

TO: THE EXECUTIVE
DATE: 14 JUNE 2016

**THIRD ANNUAL REPORT ON THE STATUTORY ROLES AND
RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND THE
LEAD MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES 2015/16**
Director of Children, Young People & Learning

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This annual report provides an account of the role of the Director Children, Young People and Learning and the Lead Member for Children, Young People and Learning as identified in the Department for Education Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS) (DfE, 2012). A copy of the guidance is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.2 The report covers a range of activity undertaken by the DCS and LMCS in fulfilling the Statutory Guidance, but does not cover all of the work they undertake.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Executive endorse the report and note the range of activity undertaken by the DCS and LMCS in fulfilling the Statutory Guidance.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Children Act 2004 requires every upper tier local authority to appoint a Director of Children's Services and designate a Lead Member for Children's Services.
- 3.2 The DCS and LMCS are appointed for the purpose of discharging the education and children's social services functions of the local authority. The aim is that between them the DCS and LMCS provide a clear and unambiguous line of local accountability.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 This report provides information on a range of activity undertaken within the Department for Children, Young People and Learning during the last year. Whilst it does not cover every area of activity, it does provide an overview of the role of the DCS and the LMCS in terms of some of their key statutory functions. The report shows there is a clear link in terms of accountability between the DCS, LMCS and the Chief Executive and Leader, it shows the response and activity around safeguarding which remains a high priority for all concerned; and it shows the ongoing and effective partnership links that exist between the local authority and key partners. There is a clear recognition that our work in the Department cannot be achieved in isolation and the way in which we engage with, support and encourage partners is

crucial to the ongoing successful delivery of improved outcomes for our children and young people.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The legal issues are contained within the body of the report and the Statutory Guidance referred to therein.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The Borough Treasurer is satisfied that no significant financial implications arise from this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 Not applicable.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 Not applicable.

Background papers

Appendix 1 – Department for Education: Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children’s Services and the Lead Member for Children’s Services (April 2013).

Contact for further information

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LEAD MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES
2015/16**

This third annual report provides an account of the role of the Director Children, Young People and Learning and the Lead Member for Children, Young People and Learning as identified in the Department for Education Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services (DfE, 2013). A copy of the guidance is attached as Appendix 1.

The report covers a range of activity undertaken by the Director Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services in fulfilling the Statutory Guidance, but does not cover all of the work they undertake.

1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Statutory Guidance was originally published in 2005, reviewed in 2009 and again in 2012. This report reflects the most recent guidance of 2013.
- 1.2 The Statutory Guidance was published under sections 18(7) (Director Children's Services) and 19(2) (Lead Member for Children's Services) of the Children Act 2004. This means that local authorities must have regard to it and, if they decide to depart from it, they will need to have clear reasons for doing so.
- 1.3 The Children Act 2004 requires every upper tier local authority to appoint a Director of Children's Services (DCS) and designate a Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS).
- 1.4 The DCS and LMCS are appointed for the purpose of discharging the education and children's social services functions of the local authority. The aim is that between them the DCS and LMCS provide a clear and unambiguous line of local accountability.
- 1.5 The DCS has professional responsibility for children's services, including operational matters; the LMCS has political responsibility for children's services. Together with the Chief Executive and the Leader the DCS and LMCS have a key leadership role both within the local authority and working with other local agencies to improve outcomes for children and young people.
- 1.6 The DCS is Dr Janette Karklins; the LMCS is Councillor Dr Gareth Barnard.

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF DCS AND LMCS

Clear lines of accountability

- 2.1 It is important to note that the DCS and the LMCS work closely with the Chief Executive in playing a key leadership role both within the local authority and in working with partner agencies to improve outcomes for children and young

people. The DCS meets regularly for one to one discussions with the Chief Executive and receives an annual appraisal which sets out the key objectives for the DCS to achieve in support of the Council's Medium Term Objectives. Many of these objectives are reflected in the CYP&L Annual Service Plan for the Department.

