

Children and Families Achievements Report 2011

Education, Children and Families Committee

31 January 2012

Purpose of report

- 1 To advise the Committee of the Children and Families Achievements Report 2011.

Main report

- 2 The Children and Families Achievements Report is a summary of successes achieved since the last report was produced in December 2009.
- 3 The report forms part of the wider performance reporting framework and the content has been summarised from a wide range of performance reports and indicators which are regularly reviewed by the Education, Children and Families Committee. Such reports include the annual attainment report, child protection performance, the bi-monthly performance information and the annual report on the Children and Families Service Plan.
- 4 Major successes to note include:
 - 100% of nursery schools and classes inspected receiving positive inspection reports;
 - 750 parents participating in Family Learning opportunities in 2010/11;
 - PrePare service supported 89 mothers during 2011 and was awarded the COSLA Silver Award for Excellence;
 - Educational attainment has improved on every nationally published measure;
 - Reduced levels of exclusions maintained;
 - Very high participation levels in Duke of Edinburgh Awards scheme with City of Edinburgh Council being the biggest DofE Operating Authority for the last three years;
 - 17,000 young people and their families participating in a wide range of activities during summer holidays, a 31% increase since last year;
 - Significant improvements in performance across child protection services and outcomes for Looked After Children;
 - Considerable progress made with implementing Getting it Right for Every Child;

- Considerable progress made with implementing the Growing Confidence programme;
- Improvement in the percentage of schools providing 2 hours of quality curriculum PE;
- High participation in Active Schools;
- Introduction of pre-referral screening resulting in a reduction of more than 50% in the numbers of young people being referred on offence grounds;
- Improved level of young people leaving school into positive destinations with the highest level recorded since 1997/98 and the gap to the national average reducing from 4.3 percentage points last year to 1.5;
- More than 11,000 adult learners taking part in our Adult Education programme;
- Significant and continued investment in the school estate;
- Year-on-year reduction in staff sickness absence levels;
- Successful engagement activities with young people, parents and public.

5 It is particularly worthy of note that the significant budget reductions have been achieved alongside the successes detailed in this report and the appendix.

Financial Implications

6 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Equalities Impact

7 There are no equalities implications arising directly from this report.

Environmental Impact

8 There are no environment implications arising directly from this report.

Recommendations

9 It is recommended the Education, Children and Families Committee notes the successes achieved as detailed in this cover report and appendix:

- a) The Children and Families Achievements Report 2011

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Director of Children and Families

Appendices	1. Children and Families Achievements Report 2011
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Wards affected	None
Single Outcome Agreement	Not applicable
Background Papers	None

Appendix 1 Children and Families Achievement Report 2011

1. Best Start in Life

Achievements

- The Early Years and Childcare Strategy and Action Plan for Children and Families was successfully launched in March 2010.
- Since the launch, substantial progress has been made:
 - 100% of Local Authority nursery schools and classes inspected during 2010/11 had positive assessments in all three indicators
 - 90% of partner provider nurseries inspected during 2010/11 had positive assessments in *Improvements in Performance* and *Learners' Experience* whilst 80% had a positive assessment in *Meeting Learning Needs*
 - The Brightstart Nurseries for children with complex needs at Braidburn and Oaklands schools received very positive inspection reports
 - 100% of children in Local Authority classes have access to a qualified teacher
 - Two new integrated Early Years Centres have been established in Craigmillar and Leith
 - The PrePare service has provided effective support to 89 mothers with drug and alcohol problems during 2011. This service was awarded a COSLA Excellence Silver Award in 2011.
 - Literacy and Numeracy levels of pupils entering P1 have been maintained
 - 750 parents participated in Family Learning opportunities in 2010/11
 - Increased support to parents has been provided through the development of 52 Peers Early Education Partnerships groups across the city
 - 100% of Local Authority staff and 83% of voluntary and private sector staff meet qualification standards
- 424 Early Years staff participated in outdoor play and active learning training delivered by the play development team since 2010.

