

Overview

Introduction

There are 12 performance indicators (PIs) in the Children's Services category. They cover a wide range of areas including:

- pre-school, primary and secondary school costs;
- performance of pupils in SQA exam results;
- the percentage of adults satisfied with local schools;
- the proportion of pupils entering a positive destination;
- the proportion of children being looked after in the community; and
- the costs of children being looked after in residential based services and in community settings.

Seven PIs, covering school costs, exam results, satisfaction with schools and positive destinations, are managed by the Council's [Educational Services Department](#). It provides a range of services including children's services, continuous professional development and workforce planning, educational development, libraries and museums, performance and improvement, and psychological services. You can find out more about Educational Services from their [Service Plan](#).

Three indicators relating to looked after children are managed by the [Community Health & Care Partnership \(CHCP\)](#). It provides a range of services covering: children's health, care and criminal justice; strategy, planning and health improvement; mental health, learning disability and addictions; and community health and care services. You can find out more about the CHCP from their [Strategic Plan](#).

Two indicators relating to exam results at level 5 are no longer relevant following the introduction of the [Curriculum for Excellence](#) in Scottish schools. There is no data available for 2013/14 with the most current data relating to 2012/13. Work is ongoing at a national level to develop replacement indicators for these.

Our work in the areas covered by the Children's Services category is set in the wider context of the key national policies of Curriculum for Excellence and [GIRFEC](#), ensuring we 'get it right for every child', as they grow to be responsible citizens, effective contributors, confident individuals and successful learners. Developing the workforce of the future is a key aim for us, in line with the recommendations made in [Education Working For All](#).

Understanding variations in performance

Before looking at our performance in this category, it is important to consider the many differences between local authorities that contribute to variations in performance, including population, geography, social and economic factors, and the needs and priorities of local communities. All of these should be taken into account when comparing performance.

Local context

Our population stands at 89,810 (based on the current mid-year estimate), making West Dunbartonshire one of Scotland's smaller local authorities, accounting for 1.7% of the total population of Scotland.

West Dunbartonshire's population is ageing. This ageing population profile is projected to continue and in West Dunbartonshire increase, with the potential to impact on all sectors of the economy and economic activity, while at the same time placing a greater demand on care and health care services.

West Dunbartonshire is an area of multiple deprivation, with higher than average levels of unemployment and poverty. As a local authority, we are working hard to tackle inequality and

poverty. We have developed strategic approaches to improving employment and economic growth, improving the lives of children and young people, improving the care of older people, improving housing and infrastructure, and improving wellbeing and protecting vulnerable groups.

You can read more about West Dunbartonshire in our [Social & Economic Profile](#) for 2014, which looks in detail at key areas including our population, education, regeneration, housing, economic activity, welfare and benefits, child poverty, crime, and the environment.

Family groups

Grouping together councils that share similar characteristics to those set out in the local context above (called family groups) make comparisons more meaningful and our learning more useful.

In autumn 2014, some of our key services began a process to benchmark their service against other councils in their family group. They will meet over several months and report the outcome of their benchmarking activity on our website. The outcomes from all 32 benchmarking local authorities will be published on the Local Government Benchmarking Framework website www.improvementservice.org.uk/benchmarking

Overview of performance across the Children's Services category

The two indicators relating to exam results at level 5 have been excluded from the performance summary below. They are no longer relevant following the introduction of the [Curriculum for Excellence](#) in Scottish schools and there is no data for 2013/14.

In the paragraphs that follow, we have highlighted how we have performed in relation to all Scottish councils. Please bear in mind the many differences that contribute to variations in performance, including social and economic factors and local priorities, as described in more detail in the section above.

In 2013/14:

- we performed better in 5 of the 10 indicators compared to the previous year;
- our ranking improved for 6 PIs and fell for 4 PIs compared to the previous year;
- we performed better than the Scotland figure in 4 PIs and worse in 6 PIs;
- with 32 Scottish local authorities, we were ranked in the top quartile (1st to 8th) for 2 PIs, the second quartile (9th to 16th) for 3 PIs, the third quartile (17th to 24th) for 1 PI and the bottom quartile (25th to 32nd) for 4 PIs.

Council performance

Performance highlights

- Cost per secondary pupil: With only Kilpatrick and Our Lady and St. Patrick's (OLSP) High School being in older premises, we have significantly improved our performance over time, moving from 27th to 18th. With the commitment to replace both Kilpatrick and OLSP, our position will improve again over time, providing learning and teaching environments required for the curriculum of today and tomorrow
- % of pupils gaining 5+ awards at level 6: We continue to improve the performance of our pupils in the senior phase of our schools year on year, up from 20.5% in 2012/13 to 24.5% in 2013/14, resulting in a rise in ranking from 31st to 26th. We have provided support at the point of need, by investing in raising attainment initiatives such as supported study and master classes
- % of pupils from deprived areas gaining 5+ awards at level 6: We have made our biggest improvement in this area, with performance increasing from 9.6% to 17.8% between 2012/13

and 2013/14. This has resulted in a significant rise in ranking from 13th to amongst the top performing local authorities in Scotland with a ranking of 3rd

- The weekly cost of £176.21 for children looked after in a community setting continues to be significantly lower than the Scottish figure of £264.83 and we are again among the top performers with a ranking of 5th.

Areas for development

- % of adults satisfied with local schools: Although the percentage of adults satisfied with local schools has decreased slightly from 88% to 86%, we remain above the Scotland figure of 81% and ranked 10th in Scotland. There is significant work in the schools estates programme affecting a number of areas to improve the quality of educational provision over the next two years.
- Proportion of pupils entering positive destinations: Presently we can account for all of our young people, with no one unknown to us in the system. With a success rate of just over 90% of pupils entering positive destinations, we continue to do well for the vast majority of our young people. However, other local authorities have made bigger improvements in the last year which has affected how we compare with them.

What we are doing to improve services

Schools Estate

Following a consultation process, a report by the Executive Director of Education on the building of a new Our Lady and St Patrick's High School was agreed by the Educational Services Committee on 26 June 2014. A new schools and early education and childcare centre (EECC) campus is planned to replace Aitkenbar Primary, St Peter's Primary and St Peter's EE&CC in Bellsmyre. A new Kilpatrick School Secondary building will be constructed. The proposed opening date of the new buildings is August 2016.

At the end of June 2014, Scottish Government offered to fund 100% of the Our Lady and St Patrick's High School project on condition that the Council would use the released funding in order to maximise the number of pupils who could benefit from establishments being raised from grade C to grade B or A in terms of their condition.

These developments will improve our performance in relation to schools estate and satisfaction rates.

Positive Destinations

With the publication of the report from the Commission for Developing Scotland's Young Workforce, we are working hard to improve what is on offer to all of our young people in the senior phase of our secondary schools. With the help of a wide number of partners, we will offer courses that meet the needs of our young people, and develop their skills, capabilities and attributes. This will help them make the transition from school into the wider world of work or further study.

The CHCP's Youth Mentoring Initiative provides additional support to our vulnerable young people to achieve and make better decisions about their life. With over 90% of these young people achieving their set goals, in 2014 the initiative received Scottish Social Services Council Care Accolades and Scottish Mentoring Network awards, recognising the positive impact they have on young people's lives.

How the public can get involved

Your feedback is important to us. Please take a few minutes to tell us what you think about our performance information by completing this short [questionnaire](#).

We will use your feedback to help us improve how we report our performance to you in future.

For more information about our performance, please contact:

corporateandcommunityplanning@west-dunbarton.gov.uk