

Office of the Children's Commissioner

Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2010-2011



Championing Children and Young People in England

Office of the Children's Commissioner

Annual Report and Financial Statements for 2010-2011

Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 8 (3) (B) of the Children Act 2004.

Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed on 7 July 2011.

HC 1101 – London: The Stationery Office – £10.25

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ISBN: 9780102971767

Printed in the UK for The Stationery Office Limited on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

ID P002428685

07/11

Printed on paper containing 75% recycled fibre content minimum.

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Foreword

Lysette

Chair of Amplify, our children and young people advisory group

Hello, welcome to the Children's Commissioner's annual report for 2010-11.

My name is Lysette, I am 16 years old, and I am the chairperson of "Amplify", the Children's Commissioner's advisory group. I got involved in the group in September when I applied after seeing a leaflet about it at school. We had a selection day and an introductory weekend in which I was elected as chair by the other members of the team. It seemed like a fantastic opportunity to represent young people and I am thoroughly enjoying it.

The Children's Commissioner has the very important job of ensuring that young people throughout England get their views heard by adults in charge. Amplify has people from a range of ages and backgrounds and we use this to help the Children's Commissioner do her job by explaining young people's views and advising her on her decisions. As chairperson, my role is to ensure that everyone in the group gets their say and is heard by Maggie and her team.

The group have spent a lot of time getting to know each other and speak virtually as well as having our meetings three times a year. So far, we have done a large project for the Department for Education (DfE) in which we carried out a survey on the commercialisation of childhood. Over 500 young people throughout England took part. We have helped to shape the business plan for next year by hearing about the upcoming projects for 2011-12, sharing our thoughts and suggesting how young people could get involved.

We have several plans for next year, including: promoting the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC); Takeover Day, where young people get the opportunity to take over the roles of adults; and beginning to change the way young people are viewed by society.

I would like to thank the Office of the Children's Commissioner on behalf of everyone in Amplify for the opportunities they have given us. I hope you enjoy reading the report.



Lysette
Chair of Amplify

Dr Maggie Atkinson

Children's Commissioner for England

I am pleased to introduce my annual report for 2010-11, illustrating how we have used our resources to represent the views and experiences of England's 11.8 million children, and to uphold their rights under the UNCRC.

My first full year as Children's Commissioner has been busy and eventful. My team and I have met and listened to thousands of children of all ages in different settings across the country. From isolated rural communities to inner-city neighbourhoods, in schools, young offender institutions, youth clubs, immigration detention centres, children's homes and support projects of all kinds we have heard children's worries and aspirations and their views on the systems, services and issues which shape their lives. In every case they have had valuable, insightful things to say. The experience has been both instructive and memorable, and has informed our work.

We continue to work closely with partners within the sector, parliamentarians and Government officials to ensure the voices and best interests of children and young people are taken into account in decisions which affect their lives. This year we have published 27 reports and consultation responses making recommendations on key policies relating to our strategic themes.

2010 saw the election of the new coalition Government, and, in the context of its efficiency reforms, an independent review of our office. The Dunford Review reported in December, setting out a model for a new office of the Children's Commissioner for England with greater independence, stronger powers and an enhanced focus on the UNCRC. We welcomed the review and are working towards the new OCCE alongside the DfE and the Children's Rights Director. New legislation will take time, but these discussions will contribute to its development.

Our business plan for 2011-12 presents an ambitious and important programme of work. As well as launching two major inquiries – one investigating group-related sexual exploitation of children and young people, and one looking at public sector equality duties in school exclusions – we will continue to work on behalf of all children in England, and in particular the most vulnerable – those who are trafficked, those within the immigration system and those who have suffered neglect, abuse and harm.

Led by the rights enshrined in the UNCRC, we enter the financial year 2011-12 with renewed energy and vigour, and an abiding commitment to the rights of England's children and young people.



Dr Maggie Atkinson
Children's Commissioner for England
16 June 2011

The Children's Commissioner for England

Who we are

The Office of the Children's Commissioner is a national organisation led by the Children's Commissioner for England, Dr Maggie Atkinson. The post of Children's Commissioner for England was established by the Children Act 2004. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) underpins and frames all our work.

What we do

The Children's Commissioner has a statutory duty to promote the views and interests of all children in England, in particular those whose voices are least likely to be heard, to the people who make decisions about their lives.

She also has a duty to speak on behalf of all children in the UK on non-devolved issues which include immigration, for the whole of the UK, and youth justice, for England and Wales. One of the Children's Commissioner's key functions is encouraging organisations that provide services for children always to operate from the child's perspective.

Under the Children Act 2004 the Children's Commissioner is required both to publish what she finds from talking and listening to children and young people, and to draw national policy makers' and agencies' attention to the particular circumstances of a child or small group of children which should inform both policy and practice.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner has a statutory duty to highlight where we believe vulnerable children are not being treated appropriately in accordance with duties established under international and domestic legislation.

How we work

As a small organisation we must carefully prioritise our work in order to have maximum impact for the 11.8 million children and young people in England whose voices we represent.

Our project work during 2010-11 had three overarching objectives:

- To safeguard the interests of children and young people by enabling them to enjoy their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC).

- To safeguard the interests and significantly improve the wellbeing of children and young people by effectively promoting their views.
- To ensure that children and young people are more highly valued by adult society.

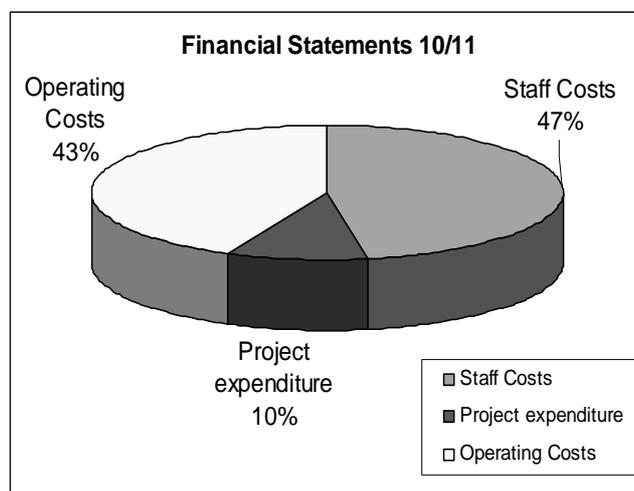
This led us to focus on six central project themes: education, safeguarding, health, youth justice, positive contribution and asylum, linked by four cross-cutting issues indicated in the Children Act 2004: the UNCRC, complaints mechanisms and Every Child Matters, as well as families.

Article 12 of the UNCRC – ensuring that children's views are listened to and taken seriously on matters which affect them – is central to our work. We partner with a wide range of organisations to reach as many children as possible from different backgrounds across the country.

In accordance with our remit as set out in the Children Act 2004, much of our work focuses in particular on vulnerable and marginalised groups, *"who do not have other adequate means by which they can make their views known"*.

How we spend our budget

We have had a standstill budget of £3m since the establishment of a Children's Commissioner in 2005, resulting in a real terms decrease in our resource of 8.5%. In 2010-11 our budget was further reduced by 5% to £2.85 million, in the context of the challenging economic situation facing the country. This equates to 24 pence per child for England's 11.8 million 0-19 year olds.



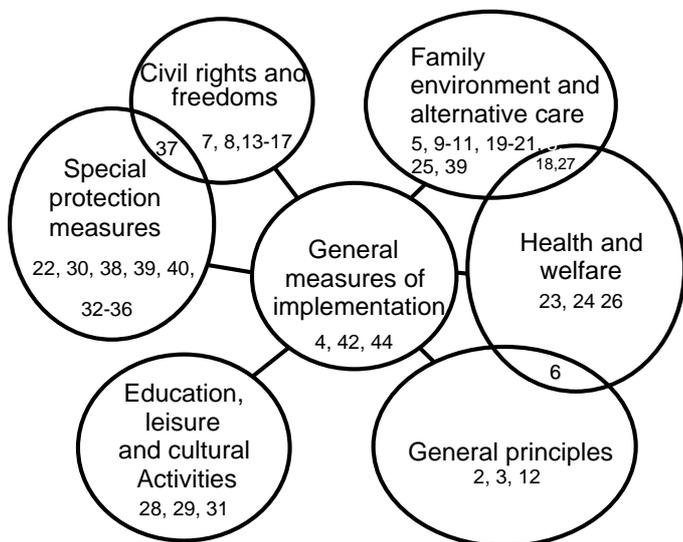
Promoting and protecting children's rights

The Dunford Review

In July 2010 the coalition Government commissioned Dr John Dunford to undertake an independent review of the Office of the Children's Commissioner. We welcomed the review and believe that its recommendations, which were accepted in principle by the Secretary of State in early December 2010, provide a strong, clear model for our organisation to follow over the coming years.

Full implementation of a new Office of the Children's Commissioner for England requires legislative changes which will take some years to realise. In the meantime, since the end of 2010 we have been working with this future remit in mind, in the spirit of the proposals set out in Dr Dunford's report.

The most significant of these is that the function of the Children's Commissioner and her office should be *"to promote and protect the rights of children as set out in the UNCRC."* This is reflected in the structure of this annual report, which is shaped around the 'clusters' of UNCRC articles defined by the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, and used by signatory nations to report on progress to the UN every five years.



These clusters incorporate our six project themes as laid out at the beginning of the 2010-11 financial year, whose objectives we have continued to fulfil: education, safeguarding health, youth justice, asylum and positive contribution, and the overarching strands of the UNCRC, complaints, families and Every Child Matters.

Looking to the future: 2011-12 Business Plan

Our business plan for 2011-12 reflects this, touching on all articles of the UNCRC, but in particular Articles 3 – best interests of the child and 12 – respect for the views of the child.

Inquiries

Under the Children Act 2004 the Children's Commissioner has the power to carry out formal inquiries. In 2011-12 we will launch two inquiries looking at:

- group-related sexual exploitation/abuse of children and young people
- public sector equality duties in school exclusions.

These will be funded from our budget. We aim to gather knowledge and understanding from those already working in these areas, and prompt new research and strategies where need is identified.

Working with others

We will strengthen and develop relationships with partners, in particular the Children's Rights Director, to maximise our reach and impact. We will continue to work with our advisory group of children and young people, Amplify, and establish an Interim Board to provide scrutiny, challenge and advice.

Project work

Our ambitious programme of work includes:

- UK Children's Commissioners' joint report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (Nov '11)
- Children's rights impact assessments on key policies
- Examining complaints mechanisms for children in care and secure settings
- Looking at children's access to protection and better care of those not receiving support.
- Promoting children's rights to GPs, and assessing the impact on children of proposed health reforms.
- Exploring the impact of spending restrictions on children's standard of living.
- Promoting children's participation in schools, in particular in relation to teaching standards.
- Visiting secure youth justice settings and promoting the mental health needs of young offenders.
- Monitoring the end of child detention, investigating returns to other countries of asylum-seeking children, and improving age assessment.

Our 2011-12 Business Plan can be read in full at: www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Implementing the UNCRC

Overview

Key UNCRC articles for this work area:

- **Article 4:** Protection of rights (implementation of rights in the Convention)
- **Article 42:** Knowledge of rights (making the Convention widely known)
- **Article 44:** Reporting obligations of the State Parties.

The Children Act 2004 which created the role of Children's Commissioner states that the Commissioner should "*have regard*" to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. The UNCRC has always underpinned our work, and since the Dunford Review reported in December we have made promoting and protecting children's rights our primary focus, in line with the review's recommendations.

The 'general measures of implementation' cluster of UNCRC articles relates to raising awareness and understanding of children's rights, ensuring that the UNCRC is realised for children in England, and reporting on the country's progress to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Throughout all our work our priorities are:

- to promote and protect the rights of all children across England;
- to identify and support children and young people from minority, marginalised and the most vulnerable groups to access and achieve their rights;
- to ensure the engagement and involvement of children and young people in influencing the decisions that affect their lives and *achieving* their rights.

Work delivered

- Children's Commissioner's speech to the RSA: Rights can't be wrong: reflections on the 21st birthday of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (November 2010).
- Speeches to influential adult decision-makers' audiences around the country about the implications of the UNCRC in their contexts, reflecting challenges to them from the Commissioner's perspective in her statutory role.
- Engagement with Unicef, CRAE and other children's rights bodies to ensure the issues raised by the UK being a signatory of the UNCRC maintain a high profile
- Group engagement with audiences of children and young people around the country, raising awareness of both their rights under the UNCRC, and the Commissioner's role in protecting those rights.

Key achievements/Impact

- Raising awareness of the UNCRC among children's sector professionals, parliamentarians and policy makers via 65 public speeches during 2010-11. The Children's Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and leadership staff addressed audiences around the country on issues relating to our work, discussing children's rights and welfare in the context of the UK's commitments under the Convention.
- Developing knowledge and sharing good practice in the promotion and protection of children's rights through membership of both the British and Irish Network of Ombudsmen and Children's Commissioners (BINOCC) and the European Network of Ombudsmen and Children's Commissioners. This has included contributing to the delivery of a BINOCC conference focussed on establishing a rights-based youth justice system.
- Leading on collation of evidence for and production of the UK Children's Commissioners' mid-term report to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (due in November 2011).

Performance review

General principles and civil rights and freedoms

Overview

Key UNCRC articles for this work area:

- **Article 2:** Non-discrimination
- **Article 3:** Best interests of the child
- **Article 6:** Child's right to life, maximum survival and development
- **Article 12:** Respect for the views of the child
- **Article 17:** Access to information to mass media (and protection from harmful materials).

This area concerns the basic rights of children and young people to be protected from discrimination, abuse and harm, to have their best interests preserved, and have the opportunity to grow and flourish. The principle of non-discrimination described under Article 2 also states that all rights under the UNCRC are universal, inviolable and inalienable.

Article 12 – children's right to have their views sought and listened to – has always been central to our work. As well as promoting this through our activities, we actively engage children wherever possible. Our work is shaped and informed by discussions with both individual children and groups with experience of the issues we are investigating.

Work delivered

- *The views of children and young people regarding media access to family courts* – research commissioned from Oxford University.
- Participation pilot project with local authorities in southeast England, concluding in a conference at which the Commissioner spoke.
- Recruitment of a new children and young people's advisory group, Amplify, to inform and help to guide our work.
- Takeover Day 2010, a national event led by the Children's Commissioner.
- *Children's participation in decision-making* – four research reports with Participation Works.
- Response to the Ministry of Justice consultation: *Proposals for the reform of legal aid in England and Wales*.
- *Children, young people and the commercial world* – report by the Children's Commissioner and Amplify.

- Response to the 'Equality Act 2010: The public sector Equality Duty: Promoting equality through transparency'
- *Parliamentary Briefing on the Equality Act 2010* – for policy makers and parliamentarians.
- *Equality and diversity - knowing your rights* – a leaflet for children and young people
- Commissioner's visit to the East Midlands: a report of children and young people's views.

Key achievements/Impact

- Playing an important part in achieving a review of Government plans to open family courts to the media. Research conducted for us by Oxford University with children who had experienced family court proceedings clearly showed media access would not be in their best interests.
- Leading a southeast pilot project to establish a network for sharing good practice in children and young people's participation, and to explore the use of new media to reach out to marginalised groups. Findings will be disseminated to participation workers across the country.
- Influencing the Ministry of Justice consultation on legal aid by highlighting the negative implications of proposed legislation for children's access to justice and ability to make their views heard in education, immigration and family court proceedings.
- Briefing parliamentarians on the implications of the Equality Act 2010 for children, and contributing to strengthened provisions relating to age and children and young people in particular.
- Raising the positive profile of children and young people by involving over 40,000 children and hundreds of organisations across the country in work experience, consultation and decision-making activities as part of Takeover Day 2010.
- Influencing improvements to complaints procedures for children in detention, both at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre and at institutions within the secure estate.
- Having our advisory group, Amplify, called on by the Government to contribute to its review of the commercialisation of childhood by developing, promoting and reporting back on a survey of children's views.
- Calling for the inclusion of a ClickCEOP button on Facebook to better protect children online.
- Reporting on the progress made in establishing a culture of involvement across different areas of children's lives, via research we funded by Participation Works.

Performance review

Family environment and alternative care

Overview

Key UNCRC articles for this work area:

- Article 19:** Protection from all forms of violence
- Article 25:** Review of treatment in care
- Article 39:** Rehabilitation of child victims
- Article 9:** Right to family life (separation from parents)
- Article 20:** Right to be properly cared for (children deprived of their family environment)

Our work aims to promote and protect children and young people's right to grow up in a safe, secure and positive environment, whether in their own family or in care. As well as undertaking some broader work on family life, we focussed in particular on those children who have experience of the children protection system, those who have been abused, and those who are or have been in care.

Work delivered

- *Family perspectives on safeguarding and on relationships with children's services* – a research report in partnership with In-Trac.
- *The Home Front* – a major piece of research into family life conducted by Demos and funded by the Office of the Children's Commissioner.
- *'Don't make assumptions': Children's and young people's views of the child protection system and messages for change* – a research report in partnership with the University of East Anglia, including a summary version for children and young people.
- Submissions to the Munro Review of Child Protection based on consultations with children and young people.
- Submission to the consultation on the inspection of children's homes

- Submission to the review of the vetting and barring scheme and criminal records regime
- Submission to the College of Social Work Consultation.
- Submission to the Family Justice Review and Munro Review of Child Protection on the participation and representation of children in judicial and administrative proceedings.
- Evidence to the Family Justice Review and to the Justice Committee on the operation of the family courts.

Key achievements/Impact

- Producing a major study on parenting and family life, commissioned from Demos and launched by the Deputy Prime Minister. Speaking directly to the Deputy Prime Minister about support for parents based on the findings of the report. This research will contribute to the Government's families' taskforce.
- Helping to inform social work training through the findings of our research with families who experience barriers in obtaining help from social services. This work is being disseminated to stakeholders including local authorities by the Centre for Excellence and Outcomes (C4EO).
- Directly influencing Government reports, reviews and consultations that impact on family, child protection and social care policy. For example, we arranged for children and young people with personal experience of the child protection system to meet with the team leading the Munro Review. This evidence, together with additional evidence from other children and young people, was immensely powerful and has been included in Professor Munro's reports.
- Contributing evidence from children and young people to the Family Justice Review, as well as influencing workers within the sector directly through the Children's Commissioner's speech to the Family Justice Council Conference 'Family Justice from the Child's Perspective'.

Basic health and welfare

Overview

Key UNCRC articles for this work area:

Article 6: Survival and development

Article 24: Health and health services

Article 27: Adequate standard of living

Our work focused on protecting children's right to health and an adequate standard of living, in particular in relation to poverty, mental health and emotional wellbeing, and inequalities in access to primary healthcare. Our work on poverty in particular has brought the views of children from deprived areas directly to the attention of those creating strategies to address child poverty.

Work delivered

- *'Trying to get by': Consulting with children and young people on poverty* – a report in partnership with the National Foundation for Educational Research, including a summary version for children and young people.
- Submission to the Independent Review on Poverty and Life Chances.
- Submission to *'Tackling Child Poverty and Improving Life Chances: Consulting on a New Approach'*.
- Submission to the *Liberating the NHS* consultation.
- Parliamentary briefing: The Health and Social Care Bill 2011.
- First report of the National Advisory Council for Children's Mental Health and Psychological Wellbeing.

Key achievements/Impact

- Being a member of the National Advisory Group (NAG) on the Mental Health of Offenders with a particular brief for the emotional well-being and mental health of children in the criminal justice system.
- Membership of the National Advisory Council on Child Mental Health and Psychological Well-being.
- Conducting an in-depth project exploring the mental health needs of and services for children in custody (see page 14).
- Partnering the UK Youth Parliament to collect children and young people's experiences and expectations of GPs. This work will inform and influence parliamentarians' understanding of the likely impact of health reforms proposed in the current Health and Social Care Bill (2011).
- Significantly influencing the Coalition Government's first child poverty strategy as the primary channel through which the Child Poverty Unit has engaged with children and young people on their experiences of living in deprived areas. This work, undertaken in partnership with the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), is our commitment to ensuring that Article 12 is realised in the discussion concerning child poverty. The Children's Commissioner talked about our findings at the National Child Poverty Conference in March 2011.
- Addressing an audience of paediatricians about the health and welfare needs of young offenders in the context of children's rights, at the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health's annual conference.

Performance review

Education, leisure and cultural activities

Overview

Key UNCRC articles for this work area:

- **Article 28:** Right to education
- **Article 29:** Goals of education
- **Article 31:** Right to cultural, artistic and leisure activities, and play.

Our work in this area focused on children's experiences of the education system, in particular discipline and behaviour, children's involvement in decision-making in schools, and their views on what makes a good teacher. We have also fed the results of large-scale research into children's views of education into a number of Government consultations, as well as highlighting the consequences of proposed changes to legal aid for marginalised young people and those with special educational needs (SEN). Our aim has been to contribute to improvements in both policy and practice in education, based on children's views and experiences of the system.

Work delivered

- *Children and young people's views of education policy* – in-depth research report in partnership with the National Foundation for Educational Research, including summary version for children and young people.
- *The classroom of today: Seat of learning or educational warzone?* – publication of opinion pieces by leading educational commentators and young people.
- Submission to the Education Bill Committee.
- Submission to the Education Select Committee on Behaviour and Discipline in Schools.
- Submission to Professor Wolf's review of 14-19 vocational education.
- Submission to the consultation on the introduction of a pupil premium.

Key achievements/Impact

- Raising awareness of the inequality of access to justice that proposed changes to legal aid would present to children and parents bringing SEN cases to tribunal.
- Promoting awareness of bullying and its impact on children and young people, through partnering with the Anti-Bullying Alliance.
- Ensuring children and young people's voices are heard within education debates by collecting strong and robust evidence on their views of the education system. Our research with NFER collected the views of almost 2000 young people in 2010-11, which helped inform and influence a number of governmental and parliamentary enquiries on education policy. These included the consultation on the introduction of a pupil premium, and the Education Select Committee's inquiry into behaviour and discipline in the classroom.
- Realising original and impactful ways of bringing children and young people's views and experiences to the attention of policy makers. For example, our work on discipline, behaviour and the classroom experience included *The classroom of today: seat of learning or educational warzone?* This publication featured young people's commentary in response to articles written by well known education commentators and practitioners.
- Influencing policy on exclusions and SEN statementing by publishing children's views of the system and their ability to participate in decision-making.
- Developing best practice guidelines and case studies for participation in schools, to be disseminated to teachers across the country (publication date: June 2011).

Performance review

Special protection measures

The articles grouped by the UN under 'special protection measures' cover vulnerable and marginalised groups. Since the establishment of the Children's Commissioner most of the office's work has concerned the groups covered by these articles. This is in line with our remit as described in the Children Act 2004: "*The Children's Commissioner must... have particular regard to groups of children who do not have other adequate means by which they can make their views known*".

Our main areas of work under this heading involve youth justice, sexual exploitation and asylum and immigration.

Youth justice

Overview

Key UNCRC articles for this work area:

- **Article 40:** (Administration of) juvenile justice
- **Article 37:** Detention and punishment (torture, degrading treatment and deprivation of liberty)
- **Article 39:** Rehabilitation of child victims.

Our youth justice work aims to break the cycle of offending and reoffending by increasing understanding of the needs of young people who offend, and working to make sure that these needs are met. Our work this year has focused in particular on the mental health and emotional well-being of young offenders, with an emphasis on working to enable their views and experiences to influence both Government policy and institutional practices.

Work delivered

- *Young people's views on safeguarding in the secure estate* – joint report with User Voice and the Youth Justice Board (YJB)
- *Young people's views on restraint in the secure estate* – joint report with User Voice
- Response to Ministry of Justice consultation: *Breaking the cycle: effective punishment, rehabilitation and sentencing of offenders*

- In-depth investigation into the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people in the youth justice system (publication date: June 2011).
- Joint response by UK Children's Commissioners to 'Policing in the 21st century' consultation.

Key achievements/Impact

- Carrying out a major investigation into the emotional well-being and mental health of children and young people in custody. The report into this work, conducted in partnership with a wide range of experts, will be launched at a parliamentary reception in mid-2011 and will include recommendations for improved practice to Government and the YJB.
- Influencing strip-searching, separation, safeguarding and complaints policies for young people in custody. This was achieved through work funded by the Office of the Children's Commissioner and undertaken in partnership with User Voice and the Youth Justice Board (YJB) to record, reflect and understand young people's experience in the secure estate.
- Directly challenging practices, including strip-searching and restraint procedures, at a number of youth justice institutions in order to improve the treatment of young offenders. Through our programme of visits to young people in the secure estate and engagement with leaders in the youth justice system we have achieved substantial improvements to conditions for young people in detention.
- Contributing as a full member of the National Preventative Mechanism that oversees the UK's compliance with the UN's Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).
- Addressing audiences of youth justice professionals including the National Association for Youth Justice conference, the Howard League AGM and the YJB and Local Government Association Joint Resettlement Conference on children's rights, voice and best interests in the youth justice system.

Refugee children (asylum and immigration)

Overview

Key UNCRC articles for this work area:

- **Article 22:** Refugee children
- **Article 35:** Abduction, sale and trafficking.

The Office of the Children's Commissioner's remit in the area of immigration and asylum extends to the whole of the UK. This year we reported on conditions experienced by children at Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre, and played a significant role in bringing an end to the detention of children for immigration purposes. We have since contributed to the Government's work on developing alternatives to detention.

We have used strategic legal interventions to help set precedents in key areas for future treatment of asylum-seeking children, and have investigated the experiences of lone asylum-seeking young people, as well as the law surrounding the UK's duty of care to returned asylum-seeking children. We have also begun work to address the criminal prosecution of child victims of trafficking and exploitation.

Our impact in this area has been based on producing evidence that combines testimonies from children and young people with the use of expert advice to assess and examine the impact of policies and practice on their rights.

Work delivered

- Joint submission with the UK Children's Commissioners to the *Alternatives to the detention of children for immigration purposes* review.
- *Landing in Kent: The experience of unaccompanied children arriving in the UK* – a report of children's experiences based on a visit to Millbank Reception and Assessment Centre.
- Legal intervention in the case of CMX regarding Refugee and Migrant Justice.
- Legal intervention in the case of NXT concerning the application of Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009.

Key achievements/Impact

- Making a major contribution in bringing an end to the detention of children for immigration purposes, announced by the coalition Government in May 2010. Through visits and detailed forensic reports which employed our power of entry under the Children Act 2004, we raised awareness of conditions at Yarl's Wood in relation to children and young people's well-being and safety, and highlighted significant child protection concerns. This powerful evidence received significant publicity across all media and was brought to the attention of parliamentarians and the general public.
- Intervening in a case at the Supreme Court to ensure that final decisions concerning age assessment of asylum-seeking children rest with the courts, and so promoting the use of evidence from a wide range of professionals including paediatricians and teachers.
- Undertaking legal interventions to assist in clarifying the scope of the UK's duty under Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009 to safeguard children and promote their welfare.
- Continuing with a long-established programme of work to consider reception conditions of unaccompanied children by visiting Millbank reception and assessment centre in Kent and obtaining the views and experiences of the young people accommodated there.
- Changing policy and practice regarding the prosecution of children (largely Vietnamese boys) who are found to be working in cannabis factories. These are trafficked children and we have facilitated roundtable discussions with key parties including the Director of Public Prosecutions, CEOP, the police, ECPAT and others to ensure that such children are recognised and treated as victims.
- Addressing over 200 judges from across the country on importance of considering the child's perspective in the legal processes related to detention and removal, at the Biennial Conference of the Immigration Judiciary of the First Tier Tribunal.

Sexual exploitation

Overview

Key UNCRC articles for this work area:

- **Article 34:** Right to be protected from sexual abuse (sexual exploitation of children)

This year we have begun a programme of work to investigate the problem of group-associated sexual exploitation and abuse of children and young people, with the aim of using this evidence as the basis for a formal inquiry in 2011. This area has some crossover with our work on child protection (covered under 'Family life and alternative care'), which revealed the need for better provision for older young people who are victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, an issue which we have brought to the attention of policy makers.

Work delivered

- International literature review into group-associated sexual violence against females, carried out by the University of Bedfordshire (to be published summer 2011).
- The Deputy Children's Commissioner chaired the launch of Race on the Agenda's (ROTA's) *Female Voice in Violence: Final report*, authored by Carlene Firmin, as well as contributing the foreword.

Key achievements/Impact

- Leading on raising awareness of the impact of serious youth violence on girls and young women, both as victims and perpetrators, as part of the London Serious Youth Violence Board. We have used this role to raise the profile of this subject among London agencies, and led a seminar on this urgent issue in March 2010.
- Highlighting gaps and inconsistencies in knowledge of the scope and prevalence of group-associated sexual violence against females, through commissioning an international literature review of the issue. This work, carried out by the University of Bedfordshire, demonstrated the need for a good evidence base to inform our response to this serious issue, and has strongly informed our workplan for 2011-12.

- Raising awareness of gaps in provision and lack of access to services for older young people who are victims of sexual exploitation and abuse, via a roundtable event with partners working in child protection services and joint letter to ministers.

Summary of our commitments and delivery during 2010-11

2010-11 WORK AREA	2010-11 BUSINESS PLAN COMMITMENT	WHAT WE DELIVERED (BY PUBLICATION DATE)	FURTHER INFORMATION AND EXPLANATION
<p>General measures of implementation</p> <p>(appeared in the <i>Positive Contribution</i> section of the 2010-11 Business Plan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring children and young people's views on stories about them are reported in the media through a Children's Media Centre. • Challenging discrimination against and positively promoting young people as active citizens through a multimedia campaign • <i>We also undertook (but did not state in our business plan) to work collaboratively with the other UK children's commissioners' offices and the Office of the Children's Ombudsman in the Republic of Ireland on areas of mutual interest.</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) OCC staff contributed to the delivery of a British and Irish Network of Ombudsmen and Children's Commissioners in Cardiff. The focus of the conference was on establishing a rights-based youth justice system. 2) OCC staff met with stakeholders and set up a steering group containing a wide range of organisations campaigning for positive images of young people. Young people also contributed to designing a powerful social media campaign as part of the overall Takeover Day campaign. 	<p>Our work across all areas promoted positive images of children and young people. Furthermore the OCC hosted a meeting of UK Children's Commissioners and government officials from all four nations to discuss how each party could tackle negative stereotyping of young people.</p> <p>OCC decided to work with other UK Children's Commissioners' offices in the following year on a more targeted campaign, the success of which could be clearly measured.</p> <p>OCC established a reference group of key media partners and commissioned the Media Trust to undertake a feasibility study for a Children's Media Centre. The reference group received the study's recommendations during 2010 and concluded that they could be better implemented by organisations other than the OCC.</p>
<p>General principles and civil rights and freedoms</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting participation in decision-making through Takeover Day and a 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3) Children's Commissioner's briefing on the Equality Act 2010). 4) Children's participation in decision-making (four 	<p>OCC successfully established a Young People's Advisory group (who chose to name themselves <i>Amplify</i>). The</p>

<p>(appeared in both <i>Positive Contribution</i> and <i>Participation</i> sections of the 2010-11 Business Plan)</p>	<p>participation network, in particular focusing on the active participation of those whose voices are least likely to be heard.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>We also committed (but did not state in the business plan) to establishing an Office of the Children's Commissioner Young People's Advisory Group.</i> 	<p>reports including a summary and one each on: children's views; a survey of local authorities; a survey of participation workers).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5) Commissioner's visit to the East Midlands: a report of children and young people's views. 6) Equality and diversity - knowing your rights (leaflet for young people). 7) Response to the Equality Act 2010: the public sector Equality Duty: promoting equality through transparency. 8) Response to the Ministry of Justice consultation: Proposals for the reform of legal aid in England and Wales. 	<p>group, administered by the Diana Awards on behalf of OCC, consists of 23 young people aged from 8 to 19. The group met 3 times over the course of the business year, including one residential weekend in November 2010.</p> <p>In addition to the published outputs Takeover Day 2010 was the most successful yet with more than 40,000 children and young participating in the day's activities.</p> <p>The OCC's young people's advisory group, Amplify, undertook work that directly influenced the Government's independent review on the commercialisation of childhood conducted by Reg Bailey. This included a survey of Amplify's peers and a final report that was presented to the review team.</p>
<p>Family environment and alternative care</p> <p>(appeared as <i>Safeguarding</i> in 2010-11 Business Plan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to research and report on effective mechanisms for raising the profile of child protection issues amongst professionals working with adults. • Researching and reporting on the experience of children and young people living in households where there is substance abuse and/or domestic violence, 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9) Family perspectives on safeguarding and on relationships with children's services (research report) 10) Submission to the Munro Review of Child Protection by the Office of the Children's Commissioner 11) Submission to the College of Social Work Consultation by the Office of the Children's Commissioner 12) Submission on the importance of independent representation in court and administrative proceedings by the Office of the 	<p>The learning from our work with resistant families was disseminated widely by C4EO following the publication of our research report (vii).</p> <p>Our commitment to research the experience of children living in households where there is substance abuse was amended following advice that similar research had already been undertaken. We redirected these resources into working with the Children's</p>

	<p>including recommendations for action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to work in partnership with local government to disseminate and extend the learning from our work with resistant families 	<p>Children's Commissioner.</p> <p>13) Submission to the consultation on the inspection of children's homes by the Office of the Children's Commissioner.</p> <p>14) Submission to the review of the vetting and barring scheme and criminal records regime by the Office of the Children's Commissioner.</p> <p>15) The Home Front (a report by Demos and the Office of the Children's Commissioner).</p> <p>16) 'Don't make assumptions': Children's and young people's views of child protection and messages for change (full and summary reports).</p>	<p>Society to produce '<i>You are not on your own: a booklet to help adults talk about a parent's drinking</i>'. This work was carried by April 2011, and will be published later in 2011.</p> <p>In addition we also provided a grant to Voice in order to undertake an interim scoping report on '<i>Advocacy Services for children and young people</i>'. This work was again completed by April 2011 and will be published later in 2011.</p> <p>Our work on the Munro Review of the child protection system went beyond the submission of evidence. OCC directly promoted the views and interests of children and young people throughout the review through our ongoing input with the review team that extended to a member of our staff being invited to become part of the reviews voice of the child sub-group.</p>
<p>Basic Health and Welfare</p> <p>(appeared as <i>Health</i> in 2010-11 Business Plan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting children and young people's views on health services to the review of NHS children's services, and inputting into reforms following the review. • Researching health service complaints procedures and recommending ways to ensure they are accessible to 	<p>17) Liberating the NHS: consultation response.</p> <p>18) Response to tackling child poverty and improving life chances: Consulting on a new approach.</p> <p>19) Parliamentary briefing on the Health and Social Welfare Bill.</p> <p>20) 'