plans, and a strand of the E&LL Validated Self Evaluation action plan.

The Whole Systems Approach to managing and supporting young people within the justice system is under development will be implemented within the Scottish Borders in 2013/14.

We continue to develop our approach to Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) alongside our partner agencies. Revised paperwork for the Integrated Assessment Framework has been adopted across Integrated Children's Services.

A streamlining and refinement of the Framework recording system is underway, with live testing due to begin in early 2014.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Care Inspectorate Inspections

Good inspection reports continue to evidence high standards across services to support and protect vulnerable children and families.

The Wheatlands residential service for young people was inspected in March/April 2013. The inspection found this service to be very good in the areas of quality of care and support; quality of staffing; quality of management and leadership; and quality of environment.

Staff were effective in meeting young people's health and wellbeing needs. They worked well with social workers and other agencies to support young people. They provided very good 'throughcare' support and kept in touch with young people who were living independently.

*Care Inspectorate inspection of Wheatlands residential service
April 2013*

The Supported Carers service was inspected in November 2012. The inspection graded the service as very good for quality of care and support; good for quality of staffing; and very good for quality of management and leadership;

The service provides very good levels of support to young people who have been in the care system. We found that staff were enthusiastic, motivated and well supported. They have been successful in encouraging young people to get the skills they need to be able to live independently, for example in their own tenancy.

*Care Inspectorate inspection of Wheatlands residential service
April 2013*

No requirements were identified by the Care Inspectorate during these inspections.

Self-evaluation

Integrated Children's Services undertakes regular self-evaluation activity to ensure quality of service. The results of these activities are fed into the Business Plan and individual team plans.

Key themes identified in self-evaluation include:

- Effective recording and reporting of outcomes
- Consistency of evaluation and monitoring
- Improvements to communication with staff and service users

Effective recording and reporting of outcomes

Members of the Policy, Performance and Planning Team and the GIRFEC Development Officer have been working on ways to improve recording and monitoring of outcomes. Advice on best practice has been sought from the Scottish Government, other local authorities and COSLA. Staff attended a conference organised by the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships, Edinburgh University. Findings from this research and investigation have influenced the development of revised GIRFEC paperwork and systems for recording and monitoring outcomes within Frameworki, the ICS management information system. The revised Frameworki build is scheduled to begin live testing in early 2014.

Consistency of evaluation and monitoring

Self evaluation identified that not all teams had a development plan in place, nor was there consistency of reporting to senior management on a regular basis. Proposals are being developed for biannual activity reporting by service area, to support the work being done to develop outcomes-based reporting

Improvements to communication with staff and service users

In the current climate of fast-paced change, communication with staff is more important than ever. New methods of communicating with staff have been implemented, including regular road shows to communicate the transformation programme, cascade briefings on key information such as the Corporate Plan, and more regular and consistent team meetings. Team meetings across localities for specialist staff such as Learning Support Teachers, Children Affected by Disability social workers, and Youth Offending social workers have been implemented to enable these staff groups to share information, experiences and practice.

The information available to staff on the internet and intranet has been overhauled and redesigned to be easier to access and use. Specific information resources have been designed for specialist staff groups such as Learning Support staff, as well as partner agencies seeking information on ICS services and referral and assessment procedures.

Communication with service users has been identified as a weakness. There are pockets of good practice, such as identified by the Care Inspectorate inspection of the Resources team and the pilot survey of Early Years Assessment Team clients. However there needs to be more consistency in seeking service users' views. An annual snapshot survey of service users' experience of Integrated Children's Services has been created and the first survey will be carried out in the first half of 2014.

SERVICE USERS' COMMENTS

Sample comments from the pilot survey and the Viewpoint questionnaire completed by Looked After Children include:

"This support has brought my family back from hell."

Client of the Early Years Assessment Team, pilot survey 2012

"We seem to be okay. (Child) settling in with secondary school and growing up. I just need to keep strong."

Client of the Early Years Assessment Team, pilot survey 2012

"(Worker's) help and support has been invaluable to me and my family."

Client of the Early Years Assessment Team, pilot survey 2012

"I would want me and nana and grandad to be a proper family again but it might not be until I am 18 but it will be ok."

Looked After Child, Viewpoint Questionnaire 2012

CONCLUSION

Integrated Children's Services continues to provide a range of services which make a positive difference to our children, young people, families and communities.

Our **key strengths** are:

- A strong culture and ethos of improving outcomes through integrated services and partnership working at all levels;
- Good progress in delivering better outcomes for vulnerable children, including those in their early years, with a high quality of individual support provided to children and families;
- Strong multi-agency teams delivering a locality-based service for families and children;
- A leading multi-agency service for vulnerable children pre-birth and in the very early years; and
- Robust multi-agency services for keeping children safe; and for children requiring fostering and/or adoption.