Achievements

- Almost all nursery schools have been accredited at Stage 1 in the Healthy Schools programme and most are now ready to progress to Stage 2. 10 early years centres (partner providers and child and family centres) were involved in a pilot in 2010/11 to take forward the initiative. Six centres have now been awarded 'Healthy Early Years' status at Stage 1 and three centres are awaiting an accreditation visit. A further 40 early years centres have expressed interest in participating in 2012.
- All children (0-3) with a disability who were referred from the NHS were offered support from the Visiting Teaching and Support Service. This includes the development of individual support planning, home teaching and support, playgroups and parent support. In the 0-5 population, 143 children and families benefited from this support.
- A programme to support the development of early language and the foundations of literacy ('Up Up and Away') was developed in partnership with Queen Margaret University and is being disseminated to practitioners in all early years services and settings.
- After organising successful conferences, the Froebel Network in Edinburgh, established by five nursery heads, worked in partnership with Edinburgh University to set up a CPD course. Practitioners from a wide range of primary and nursery settings, from Edinburgh and beyond, attended. The course offers a pathway into BA Childhood Practice.

2. Successful Learners, Confident Individuals

Achievements

Educational Attainment

- Overall attainment across primary schools has improved over the period 2007/08 to 2009/10. The last round of 5-14 evaluations took place in June 2010 with new indicators currently being defined to reflect the implementation of *Curriculum for Excellence*. Primary school performance, as measured by an evaluation of whether or not the children leaving have reached the levels they should have by the end of P7, was as follows:
 - Attainment in reading improved from 78.4% to 82.0%
 - Attainment in writing improved from 64.3% to 69.0%
 - Attainment in mathematics improved from 74.0% to 75.0%
- Attainment in early secondary has also improved over the same period. Attainment, as measured by an evaluation of whether or not the young people have reached the levels they should have by the end of S2, was as follows:
 - Attainment in reading improved from 67.6% to 73.8%
 - Attainment in writing improved from 56.4% to 58.7%
 - Attainment in mathematics improved from 60.8% to 65.4%
- Attainment of pupils in secondary schools in SQA examinations has shown significant improvement. The latest set of information (2011 examination diet) showed an improvement in attainment at Standard Grade and Intermediate levels with all indicators in line with comparator authorities and the national average. Performance in Higher and Advanced Higher remains above comparator and national averages. All seven of the national priority indicators show year-on-year improvement since 2008. The percentage of the relevant S4 cohort achieving:
 - English and Maths at SCQF Level 3 or above improved from 91.3% to 92.9%
 - Five or more at SCQF Level 3 or above improved from 89.0% to 90.7%
 - Five or more at SCQF Level 4 or above improved from 76.6% to 79.5%
 - Five or more at SCQF Level 5 or above improved from 48.2% to 52.8%

Achievements

- One or more at SCQF Level 6 or above improved from 44.5% to 50.3%
- Three or more at SCQF Level 6 or above improved from 32.1% to 37.2%
- Five or more at SCQF Level 6 or above improved from 21.8% to 25.7%

Quality of school provision

- Over the period April 2008 to March 2010 (the only period over which national data is available) Education Scotland (formerly HMIE) inspections showed 91% of primary schools and 88% of secondary schools in Edinburgh received positive evaluations compared with 90% and 87% nationally.
- During 2010/11, of the ten primary schools inspected, nine received positive evaluations in all five quality indicators. One school received *very good* evaluations in all five indicators. One school received *very good* evaluations in four indicators and an *excellent* in one.
- During 2010/11, of the three secondary schools inspected, two received positive evaluations in all five quality indicators.

Attendance and exclusions

- Attendance at secondary schools has improved from 90.7% in 2007/08 to 91.0% in 2010/11 with the latest figure in line with the national average of 91.1%.
- Overall exclusions from schools (measured per 1,000 pupils) has improved between 2007/08 and 2010/11 with the latest figure for secondary comparing well with the national average:
 - From primary schools from 14 to 13 (11 nationally)
 - From secondary schools from 67 to 55 (72 nationally)
- Significant reductions in the number of children being permanently excluded from primary and secondary schools have been sustained. In secondary the figure reduced from 37 in 2007/08 to 15 in 2010/11. In primary the figure reduced from 13 in 2007/08 to 5 in 2010/11.

Achievements

Wider achievements

- The Instrumental Music Service offers pupils free small group music lessons in 100% of schools in the city from P5 through to S6. Currently around 5,000 pupils receive tuition and in 2011, 128 Higher pupils and 53 Advanced Higher pupils were supported by the service with excellent results:
 - 52% achieved Higher at grade A
 - 77% achieved Advanced Higher at grade A
- Edinburgh is one of only seven authorities offering a free music service.
- The annual Fanfare Concert on November 18th 2011 was a huge success and feedback has suggested this year's concert was one of the best ever. Around 150 pupils performed at St Paul's and St. George's Church to an audience of nearly 500, made up of families and friends and City of Edinburgh Council staff.
- The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme allows young people aged between 14 and 25 to participate in a programme of non-academic activities which lead to awards. The numbers of awards achieved during 2009/10 rose sharply from 2008/09 and trebling the figures from 2007/08. The recorded numbers of awards fell in 2010/11 due to problems with the new UK-wide online recording system, although Edinburgh had the 2nd highest ranking of Full Awards gained among Scottish Local Authorities. Participation was high in Edinburgh at 1,824 young people due to efforts to promote the scheme, especially with schools and its close fit with Curriculum for Excellence. For the last three years, City of Edinburgh Council has been the biggest DofE Operating Authority, ranking 1st for New Entrants to the programme. Last year there were nearly 200 more young people starting DofE in Edinburgh than the next biggest authority.
- Almost 1,000 young people took part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Junior Award Scheme Scotland pilot. Now that it is available across the city, over 3,000 young people are currently taking part.
- The Outdoor Learning Strategy was approved by the Education, Children and Families Committee in June 2011. It aims to improve the understanding, quality and availability of outdoor learning from early years to secondary, and support its integration into the curriculum. Since August 2010, 114 teachers have attended eight CPD courses. 66 outdoor learning champions have been identified in 59 schools. Nurseries and Community Learning and Development are also identifying champions. From May 2009 to present, 75 different Edinburgh schools (133 bookings) have held residentials at Benmore and Lagganlia.

Achievements

- Eco-Schools is an international award programme to involve schools in positive action relating to sustainability issues. There has been a consistent improvement in participation and progression in the programme across the city. 96% of schools have registered for and participate in the scheme with 76% of those achieving their Bronze Eco Award and 72% their Silver Eco Award. The top level Eco-Schools award is the Green Flag award which recognises the hard work schools are doing to keep improving their environment and in making the wider community aware of environmental issues. 54 schools now have Green Flag Status with 32 achieving their first Green Flag, 9 their second, 9 their third and 4 achieving their fourth.
- Edinburgh International City of Learning has been established, bringing together further and higher education establishments in the city with Children and Families to strengthen international links and promote global citizenship.
- The Rights Respecting Schools Award (RRSA) recognises achievement in putting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) at the heart of a school's planning, policies, practice and ethos. Currently 21 nursery and primary schools are registered with the programme. Dean Park have just completed level 2 accreditation and Juniper Green and Preston Street will present for level 1 accreditation in 2011/12.
- The Edinburgh-Africa Educational Trust has been established to promote and support mutual learning partnerships between Edinburgh schools and schools on the African continent. A third of Edinburgh schools already have such partnerships.
- Get Set, the official London 2012 Education Programme aims to enhance young people's learning right across the curriculum – through sport, culture and education. Currently 63% of schools are registered with the programme. 50 Edinburgh primary schools are taking part in Edinburgh Gets Set for the Games, an interdisciplinary project linked to the Olympic Games which sees international students pair up with schools to study values, language, culture and sport in the lead up to the Games.
- 90 athletes are now in City of Edinburgh Schools Sports Academy programme with 80% achieving selection at regional or national level.
- 7,000 young people each week take part in youth and children's clubs held in community venues across the city. An increasing number of young people achieve awards such as the Dynamic Youth, Youth Achievement, and John Muir Awards as a result of their involvement.
- Over 17,000 young people and their families took part in a wide range of activities during the summer holidays. This is an increase of 31% on last year's figures.

3. Life Chances for Vulnerable Children and Young People

Achievements

Child Protection

- Child Protection services have improved significantly as reflected in the HMIE report of September 2009 which found that significant improvements had been made to protect children and that arrangements in Edinburgh were now judged to be satisfactory or better. Inspectors were confident that the authority would make any necessary further improvements.
- There have been significant improvements in performance across child protection services since 2007/08:
 - Reports to the Scottish Children's Reporter submitted on time improved from 39.5% to 65% with the latest figure comparing favourably with the national figure of 51%
 - The percentage of initial case conferences taking place within timescale improved from 10.5% to 79%
 - The percentage of supervision visits taking place within timescale improved from 59.7% to 85%
 - The percentage of children on the Child Protection Register for more than two years improved from 6% to 1%
- A shared electronic system is now in place for recording decisions for all children subject to Child Protection Inter-Agency Discussion, ensuring that decisions are jointly recorded and signed off by senior officers in social work, police and health.

Looked After Children

- Improving outcomes for looked after children is a Council priority and there has been significant improvement in this area:
 - All Looked After Children now have an allocated social worker and a regular review of needs
 - The number of children leaving accommodation through adoption has increased from 23 in 2008 to 46 in 2011
 - Care Inspectorate (formerly Care Commission) reports on inspections of Young Peoples Centres, Residential, Secure and Fostering and Adoption services showed 86% of services in 2010/11 receiving an average grading of Good or better, up from 50% in 2009/10. 100% received an average grading of Adequate or better.

Achievements

- All schools now receive reliable information and looked after children and procedures are in place to assess their additional support needs and progress is monitored with psychological services on a regular basis.
- The Scottish Government publication 'Educational Outcomes of Looked After Children' showed Edinburgh comparing favourably with the national picture in 2009/10:
 - The school attendance rate was 88.6% compared with 87.8% nationally
 - The exclusion rate was 303 per 1,000 looked after children compared with 365 nationally
 - The average tariff score for looked after children who left school during 2009/10 was 78 compared with 67 nationally
 - The percentage of looked after children entering a positive destination was 65% compared with 59% nationally
- A research intervention to improve literacy levels amongst primary aged Looked After Children has achieved significant improvements in outcomes. A programme is underway to introduce this approach within targeted schools.
- The City of Edinburgh Council is ahead of most other Scottish local authorities in that we now pay kinship carers at rates equivalent to foster allowances, and these have been in place since April 2010. The same rates also apply to carers who have gained parental responsibilities for children who were formerly Looked After. The Department took a decision to continue payments in such cases in order not to deter carers from applying for such responsibilities, which increase longer term security for these children.

GIRFEC Project in Edinburgh – Getting it right for every child in Edinburgh

- The City of Edinburgh has, over the past year, made considerable progress in the implementation of *Getting it right for every child* (GIRFEC). The aim is to improve support for vulnerable children through the development of a single multi-agency assessment and single multi-agency plan. Simplified systems and procedures were introduced in February of this year to support the work of practitioners.
- In 2011 over 1,000 practitioners were trained, largely in their own settings, to reflect on where they can be more effective in their own settings to bring about early and effective intervention for children and young people and some good news stories are being gathered to illustrate the process in practice. At a locality level, the delivery of early intervention is now focused on school clusters and much has been done to strengthen partnership working and service delivery around the schools with multi-agency Management Groups established to overcome obstacles to service delivery and to work collaboratively on improving negative outcomes for children, young people and families.

Achievements

Services for Children with Disabilities

- The Disabilities Team is now fully staffed, including a specialist post for autism, and an additional social work assistant, resulting in an improvement in the waiting times for assessments.
- Joint planning with mental health and voluntary services is now in place to provide support to families with children with complex challenging behaviours.
- The Occupational Therapy Team has established safety clinics with a view to reducing their waiting list, and earlier therapeutic support given the Child and Family Centres, to give children the best start in life.
- An Edinburgh Equipment Store has been established to allow for easier access to equipment and for this to be recycled and reused.
- A Day Services Panel has been established as a multi-agency admission panel, to reduce duplication of services and waiting lists.

4. Physically and Emotionally Healthy

Achievements

Growing Confidence

- A Growing Confidence project was introduced to promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in primary schools with the number of schools participating increasing from 28 to 65.
- 694 multi-agency staff have taken part in Confident Staff, Confident Children (CSCC) training with course evaluation showing over 90% reporting a large or significant increase in their awareness of the different factors affecting emotional and mental health, their understanding of how they can support their own emotional wellbeing and how they could better support the development of children's emotional wellbeing.
- Over 300 parents and carers have undertaken training around promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. The results from the online wellbeing questionnaires showed improved results in all of the key areas for improvement highlighted within the plan.
- Nearly 10,000 P3-P7 pupils completed the pupil wellbeing questionnaire with results showing:
 - 88% (an increase of 2% on the previous year) stated that they ask for help when they need it
 - 82% (an increase of 1% on the previous year) stated that they feel they have lots to be proud of

Risk Taking Behaviours (sexual health, drugs, alcohol and tobacco)

- Over the past two years the Department has commissioned Fast Forward and Caledonia Youth to deliver the Integrated Positive Choices project to educate children about the links between substance misuse and sexual risk-taking behaviour and equip them with the skills and knowledge to make informed and responsible choices.
- The project has delivered 228 educational interventions in the two pilot schools and 91 individual one-to-one support sessions for pupils, with 73% of pupils reported an increase in knowledge and local services seeing an increase in young people accessing them for support.

Achievements

- Each year a school-based seminar is delivered to around 1,600 S5 pupils across the city. The seminar now builds on a long-standing body of sexual health work on which the department leads and now incorporates elements of risk associated with alcohol and drug misuse. Evaluation of the seminar shows:
 - 86% stating the seminar helped them to understand more about sexual risk
 - 94% stating they would recommend the seminar to pupils in other schools

Physical Activity

- Taking part in physical activity and sport is known to improve people's physical and emotional health and wellbeing. Edinburgh is committed to achieving the Scottish Government target of providing 2 hours of quality curriculum PE in schools. Significant improvement towards this target has been achieved in Edinburgh's schools with performance improving, from 2009 to 2011, in primary schools from 21% to 62% and in secondaries from 13% to 43%.
- A PE pack for nurseries, based on Early Moves, has been produced with Edinburgh University and will be launched at the Early Years conference in March 2012, distributed to all early years establishments in the city and backed up with a training programme.
- Learning to swim is an essential lifeskill and an important form of physical activity. All primary children in Edinburgh receive swimming lessons as part of core PE, delivered by swimming specialists. The aspiration is to ensure all children leave primary education able to swim, with as many as possible achieving level C5 ensuring they are competent and confident in the water. The percentage of P7 school children achieving Level C5 competency has risen from 55% in 2009/10 to 61% in 2010/11.
- Edinburgh's Top Up Swimming programme is designed to provide extra support to non- and weak-swimmers during primary curriculum swimming by lowering the teacher:pupil ratio. This programme was voted the best in Scotland by Scottish Swimming and held up as a model of excellent practice. The award is recognition of the quality of the organisation, teaching and partnership working.
- Active Schools provides the opportunity for children and young people to participate in physical activity before, during and after the school day. Active Schools operates in 23 secondary schools, 87 primary schools and 9 special schools in Edinburgh. Schools are linked to over 100 clubs per term providing children and young people with a pathway and opportunity to continue their chosen activity. 22 secondary schools ran Fit for Girls programmes which focused on engaging disengaged girls in physical activity and PE. 12,600 children and young people participated in 35 distinct activities, supported by 600 volunteers. Of 7,600 primary pupils 52% were girls, and 49% of secondary pupils were girls.

5. Safe from Harm and Fear of Harm

Achievements

Youth Offending

- With the introduction of our Early and effective Intervention model currently called Pre-Referral Screening, we have reduced the number of young people who need to be referred to the Reporter on offence grounds from 732 in 2007/08 to 355 in 2010/11. This has been achieved by identifying children who offend at a weekly inter-agency meeting and providing support and interventions from a variety of resources including the police, antisocial behaviour, education and social work.
- The rate of 10 children per 1,000 reported for offending is lower than most other Scottish authorities, including the four largest cities.
- The provision of restorative justice approaches was reviewed by the Youth Justice Strategy Group. A central strategy has been implemented which incorporates Police restorative warnings, Youth Offending Service restorative justice work, and the use of restorative approaches in schools. Over the past year, City of Edinburgh Youth Offending Service and the police have offered Restorative Justice approaches to a wide range of young people who offend.

Anti-bullying

- A new Policy, Procedures and Toolkit aimed at Preventing and Responding to Bullying and Prejudice amongst Children and Young People was disseminated in October 2010 and officially launched at the first Anti-Bullying Conference in March 2011.
- The percentage of pupils who say their school is good at dealing with bullying has improved.
- Learners supported by the Hospital and Outreach Teaching Service won first prize at the Edinburgh International Film Festival for their film exploring the issue of bullying.

6. Poverty and Inequality

Achievements

School Leaver Destinations

- School Leaver Destinations has been a recent key improvement area with a number of improvement activities having been put into place including The Edinburgh Guarantee – a Council led initiative to increase post school opportunities to ensure that every school leaver can secure a positive destination.
- The latest statistics for 2010/11 show the percentage of school leavers entering positive destinations improving from 82% in 2007/08 to 87.4% in 2010/11, reaching the highest level since 1997/98. This improvement was one of the best in the country with Edinburgh closing the gap on the national average. The gap is now 1.5 percentage points compared with 4.3 last year.

Adult Education

- More than 11,000 adult learners take part in our Adult Education Programme. Within the Programme we delivered 180 Higher and SQA classes designed to improve learners skills and abilities. Enrolments to courses achieving an award increased by 60 this year.
- 1,837 adults took part in programmes to improve their literacy. All literacy learners work towards agreed learning goals and 79% of our students achieved all or part of their agreed learning goals in 2010/11.
- More than 1,000 (of which 745 were new learners) non-English speaking people received English language tuition in 2010/11, an increase of nearly 15% on the previous year.
- Evaluation of the Adult Education Programme showed 96.4% of students rated their overall satisfaction as good or excellent.

7. Making Best Use of Resources

Achievements

Finance and Infrastructure

- The department has achieved a level of financial stability with £37m of savings being realised since 2007 whilst protecting front line services. The department has successfully addressed the significant budget challenges and the budget was balanced in 2010 and returned a small underspend in 2010/11. Despite these budget challenges, outcomes for children and their families in the city have continued to improve.
- There has been significant investment in the school estate over the last decade resulting in:
 - A third of the overall school pupil population in new or refurbished schools
 - 98% of primary, 87% of secondary and 100% of special schools' condition judged to be satisfactory or better. This compares favourably with the national averages of 81%, 84% and 66%.
 - 79% of primary, 78% of secondary and 64% of special schools are judged to have a suitability rating of satisfactory or better
- Investment continues with:
 - £29m in energy and building improvements in schools to 2015 as part of the Capital Investment Programme
 - £83m committed as part of the Wave 3 project to replace Portobello, James Gillespie's and Boroughmuir High schools
 - On completion of the Wave 3 project, the proportion of the secondary school population in new or refurbished accommodation will rise to 75%
- The planning application to replace Seaview Centre with a new centre in Bingham has been approved. The centre provides much needed residential care for children with disabilities and gaining planning permission is a major milestone in the project. The new centre will provide 21st century care and residential facilities and there are already strong links into the local community.

Achievements

- During 2011 extensive consultation was undertaken with the Learning and Teaching community as a result of which the Department identified the need for a step change in the way ICT is embedded in our Learning and Teaching establishments. As a result, a range of improvements were identified which will see pupils, students and teachers in Council run schools and the majority of community education establishments benefiting from access to WIFI along with significantly improved internet speeds in schools, increased capacity for email and other electronic storage, remote access to files and better management of software. The major refresh will also replace 9,000 now ageing computers with new and improved equipment. The completely revamped IT infrastructure will allow for the development and growth of IT and provide the flexibility needed to meet the needs of learners and teachers now, and in the future. In December 2011, Council approved an investment of £5.3 million for this innovative and exiting project which will be delivered during the forthcoming year.
- The new Royston/Wardieburn Community Centre was formally opened marking the completion of the ambitious £3.75m project. The new centre boasts a sports hall, computer suite, café, arts and crafts room, games room, training room, shower facilities and five meeting rooms.
- A wide-ranging consultation on the Children and Families Commissioning Plan was successfully concluded with the approval of the updated plan by the Policy and Strategy Committee in October 2011.