- 2.2 The LMCS and the DCS attend quarterly safeguarding meetings with the Chief Executive, and Chief Officer Children's Social Care. The Independent Chair of the LSCB joins these meetings twice a year and provides a report from her perspective as Chair of the LSCB and in order to provide an update on the work and the effectiveness of the LSCB. The Leader of the Council attends this meeting twice a year. These meetings ensure that there is effective communication and exchange of information which identifies progress made and any areas for action or further development, with a particular focus on child protection and safeguarding. The model of operation for this meeting was reviewed and refreshed in 2015 drawing on best practice and providing greater challenge and accountability.
- 2.3 The Department for Children, Young People and Learning provides education and children's social care under a single officer and a single member providing a strategic and professional framework within which the safety and the educational, social and emotional needs of children and young people are considered together. The roles provide a clear and unambiguous line of political and professional accountability for children's well being.
- 2.4 Within Bracknell Forest the local authority has recognised and supported the breadth and importance of children's services functions, with the discrete roles and responsibilities of the DCS and the LMCS remaining protected.

Leadership and Partnership

- 2.5 In 2015 the Council established a new statement of vision underpinned by six strategic themes.
- 2.6 The LMCS is an experienced Councillor with a detailed knowledge and understanding of the issues for children's services. The LMCS has good knowledge about adoption and fostering through his work on panels, and his work as a regular member of Peer Review teams and through national events which gives a broad perspective on many current and emerging issues. The LMCS regularly brings back learning from these events to feed into local discussion and ongoing developments. He is the longest serving Member for Children's Services nationally.
- 2.7 The LMCS is a member of the Children and Young People's Partnership Board, and is a participant / observer of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. He is also involved in a range of other areas of activity in the Department, including being a member of the School Pupil Places Planning Group, which has the responsibility for steering accurate pupil forecasting and school places planning. He also sits on the Children's Centre Management Board, and Chairs the Adult Learning Board providing appropriate support challenge and accountability.
- 2.8 The LMCS also meets with the DCS on a monthly basis, attends the Departmental Management Team on a regular basis, and is in frequent contact with the DCS and Senior Officers via a range of meetings across the Council. Executive Member decisions are made each month.

- 2.9 The DCS is an experienced Director and one of the longest serving in the South East. She has provided stable leadership and a clear sense of purpose and direction through the vision documents and a clear focus on continuous improvement.
- 2.10 The DCS leads a team of Chief Officers in the delivery of a wide range of key functions across the Department and with partners. The DCS is the Chair of the South East Children's Improvement Board and leads by example in undertaking Peer Review and Peer Challenge in other authorities and enabling professional development of Bracknell Forest staff to participate in these Peer Reviews and Challenges. The DCS worked with others in the South East Region to develop a subscription process for local authorities wishing to continue to progress the improvement programme. As a result a number of key strands of improvement work continue which include regional benchmarking, peer review and peer challenge, management and leadership development programmes and a range of small discreet projects such as Early Intervention indicators.
- 2.11 During 2015 Bracknell Forest hosted a Peer Challenge on support for Care Leavers which focused further on improving provision. An action plan and confirmation of the success of the current approach were key outcomes. In September 2013 and January 2016 the DCS invited the Local Government Association to come into the Department and undertake a Safeguarding Practice Diagnostic which enabled us to look at our strengths and areas for development in relation to children and young people who receive support from Children's Social Care and partners. The two SPD reviews and the Peer Challenge process are part of the commitment the DCS and DMT have to continuous improvement. As a result of this work we have been able to gain a good insight into some of our strengths and areas for development and an action plan ensures the recommendations are being monitored and implemented in practice.
- 2.12 The DCS is committed to continuous improvement and established a new Board in 2014 to oversee continuous improvement across the Directorate and to coordinate inspection preparation and the commissioning of peer reviews and self-assessments.
- 2.13 In addition, in 2015 a series of Transformation Projects were agreed by Corporate Management Team. These are key projects for all services to develop over the next three years. CYPL has two major projects, one focussed on schools and the other on early intervention.
- 2.14 The Directorate also has a Service Plan which drives performance. The Service Plan is monitored quarterly and includes relevant performance information. The new three year plan was agreed in April 2016.
- 2.15 The Statutory Health and Wellbeing Board came into force in April 2013. The DCS and LMCS are both members and regularly raise issues relating to children's health and wellbeing needs. There has been a particular focus on CAMHS and the emotional health and wellbeing of children and young people which has led to more joint work between partners to focus on improved integration of health and emotional wellbeing services across all four tiers of need. This work has made major changes in support, especially when considered with the national developments. It is expected that this will lead to significantly improved services for children and young people in relation to mental health and emotional wellbeing. A new Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy has resulted which is a partnership plan with clear actions.

- 2.16 New management arrangements have been embedded for Involve (the voluntary sector action and coordination group for Bracknell Forest) and the work of the Voluntary and Community and Faith Sector remains a very important part of the infrastructure for supporting children and young people in their communities. The Department continues to commission a range of support and services from the Sector.
- 2.17 In 2014 the Directorate successfully applied for DCLG funding for a project called Delivering Differently in Communities. This project has developed the role of volunteers in three local communities as Parent Partners. The project has been very successful and is currently being evaluated. It will conclude in the autumn of 2016.

Safeguarding

- 2.18 Clear and effective arrangements are in place to protect children and young people from harm (including those attending independent schools). The LSCB arrangements are strong and effective with full engagement of all partners. The LMCS is also a participant observer on the LSCB. The DCS is a Board member and contributes actively to the ongoing work of the Board.
- 2.19 The DCS meets on a regular basis with the Independent Chair of the LSCB ensuring there is accountability for the role of the Chair and that the DCS maintains a clear oversight of the work of the LSCB. In 2015 the arrangement for setting the LSCB Chair's appraisal, performance targets and review were revised and further developed. The Chief Executive and the DCS both carry out this process to give joint overview of the LSCB Chair's work.
- 2.20 The LSCB Annual Report provides an account of the work of the LSCB each year. The Annual Report has been presented to a wide audience including the Corporate Management Team, Council's Executive, Council Overview and Scrutiny and the Health and Wellbeing Board. The impact of sharing the report is that it secures a good understanding across the Council and partners of safeguarding roles and responsibilities and ensures any key messages are clearly and widely disseminated.
- 2.21 During 2013 and 2016 the DCS commissioned the LGA to come into the Department to undertake a Safeguarding Practice Diagnostic. This process enabled the Department to look at areas of strength and areas for further development and to identify an action plan for further development and improvement. This continues to be monitored by the Department's Continuous Improvement Board.
- 2.22 All the actions identified in the SLAC inspection in 2011 have been completed. The actions were reviewed again in 2015 to consider if further work was needed to progress them. The recent SPD also included a focus on audit which commented favourably on the audit work programme and arrangements.
- 2.23 The DCS undertakes regular random audits of case files in order to maintain an overview of cases, and provides feedback to the Chief Officer Children's Social Care. The Chief Officer and DCS hold regular case file discussions with social workers which enables the workers to share their cases, discuss any issues with the DCS, and receive feedback. The DCS also attends Duty and Assessment Team Meetings 5 to 6 times each year and has done for several years thus demonstrating the consistency of the oversight process.

- 2.24 In order to respond to the Eileen Munro Review of Child Protection and consequent recommendations Bracknell Forest introduced the Single Assessment in May 2013. A review of implementation has enabled changes to be made, tools have been utilised in the completion of the assessment such as the Three Houses Tool and monitoring of the quality of assessments through supervision provides management oversight of the quality of assessments. Training was provided for all Social Workers on the implementation of the Single Assessment. This work is well embedded across CSC.
- 2.25 In 2015 the Directorate set Signs of Safety as the preferred risk assessment tool for all services. This is being rolled out with relevant training and development across CSC and early help services and relevant sections in education. It also complements the focus on permanency and promoting permanency, which has resulted in the development of a new strategy in 2016.
- 2.26 The Principal Social Worker role was established in 2013. She prepares an annual report which details the work she has carried out over the past 12 months. It also provides an opportunity to review the past year and set out the plans for the forthcoming year.
- 2.27 As identified in paragraph 2.2 above there is regular liaison between the DCS, LMCS and the Chief Executive, Independent Chair and the Leader with regards to ongoing safeguarding monitoring and management.
- 2.28 There has been a considerable amount of work undertaken in the year to meet the new legislation contained within the Family Justice Review and the Children and Families Act. The timeliness of care proceedings has reduced and is now within the 26 week requirement. There has been a significant focus on adoption in Bracknell Forest, with the establishment of Adopt Berkshire which is a regional provision for four Berkshire LAs and well in advance of new DfE policy for regionalisation.
- 2.29 The DCS facilitated a review of the Section 11 Self Assessments undertaken by each Department in the Council and good progress has been made in achieving the identified action plans. These are scheduled for full review by the LSCB in 2016 and have been renewed by the Directorate in 2015.
- 2.30 The LADO role is made clear in the Safer Workforce Training, and a safeguarding cue card details the role as part of the Section 11 toolkit. The LADO role is well embedded, and sits with the Conference and Review Team Manager. This role is managed outside of Children's Social Care and reports to the Head of Performance Management and Governance allowing independence from decision making within Children's Social Care. Additional capacity has now been built into the LADO role, with the development of a Deputy LADO function.
- 2.31 The LADO provides an annual report to the LSCB, and also attends regional LADO meetings in order to build improved networks and liaison as well as to develop more consistent approaches across areas of working.
- 2.32 The DCS meets on a six monthly basis with the Manager of the Conference and Review Team and the Head of Performance Management and Governance to ensure an overview of the IRO role and function within the Department. The IRO Annual Report is considered by the Department Management Team, and was fully discussed and signed off by the LMCS. The IRO report is then presented to the Corporate Parenting Panel, Local Safeguarding Children Board and Overview and Scrutiny for Children, Young

People and Learning. This provides accountability for the IRO role and ensures that relevant partners and stakeholders are informed regarding ongoing practice and developments for monitoring outcomes for looked after children.

- 2.33 The Annual Complaints, Concerns and Compliments Report is presented to the Department Management Team which provides an overview of the role of the Complaints Manager and the type of complaints, concerns and compliments that are raised. The report provides an insight into the quality and practice of Children's Social Care in working with children, young people and families and informs learning and ongoing development and improvement activity. The report is also signed off by the LMCS and it is presented to the Local Safeguarding Children Board and to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for Children, Young People and Learning. This ensures relevant partners and stakeholders are informed regarding ongoing practice and action taken to address complaints or concerns.

Vulnerable Children and Young People

- 2.34 The number of children and young people who met the statutory threshold for support from Children's Social Care in 2015-16 has reduced for looked after and Child Protection Plans but remains high for Children in Need. The numbers can vary from month to month as children move in and out of the system; however the figures at the end of March are those which are returned to the DfE in the statutory returns period.

- On 31 March 2016 the number of children who were looked after was 98, this is lower than the number at the end of March 2015 which was 100.
- On 31 March 2016 the number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan was 115, which is slightly lower than the number at the end of March 2015 which was 122.
- On 31 March 2016 the number of children who were identified as a Child in Need (CiN) under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 was 605, which is higher than the number at the end of March 2015 which was 524.

- 2.35 In 2014-15 the Directorate established a CSC Programme Board. This was a response to increasing concerns about the retention of social workers; staff turnover and increase pay rates by other neighbouring LA. The Board's initial work was to stabilise staffing and this was done by developing an increased pay award as an interim measure. This successfully stabilised staffing but also set the plan to develop through the CSC Programme Board a new approach. The focus was on four key areas:

- Review the main business systems and processes in CSC and implement refinements to make them even better for staff, whilst having due regard to the Munro recommendations and relevant statute and statutory guidance
- To identify the most effective structure taking into account the current Bracknell Forest structure with those working in other similar LA and implement.
- Where needed, to undertake a process of job redesign and working methods following the outcome of the business systems and processes review and consideration of structures.

- To develop a main strand of the work programme around improved ICT capability, including any quick win solutions or relevant trials of software.
- 2.36 The CSC Programme Board also introduced a Challenge Panel and Member Reference Group. Both successful innovations which has resulted in a much better and improving position with regards to staffing and quality. The Board also developed solutions in partnership with staff which led to better and more informed recommendations. The Council invested an additional £1.2m in the Department to support their work and demonstrates their commitment to children and young people.
- 2.37 There is also a strong commitment to ensuring the delivery of prevention and early intervention services in the Council, with additional resources being allocated to Children's Services as part of the work of the CSC Programme Board. There are many elements of Early Intervention in place across the borough and there has been a strong commitment to this approach which is in all layers of the organisation. The Lead Member is a strong advocate for early intervention, it is a priority in the key plans and strategies and a commitment to retain and further develop early intervention services where they are proven to be beneficial in reducing poor outcomes for children and young people.
- 2.38 The Council developed an overarching approach to early intervention which states the commitment to ensuring that prevention and early intervention remain a high priority across the Council Departments. Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy is included in the Children and Young People's Partnership Plan and is a focus of all services. Prevention and early intervention are also key elements in the Council Plan and new narrative.
- 2.39 The Children, Young People and Learning O&S Committee meets on a quarterly basis and undertakes scrutiny of the Quarterly Services Report for the Department, in addition to receiving and discussing reports on a wide range of issues across the Department. The DCS and LMCS attend and provide information, presentations and responses to questions raised with the Directorate Managers.
- 2.40 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertake at least one scrutiny review each year. Recent scrutiny reviews have been on CSE (2016), Substance Misuse (2015), School Admissions (2014) and School Governance (2014).
- 2.41 The Department has always responded to new priorities and sought innovation solutions where appropriate. The development and embedding of the Symbol Project providing an intensive intervention service to parents with low cognitive functioning delivering measurable improvements for the children and families involved. Symbol works with a small number of families whose children have child protection plans and who are at risk of coming into care or children with child in need plans who are at risk of child protection plans.
- 2.42 In 2015 the Council formalised 'Staying Put' arrangements enabling vulnerable care leavers, if appropriate, to remain with foster carers. This has enabled greater stability for our young people and clear longer term planning.
- 2.43 The YOS Prevention Service provides main focus on preventative services to those young people and their parents/carers where the young person is aged 8 – 15 years and is identified as being at risk of entering the Criminal Justice System. The children and young people referred to this service have been identified as at risk of offending behaviour by virtue of their involvement in anti-social behaviour and /or the prevalence of significant risk factors in their lives including issues within school that often result in exclusion from school.

- 2.44 Care leavers have been the focus of ongoing additional support and review. During the past two years there has been a complete review and refocus of support for care leavers which has enabled clearer pathway planning and preparation for economic wellbeing.
- 2.45 The LA continues to provide a range of successful support for young people who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) including mentoring and, bespoke education and training through the European Social Funding Support for NEET young people, as well as extended work placements, work pairing and a range of educational opportunities from foundation level learning through to apprenticeships. Our NEET unknown levels are very low, and we carefully track the EET status of young people. The Thames Valley Berkshire City Deal is commissioned by the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the successful development of Elevate has further improved employment opportunities for young people. Key priorities include reducing youth unemployment, generating new employment opportunities and delivering new work experience placements and apprenticeships. An annual report is prepared for the Executive on progress against the NEET Strategy.
- 2.46 The Corporate Parenting role is taken seriously by Elected Members. The Panel takes an active role in listening to the views of young people through the work of SiLSiP (Say it Loud Say it Proud) our Children in Care Council, who will attend the Corporate Parenting Panel to present information on their activity throughout the year. The Panel meets quarterly and receives a range of reports on activity for looked after children; this includes for example contributing to developing the Pledge for LAC, the LAC Commissioning Strategy, and receiving regular performance reports. Members of the Corporate Parenting Panel also participate in Regulation 33 Visits to the Short Term Respite Care Unit as part of their role. A main development over the past two years has been the 'Do You Know' training led by young people in care on what it is like for them in care.
- 2.47 The DCS and LMCS supported by Senior Officers meet with young people from SiLSiP on a quarterly basis to hear about their activities, and to listen to any concerns or issues they may have. This enables the DCS and LMCS to maintain an overview of the views and issues that are faced by young people who are looked after on a day to day basis. SiLSiP concerns have led to tangible improvement from a child's perspective which they have driven forward.
- 2.48 Prevent has been a particular area for development over the past three years led by Community Safety. Clear guidance, training and support is in place, including on-line recommended training.
- 2.49 Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) is a focus through the LSCB Task and Finish group and forms part of the awareness raising training and guidance for all front line staff.

Fair Access to Services

- 2.50 The Fair Access Panel meets on a regular basis to discuss children who may be at risk of exclusion. The Panel identifies strategies to support and address the issues, and there are very low permanent exclusions in 2014/15 (2).
- 2.51 The Life Chances Team (LCT) formally brings together a number of professionals from a range of agencies working with looked after children.

The LCT meets once a month to discuss progress of LAC and identify areas where additional support may be needed. The LCT has had a number of successes in supporting carers to maintain placements for challenging young people and provide prompt, practical support.

- 2.52 A new partnership group called Adolescents at Risk has been developed working with the police and College Hall (Pupil Referral Unit) to support those young people at risk and prevent their level of need escalating.
- 2.53 There is an Edge of Care Panel, chaired by the Head of Service for LAC which reviews all those cases of children on the edge of care and identifies ways to provide additional support where possible to prevent them coming into the care system.
- 2.54 Effective and appropriate use of the pupil premium for LAC is an integral part of our work with LAC. Schools are supported in developing their practices and building capacity in meeting the educational needs of LAC through termly Designated Teacher forums and training events delivered by the Virtual School. Designated Teachers in schools are supported in their role to attend training sessions organised by the LA and then to cascade this to school staff. Working with looked after children is also part of the formal induction process for newly qualified and appointed members of staff where they are provided with practical strategies aimed at raising an awareness of the common challenges faced.
- 2.55 The Virtual School for Looked After children has continued to develop and improve to meet its core function through working collaboratively with designated teachers in schools and monitoring each child's personal education plan (PEP). They support a range of vulnerable learners and include those who have been adopted, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers and Care Leavers.
- 2.56 The provision of sufficient school places is a statutory responsibility and also a key role for the local authority. Considerable time and energy has been put into planning the expansion of school places in the Wards where they are most needed. This is to ensure that there are sufficient places and also that they are in the schools that parents want their children to attend. This has been a successful approach for example at primary 97% of children were allocated one of their preferred choices and in secondary 93% of young people got one of their preferred choices for September 2016.
- 2.57 Work has continued on the implementation of the SEN reforms as a result of the Children and Families Act, and the changes have been implemented from September 2014. The single Education, Health and Care Plan is being rolled out.

Educational Excellence

- 2.58 The local authority has "Our Vision for Education" which identifies how the local authority works with community, parents and wider stakeholders to embed the vision and ambition for young people to reach their potential. This vision identifies ambition, values, aims for education, quality, and governance in particular highlighting the role of school governors. In addition there is a School Improvement Strategy and Pupil Premium Strategy.
- 2.59 The need for Governors to take an enhanced role was fully recognised in 2014. This has resulted in an ambition to review every Governing Body. A

new perspective on the important role of Governors and a continued focus on training and development and sharing best practice.

- 2.60 The policy context and expectations of the role of the LA in relation to schools is in a period of significant change. The enactment of the Education and Adoption Act in April 2016 strengthened the role of the Regional School Commissioners so that they will issue academy orders for any schools which are *Inadequate* and identified as *Coasting*. Three local schools are at risk of being forced to become academies under this legislation.
- 2.61 Education Excellence Everywhere, the White Paper published in April 2016 includes the government's ambition that every school becomes an academy by 2022 and a radical reduction in the statutory duties of LAs particularly in the area of school improvement.
- 2.62 Officers are in consultation with headteachers, chairs of governors and other stakeholders to scope an agreed way forward which will include new models of service delivery.
- 2.63 **Early Years Foundation Stage:** EYFS data is obtained through teacher assessment. There were 1506 children in the cohort. The LA average for a percentage of pupils achieving the national benchmark of a 'good level of development' at the end of the EYFS, (pupils achieving or exceeding the expected levels in the prime areas of learning, plus literacy and mathematics) is 73% (National Average, NA, is 66%). This is an increase of 10% from 63% in 2014, when the national average was 60%.
- 2.64 **Key Stage 1:** Bracknell Forest was significantly above the NA in 2014 and there were again some improvements in 2015 and remains significantly above average in all subjects. Improvements were seen at the higher levels in all subjects however not in writing and the percentage of pupils achieving a Level 2b declined. Writing is above national in 2015 but not significantly as it had been in 2014.
- 2.65 **Key Stage 2 (age 11):** 1227 pupils took the tests and the results show a continuing improvement trend with a 2% increase in the pupils achieving Level 4+ in the individual tests on reading, writing and maths. The percentage of pupils achieving the national benchmark of L4+ in the three areas combined however improved by 1%, to 79%, just below the new national average of 80%. There were improvements at L4b+ and good improvements in writing at L5+. 20% of pupils achieved L5, compared with 22% nationally, but given the local demographic performance should be higher.
- 2.66 **Key Stage 4:** 1112 pupils took GCSE or equivalent examinations this year. Results show that the percentage of young people obtaining 5 or more GCSE grades A* - C including English and mathematics was 58.9% on first entry, rising to 63% for best entry results (includes results for pupils retaking exams). The percentage of young people achieving 5 or more GCSE grades A* - C is 71.22%. National results for 5 GCSEs including English and maths were 57.1% for state funded schools and 68.8% excluding English and maths.
- 2.67 **Post-16:** 417 students took A-level examinations. The A* - E pass rate at A Level remains constant, with 98.8% of entries resulting in a pass grade, slightly above the national pass rate. The percentage of students achieving A*-B has fallen significantly, reflecting the national trend; however Bracknell Forest is 7.6% ahead of the national average.

- 2.68 Inspections of schools by Ofsted remain ongoing. During the period of 2014 to date there were 10 Inspections of Schools 8 primary, 1 secondary (academy) and 1 Special School. In the primary section 6 schools were graded as good and 2 were graded as requires improvement. In the secondary section 1 school was graded as outstanding. 1 special school was graded as good. Overall, the number of schools in Bracknell Forest that are good or better is: 25 out of 31 primary schools, 2 out of 2 Special/PRU Schools, 4 out of 6 secondary schools (includes 2 academies, 1 outstanding and 1 requires improvement).
- 2.69 The DCS holds half-termly meetings for all Headteachers and termly meetings with Chairs of Governors to ensure that there is effective communication and liaison between the LA and schools on key policy and practice issues.

3 SUMMARY

- 3.1 This report has provided information on a range of activity undertaken within the Department for Children, Young People and Learning during the last year. Whilst it does not cover every area of activity, it does provide an overview of the role of the DCS and the LMCS in terms of some of their key statutory functions. The report shows there is a clear link in terms of accountability between the DCS, LMCS and the Chief Executive and Leader, it shows the response and activity around safeguarding which remains a high priority for all concerned; and it shows the ongoing and effective partnership links that exist between the local authority and key partners. There is a clear recognition that our work in the Department cannot be achieved in isolation and the way in which we engage with, support and encourage partners is crucial to the ongoing successful delivery of improved outcomes for our children and young people.
- 3.2 Training and development opportunities are an essential part of maintaining a high performing department. Staff are actively encouraged to attend relevant job related training and development. They are also actively encouraged to access a wide range of support including through reflective supervision, access to current academic and research papers and peer support.
- 3.3 The priority outcomes for the Children, Young People and Learning Department are identified in the CYPP Plan and the CYP&L Service Plan which supports the delivery of key actions within the Council linked to the delivery of key actions across the Council and with partners.
- 3.4 The Children and Young People's Plan can be found at:
<http://www.bracknellforest.gov.uk/bracknellforestchildrenandyoungpeoplespartnership>

Dr Janette Karklins – Director Children, Young People and Learning
Councillor Dr Gareth Barnard – Lead Member Children, Young People and Learning

March 2016