The **identified areas for action** include:

- Managing and supporting the cohort of young people exhibiting extreme behaviour resulting from life trauma and requiring a high level of specialist support;
- Meeting the challenges of revised legislative duties under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act;
- Strengthening services for children Looked After at home; and
- Raising attainment and achievement among our most vulnerable learners.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

These tables provide the performance data collected by Integrated Children's Services, along with additional information regarding the detail and context of the data.

Indicators are coded ✓ where the data is within the set tolerance; ● where the data is indicating a negative change in performance which warrants closer attention; and 🚫 where the data indicates a significant problem with performance.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS

Co-ordinated Support Plans

A Co-ordinated Support Plan is a statutory support plan for children with significant, ongoing needs which require multi-agency additional support to make the most of their education. The data for CSPs is taken as a snapshot on 31 March each year. The overall number of CSPs has remained relatively steady in recent years, as has the number of children and young people requiring specialist education outwith the Borders.

The minimum period of need to qualify for a CSP is 12 months, and the typical nature of support needs requiring a CSP means that most CSPs will be in place for a number of years. The governance of CSPs was restructured in 2010, providing a more thorough review process. This correlated to an increase in the number of CSPs being successfully concluded between 2010/11 and 2011/12. However this number has evened out in 2012/13, suggesting the review process is now bedded down and CSPs are being appropriately monitored and adapted as the child's needs change.

Parents have a right to request that their child be assessed for a CSP. The percentage of requests for a CSP which lead to a CSP being opened is a proxy indicator for the quality of assessments – a high number indicates that only appropriate referrals are coming forward and that support needs that do not meet the criteria for a CSP are being met at an earlier stage.

Description	Status	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Number of Coordinated Support Plans in operation	✓	135	127	116	120
Percentage of requests for Coordinated Support Plans which lead to CSPs being opened*	✓	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	93.33%
Number of Coordinated Support Plans successfully concluded	✓	11	20	17	8

Description	Status	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Reduce the number of children in educational provision outwith the Borders*	●	52	42	40	51

* Includes children in specialist day provision for complex needs or social, emotional and behavioural needs.

Self Directed Support

Self Directed Support (SDS) enables families to make their own choices about how a child with additional needs is supported. A pilot scheme was introduced in 2012 to begin the process of offering the choice of SDS to all families in line with the relevant legislation. The figure is a snapshot taken at 31 March.

Description	Status	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Increase the number of children who are supported through Direct Payments	✓	35	21	20	18

Young Carers

Services for Young Carers in the Scottish Borders are provided through a third party service commissioned by the Children and Young People's Planning Partnership. This service was re-tendered in 2011 with a new provider winning the tender. A review of service users was carried out which resulted in a number of cases being closed due to the young person no longer requiring the service. Under the new provider, the number of young carers accessing the service has remained relatively consistent for the last two/three years.

Young carers are given the option to choose to whom they disclose their Young Carer status. This means that some of them are known to the ICS locality they live in, some are known to their school, and some are known to both. Notably, however the majority of young carers receiving the commissioned service have chosen not to disclose their status to their school.

Description	Status	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Number of young carers receiving services from commissioned service	✓	68	77	87	137

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – CHILD PROTECTION

Child protection is managed in the Scottish Borders through the multi-agency Child Protection Committee. The Child Protection Unit combines staff from ICS, Education & Lifelong Learning and the Police to support all agencies in ensuring our children are kept safe and well. Typically, only a small number of children are on the Child Protection Register at any one time in the Borders, which can skew data if looking only at percentages. Therefore figures will be placed in their numerical context where required. Figures are taken at 31 March.

The percentage of children who have been re-registered is used as a proxy indicator of the effectiveness of our intervention, recognising of course that circumstances outwith the service's influence may result in a child requiring to be re-registered within the time frame.

Description	Status	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Reduce the percentage of children on the Child Protection Register who have been re-registered within 2 years, to below the national average	✓	0%	3.6%	5.9%	3%
Reduce the average time (in days) spent on the Child Protection register for those children who are removed from the register. The reported figure is the cumulative average over the year to date.	✓	221	196	221	185
Maintain the percentage of Child Protection review conferences which take place within timescales set out in Scottish Borders Child Protection guidelines (target 90%)	✓	93%	93%	100%	100%
Conduct 100% of case reviews on all children and young people on the Child Protection Register for over 18 months	✓	100%	100%	100%	100%

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

Referrals for non-attendance at school are measured as a proxy for partnership working with Education & Lifelong Learning. Non-attendance at school is rarely a problem in isolation and far more likely to be a symptom of other issues in a child's life, frequently requiring multi-agency involvement to resolve. Referrals for non-attendance suggest one agency working alone. The 2012/13 increase is disappointing and will be tackled through refreshed communications with schools and Learning Community Boards about the importance of using the Team Around the Child approach for non-attendance.

The number of referrals for offending behaviour continues to reduce year on year, reflecting the effectiveness of our joint working with the Police and other partners in reducing offending and pre-offending behaviour.

Description	Status	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Reduce the number of referrals to the Children's Reporter for non-attendance at school	●	21 referrals (out of 342) re 19 children 6%	11 (out of 362) 3%	25 (out of 782) 3%
Reduce the number of referrals to Children's Reporter on offence basis (2% per annum reduction)	✓	71	90	228

School Exclusions

School exclusions are a joint performance indicator with Education & Lifelong Learning. The figures given are for the school year.

Description	Status	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Reduce the number of incidents of exclusions overall (joint PI with ELL)	●	650	587	545
Reduce the number of individual children being excluded (joint PI with ELL)	✓	275	309	299

While the number of children being excluded is reducing, the number of exclusions overall is rising, ie, fewer children are being excluded more often. A piece of work is underway to look into areas of high exclusion, particularly in primary schools, to identify the reasons for exclusion and whether additional support for individuals and/or schools is required to reduce the number of exclusions.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – EARLY YEARS

The Scottish Government's Early Years Framework, published in December 2008, signified an important milestone in encouraging partnership working to deliver a shared commitment to giving children the best start in life and to improving the life chances of children and families at risk.

There is a wealth of evidence indicating that the earliest years of life are crucial to a child's development and future life chances. Integrated Children's Services seeks to support families with very young children through early and effective intervention, supporting families before compulsory measures are required.

Description	Status	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Reduce the number of children under the age of 8 who are referred to the Children's Reporter	✓	42	51	158

The Early Years Assessment Team focuses on vulnerable women during and after pregnancy. The multi-agency team includes a SureStart midwife and an Infant Mental Health Worker. The team work with families where it has been identified that there is a high likelihood that a child will require to be taken into care. The Early Years Assessment Team supports locality teams in working with children who require permanence planning.

Description	Status	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Number of children placed for adoption	✓	6	5	5	4
Reduce length of time between decision to apply for Permanence being made at S.31 meeting to the Permanence Application being lodged in court)	✓	Average: 6 months	Average: 4.7 months	Average: 19 months	*

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

The number of children and young people requiring to be looked after fell slightly in 2012/13. In Scottish Borders, there were 186 Looked After Children at the end of March 2013, compared to 211 the previous year. However these figures are still well outside the Council's internal capacity and numbers of Looked After Children still require to be accommodated outside the Borders, increasing pressure on budgets.

In particular, a cohort of young people have emerged in 2013 who have experienced significant trauma and exhibit extreme behaviour, with a corresponding rise in the resources required to meet their needs. While some of these young people have been previously Looked After or otherwise involved with Integrated Children's Services, all have demonstrated a significant escalation in their behavioural issues in the last six to twelve months. This is placing pressure on both the placements budget and the overall budget for ICS.

Description	Status	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Reduce the number of looked after and accommodated children by 3% per annum	●	199	186	211	221

Monitoring of placements for Looked After Children is focused on ensuring that children are found stable homes, ideally within their own communities. Procedures for Kinship Care were updated in 2012, and it should be noted that while reporting is done by percentage, the actual figures are relatively small. All figures are snapshots taken at 31 March.

Description	Status	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Increase the proportion of looked after and accommodated children placed with Kinship carers	✓	20%	21%	24%	26%
Increase the proportion of Looked After and Accommodated Children (aged 12+) in family-based placements compared to those in residential placements	✓	73.30%	75.30%	80.50%	73%
Reduce the proportion of looked after and accommodated children who have had 3 or more placements away from home in the current period of care	✓	18%	17%	17%	18.90%
Increase the proportion of looked after and accommodated children who are accommodated within the Scottish Borders	✓	75%	68%	72%	73%

Nationally, outcomes for Looked After Children continue to be poor compared to the general population. Monitoring of school achievement and health outcomes ensures we remain focused on our corporate parenting duty to our Looked After Children. Attendance, attainment and exclusion figures relate to the school year. All Looked After and Accommodated Children are now routinely registered with a dentist through the work of the LAC Nurse.

The School Exclusions Policy was rewritten in 2012 with particular focus on the tendency of Looked After Children to be excluded more frequently, with disproportionately high effects on their education. The policy specifically addresses the needs of Looked After Children within the procedures for appropriate exclusion from school and may have played a part in the reduction in exclusions in 2012/13.

A joint action plan is being developed with Education & Lifelong Learning to improve the attainment of the lowest-performing 20% of children. Within this cohort, specific attention will be paid to the needs of Looked After Children.

Description	Status	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Reduce the number of formal exclusions among children Looked After away from home (incidents)	✓	41	63	73
Reduce the number of formal exclusions among children Looked After at home (individuals)	✓	17	20	51
Increase the percentage level of school attendance for Children looked after at home	●	84%	85%	83%
Increase the percentage level of school attendance for Looked After and Accommodated Children	✓	95%	93%	93%
Increase the average school attendance of Looked After Children in secondary school	✓	89%	84%	80%
Increase the number of S4 LAC attaining SCQF level 3 or better in English and mathematics	✓	52.63%	50.77%	64% Looked After Children (for period April 08-Mar 09)
Increase the proportion of looked after and accommodated children registered with a dentist	100% - all Looked After Children have access to a dentist.			

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS –YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING CARE

As for Looked After Children generally, the national outcomes for care leavers lag behind the rest of the population. ICS provides a dedicated transitions service for care leavers aged 16+ years, which offers employment, housing and other support.

Not all care leavers are referred to or choose to make use of the Transitions service: therefore some figures are provided both for the overall number of young people leaving care and the proportion of these who are receiving an aftercare service from the Transition team.

Description	Status	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Increase the proportion of care leavers receiving aftercare going into employment, education or training (Looked After and Accommodated children beyond school leaving age)	✓	51.3% (20 of 39 receiving aftercare)	35% (12 of 34 receiving aftercare)	47% (26 of 55)
Reduce the percentage of young people receiving an aftercare support who are under 19 and have experienced a period of homelessness	●	33.3% (13 of 39)	15% (5 of 34)	24% (13 of 55)
Increase the percentage of care leavers with pathway plans	✓	31.8% (38 of 119 total care leavers)	27.6% (34 of 123 total care leavers)	Not collected
Increase the percentage of care leavers receiving aftercare with pathway plans	✓	100% (39 of 39 receiving aftercare)	100% (34 of 34 receiving aftercare)	80%

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS – SERVICE IMPROVEMENT

Referrals to the Scottish Children’s Reporter

Re-referrals to the Reporter within 12 months are used as a proxy indicator for the effectiveness of our intervention. While outside circumstances can cause an individual or family to require re-referral within this period, the best practice to which we aspire is to ensure that child/family are supported not only during the period of supervision but through a structured exit plan and an ongoing relationship with ICS which would support early intervention before re-referral became necessary.

Description	Status	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Number of children referred to the Children’s Reporter	✓	181	211	435
Number of referrals to the Children’s Reporter	✓	342	362	782
Increase the proportion of referrals to the Children’s Reporter via ICS compared to other agencies (correlates to improved partnership working)	●	61 of 342 (17.84%)	87 of 362 (24.03%)	77 of 782 referrals (9.85%)
Reduce the number of re-referrals to the Children’s Reporter within 12 months	✓	78	99	214

Participation

Scottish Borders Council is committed to ensuring we involve children, young people and families in the decision that affect them and the development of our services. We work to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (Article 12: *Respect for the Views of the Child*) and the Values and Principles of Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC), which include *Putting the child at the centre*: Children and young people should have their views listened to and they should be involved in decisions that affect them. In response to the declining numbers of children and young people using the Viewpoint online questionnaire, a review has been undertaken of the ways in which we gather the views of children and young people and revised guidance will be issued to staff in 2014.

Description	Status	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Proportion of Child Protection case conference reviews where the child or young person is offered a Viewpoint questionnaire	●	7	24	3
Proportion of Section 31 reviews where the child or young person is offered a Viewpoint questionnaire	●	85	134	45 plus 6 CHAD

Case File Auditing

Case file auditing is a key method of ensuring service quality. The practice standards for case file audits were reviewed in 2012 and clearer guidance issued to managers. Managers are now expected to carry out a minimum of one case file audit per member of staff each month to inform their staff supervision sessions; identify gaps and issues with recording which require remedial action; and give an overall indication of case recording quality.

Description	Status	2013/14	2012/13	2011/12	2010/11
Case file audits carried out/satisfactory (monthly average at 31 March)	✓	28	31	8	6