



Helping people live their own lives;
Building sustainable care and support in
Monmouthshire

Annual Report of the
Director of Social Services
2015



monmouthshire
sir fynyw

How are we doing? Social Care

Doing Well



Only 9 instances where people had to stay in hospital longer because social care was unavailable



94% of adults told us they are satisfied with the service



54% of people are returned to independence after reablement



59% of children are seen alone by a social worker during assessment

100% of children coming into care have a plan in place



We review 97% of children on time



100% of looked after children and care leavers have a current plan for their independence

Getting Better



83% of statutory visits to looked after children were on time – an increase from 65% last year



89% of core assessments completed on time



Looked after children achieving at key stage 2 has increased from **0% to 67%** and at key stage 3 **50% to 57%**

Room for Improvement



The percentage of adults whose care package was reviewed in the year fallen from **82% to 78%**



19% of looked after children have experienced an unplanned school move



77% of initial child protection conferences were held on time

Version Control

Title	Annual Report of the Director of Social Services
Purpose	To tell local people and partners how well we think the arrangements for delivering social care are working. This report is part of the Annual Council Reporting Framework for social care in Wales.
Owner	Monmouthshire County Council
Approved by	Chief Officer, Social Care and Health
Date	17 th April 2015
Version Number	1.0
Status	Draft
Review Frequency	Annual
Next review date	April 2016
Consultation	

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Introduction

Helping people live their own lives; building sustainable care and support systems in Monmouthshire

This is my 5th Annual Report as Statutory Director of Social Services and it is both gratifying and sobering to reflect back on our journey as a directorate over these 5 years. In an earlier introduction I used a favourite quote of mine:

“When the strong winds blow some people build shelters, others build windmills” (ancient Chinese proverb)

This has indeed summed up our approach since then and I am glad that as we embarked on major service redesign we didn't know quite how strong the financial, legislative and organisational wind speeds would become. But we have survived and indeed flourished and in this report you will see a picture of a directorate which, by adhering to its strong values and principles, has improved its performance, innovated successfully and secured the high calibre staff and financial resources it requires.



Looking forward it is clear that the storms will not abate. The complexity of the needs of our children and young people and the increase in older people living with dementia are just two examples of this. But we have learnt some crucial lessons which will help us to prosper;

- That people have personal strengths and networks and with our support can be helped to find their own solutions.
- That it is through building relationships with individuals and families that we can make a difference in people's lives.
- That leadership sits at all levels within our organisation and the job of senior leaders such as myself is to create the conditions in which we can all listen to and learn from our communities and each other.
- That safeguarding the most vulnerable and intervening early on to build individual and community resilience are not either/ors. Our job is to manage this tension on a daily basis.

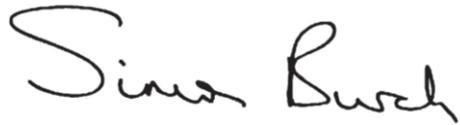
Also, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the frontline care staff and social workers who work so hard to support people in Monmouthshire.

This report has two purposes;

- To describe our direction and actions for the year ahead, and
- To report on how we did last year.

On page 8 you will see our strategy summed up in a single picture and on page 10 is my overview of last year. You will also see quotes from people who have used our services spread throughout. The final part of this report lays out my six strategic priorities and the actions that we shall be carrying out during 2015 to start to achieve these. I have limited myself to six in the belief that “if everything is a priority, nothing is a priority”. So if you don't find mention of your particular area of interest that doesn't mean there is no activity going on.

I have drawn on the detailed reports prepared by Julie Boothroyd (Head of Adults) and Tracy Jelfs (Head of Children) for the *How well are we doing* section of this report and these can be accessed [here](#). In these reports you will find the full range of actions that teams will be focusing on during 2015/16.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Simon Bush". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

**Chief Officer
Social Care and Health**

March 2015

Our Journey: what we're trying to achieve

We are operating in a climate of both fiscal and demographic challenges unseen since the 1940s. UK- wide budgetary decisions have a direct impact on the resources available to deliver social services and this is particularly challenging at a time when demand is increasing. We are experiencing particular pressures around meeting the mental health needs of young people and in responding to increasing levels of dementia.

As we respond to these challenges we are assisted by a national policy context which is well aligned to our local aspirations. The Social Services and Wellbeing Act, the Future Generations Bill and the Prudent Healthcare agenda all serve to underpin our focus on community resilience, proportionate intervention and personal outcomes.

At a local level the [Monmouthshire Continuance Agreement](#) has *restated* “*protecting the most vulnerable in society*” as one of its key priorities and demonstrated this in practice by significant investment in children’s services and a managed approach to savings in adult services.

We have used systemic approaches to ask the question “what matters to the people we work with?” That has included asking people directly and analysing case files and at times has led to a painful realisation that our services do not always focus on what really matters.

Having looked unflinchingly at ourselves as an organisation we have been able to identify the key characteristics we need to adopt to move forward.

These can be summarised as:

- Focussing on people’s strengths and assets, both as an individual and within their wider family and community.
- Having different conversations with individuals around “what matters to you” and “how can we work with you to find joint solutions?”
- Putting our expertise at the “front end”, so that people speak to someone who can help them there and then.
- Thinking about how we can intervene earlier on and who the best person to do this is.
- Building a culture which encourages creativity and innovation.
- Finding new ways to engage individuals and communities and to deliver services differently.
- Developing new ways to measure our impact, based on individual outcomes.

This work is essential because in the current financial and demographic context if we don’t find ways to support people to find better solutions we will end up rationing services and only intervening in crisis situations. The human cost of failing to have the right conversations at the right time includes young people placed in institutional placements away from home and older people experiencing isolation and loneliness in their communities.

The national policy focus on early intervention and wellbeing supports our approach and challenges us to work more preventatively with individuals, families and communities.

This work, along with other analysis and reflection, has enabled us to clarify our purpose, principles and our three year strategy.

Our purpose

Our purpose in Monmouthshire is:

“Building resilient and sustainable communities”

Three themes underpin all our work: Nobody left behind; People are capable, confident and involved and Our County thrives. As a social services directorate we play a key part in all these areas and have agreed our own purpose statement to drive our work

“Helping People Live Their Own Lives”

Given the particular pressures of working with families and vulnerable children we have expanded this to:

“Enabling families and communities to keep children and young people safe and to reach their own potential”

Our principles

- We will work in partnership to facilitate solutions, building meaningful rapport/relationships with family's individuals and partners.
- We will know/be clear about the people who we will support in a timely manner.
- We will have a plan of how we will support people to develop a “whole life” plan, and have a method to track progress and communicate effectively (including commissioning).
- We will take an outcome focused approach to future planning (long term and short term) with families and individuals to meet their own aspirations and goals.
- We will involve the right people at the right time to help people in crisis and will take responsibility for the appropriate pace and continuity of our on-going intervention.
- We will have honest and transparent conversations with all people.
- We will work with and respect other colleagues and challenge systems to ensure best practice and service delivery.
- We will use knowledge to reflect learn and develop on our practice and decisions.
- Everything we record will be purposeful and proportionate.
- We will value and respect our staff and trust their judgement; and promote wellbeing in the workforce.
- Our IT system will work for us.
- We will work creatively and equitably within all resources available.

Our approach

Identifying new principles is one thing, delivering them requires careful thought and clear ways (methods) of achieving this.

My fundamental belief is that the key relationship is that between our front line workers and our communities. My role and that of other managers is to hold true to the principles and purpose and provide the environment in which excellent practice can develop. It is at the front line that lives are changed and that most resources are committed.

We need to engage simultaneously at three levels;

Community level: Building resilient individuals, families and communities

Service level: Building flexible, empowering and responsive services

Individual practice: Helping people and their families to find solutions that build on their strengths, aspirations and networks

What we are going to do?

This annual report sits within our longer term strategy. We are now in the fourth year and have reviewed the three themes and six priorities which will again drive our actions for 2015/16.

The themes are described below; the way in which we will deliver the priorities during the coming year is laid out in section five on page 16.



Theme One: Changing practice, changing lives

This means focusing on practice at the front line, supporting staff to build effective relationships and working with people to find imaginative solutions. By listening, concentrating on what matters to citizens and engaging communities in supporting individuals and families we believe we can help people find lasting solutions. And if that sounds familiar it's because this is reclaiming some aspects of professional values and practice which have been underused in recent years.

What this means in 2015/16

We will invest our time, energy and financial resources on:

- Supporting staff across the directorate to further develop excellent practice.
- Building the capacity and resilience of our local communities, including:
 - developing relationships based practice which builds on the strengths and aspirations of individuals and communities;

- establishing locality-focused approaches;
- setting up a Children in Care Council and creating employment opportunities for care leavers;
- finding ways to measure our impact.

The big question is *“Are we really focused on what matters to individuals?”*

Theme Two: Safeguarding people

Working to keep children, young people and adults in need safe will always be a key priority for us. The way in which we work with others to safeguard people is crucial and we want to get better at how we listen to people and give them as much control as possible of the processes and decisions that affect them.



What this means in 2015/16

- We will continue to improve our whole authority delivery and evaluation of safeguarding.
- We will work with partners to ensure the three strategic boards (Children, Adults, Domestic Abuse) work effectively.
- We will ensure our own adult protection and child protection processes are excellent.

The big question for 2015/16 is *“How safe are our children and young people and vulnerable adults?”*

Theme Three: Working with and through others

We can't achieve any of our objectives unless we are skilled at working effectively with others. This includes citizens, carers and a range of local, regional and national organisations. We need to concentrate on what we want to achieve and build good relationships with the right partners.

What this means in 2015/16

- We will build on our strong integrated teams which are having such a positive impact on the lives of people requiring health and social care support.
- We will work in partnership around a range of children's issues and demonstrate concrete progress around the mental health integration agenda.
- We will engage nationally and regionally to implement the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.

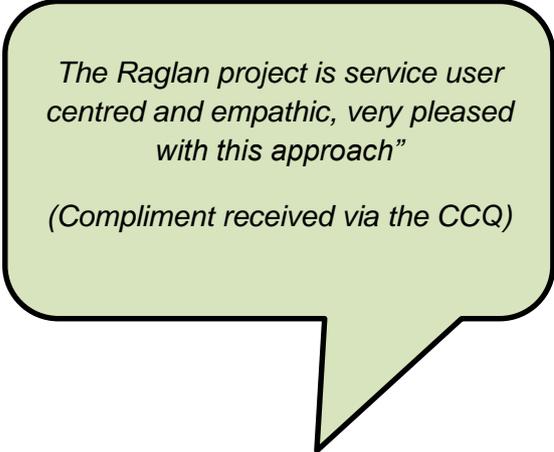
The big question for 2015/16 is *“What difference are we making?”*

How well are we doing?

This section presents my view as Statutory Director of Social Services on our performance over the past year. It is a high level perspective and more detail and supporting evidence is contained in the [Heads of Service reports](#).

My overview

This has been another year characterised by great busyness and the challenge as ever is to deliver reliable and high quality services whilst also finding time to improve and innovate. A particular feature of 2014/15 has been the high level of regulatory activity including extensive detailed inspections by CSSIW, Estyn and WAO.



The Raglan project is service user centred and empathic, very pleased with this approach"

(Compliment received via the CCQ)

As a statutory, demand driven service we have worked hard to ensure that we respond promptly and effectively to need. In doing so we have played to our strengths as a small, values-driven authority and have also been aware of the potential risks in terms of capacity, resilience and resource base.

As Statutory Director I have ensured that we have met our statutory duties and the leadership of the wider authority has ensured that resources were available to deliver safe and effective services.

We begin 2015/16 in good organisational health, with improved performance indicators, a relatively robust workforce and financial stability. Our record of regional engagement has been strong and we are well placed to work towards the agenda set out in the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.

The main highlights and challenge for me have been:

- We have strengthened Safeguarding including:
 - An effective joint safeguarding unit with a comprehensive audit timetable;
 - A strong corporate profile including a whole authority safeguarding group chaired by the Chief Executive;
 - reviewing and investing in an expanded and refocused Protection of Vulnerable Adults team.
- We have responded to a challenging financial context in a proactive way. In a situation of significant cuts and increasing pressure on children's services we have;
 - Managed demand in adult services to deliver actual savings and prepare for further reductions in the medium term.
 - Developed a sophisticated understanding of the demand pressures in children's services and secured additional resources to manage current demand and reconfigure services.
 - Delivered significant improvements in key performance indicators across Children's Services and sustained the improvements already made in Adults.

Children's Services:

Ref	Description	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Latest	2013/14 Welsh Av	Direction of Travel
SCC/011b	The percentage of initial assessments that were completed during the year where there is evidence that the child has been seen alone by the Social Worker.	33.2	48	57.3	42.9	↑
SCC/025	The percentage of statutory visits to looked after children due in the year that took place in accordance with regulations.	65.3	90.6	82.8	85.3	↑
SCC/041a	The percentage of eligible, relevant and former relevant children that have pathway plans as required	73.3	98	96.1	89.2	↑
SCC/001a	The percentage of first placements of looked after children during the year that began with a care plan in place	83	100	100	90.9	↑
SCC/016	The percentage of reviews of child in need plans carried out in accordance with the statutory timetable.	57.5	86	90.9	78.8	↑

Adult Services:

Ref	Description	2013/14 Actual	2014/15 Target	2014/15 Latest	2013/14 Welsh Av	Direction of Travel
SCA/007	The percentage of clients with a care plan at 31 March whose care plans should have been reviewed that were reviewed during the year	82.1	82.1	83.1	81.1	↑
SCA/018a	The percentage of carers of adults who were offered an assessment or review of their needs in their own right during the year	97.3	95	100	85.8	↑
SCA/019	The percentage of adult protection referrals completed where the risk has been managed	81.2	94.45	100	94.45	↑

- Monmouthshire has been active on the regional stage, chairing the regional Safeguarding Children’s Board and the Mental Health/Learning Disability Board. At a national level we have chaired the All Wales Heads of Adult Services committee and been active contributors to the work around the Social Services and Wellbeing Act.
- We have received national recognition for our work, including [an innovation award for our work in Children’s Services](#) and two nominations for Social Services Accolades.
- Within Children’s Services there has been a great deal of work to embed the restructure and create a positive culture. This has included:
 - Relocating the teams into a single base in order to improve communication and build a strong sense of working as a single service;
 - Improving policies and pressures to ensure consistency;
 - Building a stronger whole authority profile;
 - Developing a set of investment proposals to position us to manage demand more efficiently;
 - In last year’s report I anticipated the establishment of a joint children and adults disability service. In fact the changes listed here have been a higher priority so this has not progressed;
 - Starting to implement our action plan in response to the November CSSIW inspection of children’s services.
- Within adults services the ambitious agenda around personal outcomes, relationship based care and systematic approaches to demand management have continued, including:
 - The learning from the [Raglan project](#) is being rolled out across the County based on a train the trainer approach in partnership with “Dementia Care Matters”
 - Community Coordination and Small Local Enterprises initiatives are in place
 - Clear evidence of reducing spend on care home placements and community packages
 - Testing out new integrated teams approaches via the Intermediate Care Fund
 - The learning disability My Day My Life work is demonstrating impressive results for individuals and is being rolled out across the County
 - Working with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board to build sustainability into integrated services
 - Building a procurement process to take forward local, relationship based commissioning that supports the new Act.
- We have commissioned a new IT system, designed with our staff, which will provide a contemporary system which enhances good practice and frees staff up to focus on social work. This will be in place in May 2015.
- We have redesigned our recruitment process and have been successful in recruiting a number of high calibre staff and decreasing our use of agency staff. We are also implementing the corporate People Strategy and working regionally on workforce issues.
- We have invested a lot of energy in developing our staff. Examples include local and regional safeguarding training, continuing professional development for social

“My Uncle was very fortunate to be placed in your care where he was treated with the utmost respect and dignity”

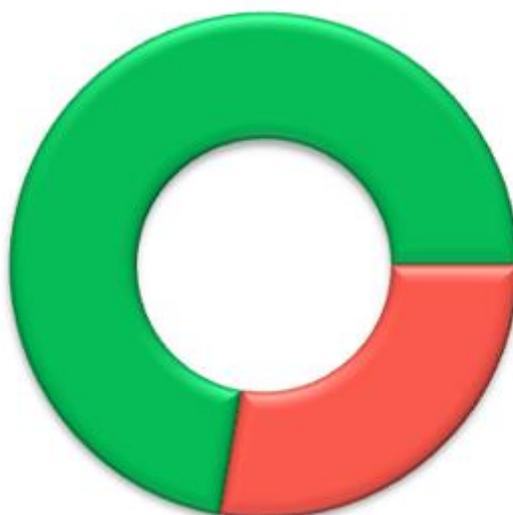
(Letter of thanks sent to Mardy Park)

workers, resilience and coaching training. We have been supporting new cohorts of social work students and gain much from their insights, experiences and energy.

- We have published our Corporate Parenting strategy and are implementing it. We still have work to do to embed this and ensure that it impacts on the life chances of the young people for whom the authority acts as corporate parent.
- We continue to make good progress in our “More than Just Words” Welsh language strategy and have received acclaim for our initiative in one of our residential homes.
- The November 2014 [CSSIW inspection of children’s services](#) reassured us that our child protection processes did not leave children “being harmed or at risk of harm” (hyperlink) They made a number of recommendations around risk assessment, recording and how some initial referrals were dealt with which are being addressed within this years’ [Service Improvement Plan](#). The report also acknowledged the strong political and senior leadership of the service.
- We dealt with 39 complaints during the year. The recurring themes are around how we communicate with individuals and families, concerns about the behaviour of some staff and issues around assessment and care plans. As well as resolving the individual complaints we are committed to learn and improve from these broader messages. We also received a number of unsolicited compliments relating to our services and some of these are reproduced in speech bubbles throughout this report.

“I couldn’t wish for a better social worker”
(Email sent to Children with Disabilities Team)

Social Care and Health: National Strategic Indicators and Public Accountability Measures improving or declining at Q3:



Progress on our priority actions from 2013/14

In last years report I set out six priorities, each with 3 actions. In this section I comment on how well we have done. To make this clear for people who aren't familiar with the specific issues I also summarise how far I think we have achieved the priority actions.

1. A focus on families: Partially achieved

Our desired outcome was that families are supported during key transitions or times of stress. The progress we have made:

- The Joint Assessment Family Framework ([JAFF](#)) now has a manager in place and is located in the Partnership team with strong social services links.
- The planned all-age disability service has not been implemented due to other priorities.
- The Corporate Parenting Strategy in place and requires further work to implement fully.

2. Doing what matters: Mostly achieved

Our desired outcome was that people are supported to “live their own life” i.e. take more control over life they live. The progress we have made:

- Practice in Children's services more child focused e.g. more direct work with children.
- Integrated assessments and carer support plans are in place.
- Improvements implemented since Looked After Children inspection.

3. Finding integrated solutions: Fully achieved

Our desired outcome was that services are built around the needs of the individual and deliver “what matters.” The progress we have made:

- Carried out integrated pilot; further negotiation ongoing with ABUHB.
- Mental Health pilot successful and being rolled out across Gwent.
- Majority of Intermediate Care Fund projects delivered.

4. Strengthening communities: Fully Achieved

Our desired outcome was that people are engaged in and supported by the communities and not dependant purely on statutory services. The progress we have made:

- Community coordination established.
- Small Local Enterprises project set up and My Day programme extended.
- New domiciliary care model designed and commissioning timetable agreed.

5. *Building new safeguarding and protection systems: Fully Achieved*

Our desired outcome was that people are protected and that this is achieved in ways which will empower the individual to sustain/regain control of their life. The progress we have made:

- New Adult Protection model agreed to improve responsiveness and consistency
- Robust whole authority safeguarding approach in place.
- Regional safeguarding arrangements well-embedded.

6. *Developing and supporting our people: Mostly achieved*

Our desired outcome was that all our staff are trained and motivated to deliver excellent person-centred support. The progress we have made:

- IT system developed with rescheduled implementation date of May 2015.
- New recruitment process in place and drop in use of agency workers.
- New Check In/Check Out system in place; need for more consistency noted in CSSIW report

Conclusion

We have made good progress over the last year in responding to the challenges that impact on social services in Wales. We have worked hard to sustain high quality services and strengthen processes and systems to ensure effectiveness. At the same time we know that more of the same is not the answer and that we need to build different relationships with people who approach us for support. Hence the developmental work described in this section is essential in recalibrating our services for the future.

“Those people I have worked with have very obviously given a great deal of thought to the emotional wellbeing and development of the child and family, and seem to always place the child at the centre of

“She has been a tower of strength to us over the last few months and it is down to her that we are still fostering”

(Compliment received via Yammer to Placement and Support Team)

Our priority actions for 2015/16

Earlier, I described our strategy with its three themes and six priorities. Here are the priority actions for this year, grouped under the six priorities. The detail of how and when these will be implemented sits within our Heads of Service plans and Service Improvement Plans.

A key question for me as Director is “how do we know how we are doing?” During 2015/16 we will need to:

- Maintain our performance against the traditional Welsh performance measures.
- Develop tools to capture the personal outcomes and views of the people we work with.

So we will be looking at:

- Traditional performance indicators (how many, how much)
- Feedback from people who use our services and their carers
- Feedback from regulators and partners
- Feedback from staff
- Personal Outcomes data
- Analysis and benchmarking

Priority	1. <i>A focus on families</i>
Outcome	That families are supported during key transitions in times of stress.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Children in Care Council and develop employment opportunities for care leavers • Undertake a needs analysis of children in Monmouthshire • Continue to embed JAFF/TAFF

Priority	2. <i>Doing what matters</i>
Outcome	That people are supported to “live their own life” i.e. take more control over life they live.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a new Home Support model in Adults Services • Maintain performance against key indicators • Deliver our post-inspection action plan in Children’s Services

Priority	3. <i>Finding integrated solutions</i>
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Outcome	That services are built around the needs of the individual and deliver “what matters”.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree integrated model with Health based on further local delegated decision making. • Continue key intermediate Care Fund initiatives • Work with Health to improve the child and adolescent mental health pathway

Priority	4. <i>Strengthening communities</i>
Outcome	That people are engaged in and supported by the communities and not dependant purely on statutory services.
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set up Mardy Park as a community hub • Roll out My Day/ My Life in the Monmouth area • Develop area based approaches building on the community coordination approach

Priority	5. <i>Building new safeguarding and protection systems</i>
Outcome	That people are protected and that this is achieved in ways which will empower the individual to sustain/regain control of their life
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the new adult safeguarding system • Deliver positive outcome re: Estyn review of Safeguarding • Implement a consistent audit framework across children’s services

Priority	6. <i>Developing and supporting our people</i>
Outcome	That all our staff are trained and motivated to deliver excellent person-centred support
Actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce new IT system across social services • Roll out dementia care training and competency framework • Ensure appropriate caseloads to enable quality work across adults and children.

These are the tangible actions which will help us achieve our purpose. Behind these specific actions are a number of organisational tasks which my staff and I will be carrying out to enable us to deliver on these. For 2015/16 the internal focus will be on:

- Stabilising the budget and delivering in line with the Medium Term Financial Plan
- Maintaining and improving our performance against national performance indicators
- Developing and supporting staff at all levels.
- Effective service commissioning.

Performance Measures

We have clear strategies to set the direction our services will be taking in the years ahead. We recognise that this is not easily measurable at the current time and that we cannot take our eyes off the basics of service delivery. We include here some more traditional and comparable measures of our performance.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15#
The number of adults who received a traditional service during the year	2570	2482	[TBC]
The number of children looked after at 31 March	101	103	105
The number of children on the child protection register on 31 March	55	37	48
The number (and rate per 10,000 population) of delayed transfers of care for social care reasons	16 (1.77)	17 (1.83)	12 (1.27)
The percentage of adult clients supported in the community during the year	86.8%	86.3%	85.6%
The number (and rate per 1000 population) of older people supported in residential settings	254 (13.21)	227 (11.33)	10.11 (209)
The percentage of adult clients who were reviewed during the year	54.4%	82.1%	83.1%
The percentage of carers of adults who were offered their own assessment or review	72.2%	97.3%	100%
The percentage of people who were fully independent following reablement	55%	54.6%	54.2%
The percentage of surveyed adult service users who were satisfied with the services they received	96%	90%	94%
The number of referrals to children's services dealt with the same day	93.9%	99.0%	99.3%
The percentage of initial assessments completed within 7 working days	76.5%	79.1%	76.0%
The percentage of Core Assessments completed within 35 working days	81.3%	86.7%	83.3%
The percentage of children looked after or on the child protection register with a social worker	100%	100%	100%
The percentage of reviews of looked after children carried out on time	100%	99.6%	100%
The percentage of reviews of children on the child protection register carried out on time	90.5%	93.9%	95.7%
The average education qualification points score of 16 year olds who have been looked after	269	222	308

#Data for 2014/15 is provisional. For many of these measures comparable data for other areas will be available at infobasecymru.net

What we Spend