Staff

- Following the significant achievement of being awarded liP for the whole department, including schools, in April 2009, each department of the Council went through an internal review for Investors in People between November 2010 and January 2011. Of the 10 indicators in the standard, this part of the review covered 5, containing 91 evidence requirements. The results were impressive with the Council achieving 87 and Children and Families achieving 88 of these 91 evidence requirements.
- The Department is committed to reducing sickness absence amongst staff. Robust monitoring, support for managers in adhering to policies and challenging but achievable target-setting at Service level have led to this statistic reducing from 4.62% in 2008/09 to 3.79% in 2010/11. Sickness absence among teaching staff has also improved with the average number of days lost per staff member reducing from 7.8 in 2008/09 to 6.3 in 2010/11 with the latest figure comparing favourably with the national figure of 6.6.
- Edinburgh Schools are attracting a good number of quality candidates for Head Teacher positions. The recruitment process is working well and there is a high degree of satisfaction with the quality of candidates appointed. The Department remains committed to providing a comprehensive programme of support to encourage and develop leadership for aspiring, new and experienced Head Teachers. This is a priority and we will continue to develop this work to ensure that it attracts and retains high quality leaders in its schools.
- As part of the Community Learning and Development upskilling programme, the CLD service worked with Napier University and Telford College to develop a work-based Degree Qualification in Youth Work. 27 students from the Council and its partners are now enrolled in this exciting opportunity which opens up a pathway to professional qualification for a group of people who would find Higher Education difficult to access from a more traditional route.

Achievements

- A ceremony was held at The Hub on 23 November 2011 to announce the winners of the 12th annual Children and Families Achievement Awards. These awards celebrate and recognise the hard work carried out by Children and Families and are a highlight in the department's annual calendar. An audience of more than 350 invited guests enjoyed an entertainment packed night, hosted by Councillor Marilyn MacLaren and Forth One radio presenter Boogie.

Engagement

- 10,228 young people voted in the Scottish Youth Parliament elections in March 2011. This represented a 104% increase in turnout from the last elections in 2009. 31 candidates stood for election which was a 44% increase on the previous election. The campaign won the award for 'best use of social media by a public sector organisation' at the UK-wide 'Some Comms Awards' in October 2011. It also won the Grand Prix award, singling it out as the 'best of the best' of all the entries. The elected Members of the Scottish Youth Parliament are now being supported to make an impact at both local and Scotland-wide levels.
- The Edinburgh Youth Issues Forum involves young people and decision makers, including councillors and representatives from partner agencies such as the NHS and the voluntary sector. The Forum alternates between a committee format and a themed young people's event, so that young people can have a real impact on decisions that affect their lives. This year themed events have taken place on *Job Opportunities and Employability* and *Health*.
- Young people from the neighbourhood based youth forums have been heavily involved in the development of the Edinburgh Youth Issues Forum and several of the Neighbourhood Partnerships have held themed youth events to increase young people's involvement in local decision making.
- The Parental Engagement Development Group (PEDG) has engaged parents, head teachers, CLD staff, early years staff and others in 'roadshow' discussions across Edinburgh on parental engagement. The group's final workshop took place in November at Wester Hailes Education Centre, where about 80 parents, heads and other staff discussed a range of issues. The feedback from the roadshows will inform the development of a new parental engagement strategy.

Self-evaluation

- More pupils, more parents/carers and more schools have taken part in school self-evaluation surveys. Almost 2,500 parents/carers completed the surveys this year, an increase of 15%. The surveys showed strong satisfaction levels with schools – with up to 95% of parents/carers agreeing that 'my child enjoys learning at school'. Almost 3,400 pupils completed the 'About your school – views of pupils' survey and over 9,000 primary school pupils completed the Growing Confidence Pupil Well-being Questionnaire.

Achievements

- The Self-evaluation Strategic Group, set up in February 2011, are leading on the production of a robust, outcome focussed self-evaluation of the educational functions and central services of Children and Families in order to establish a clear and accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement of the services. There is increasing evidence of the embedding of self-evaluation across the services.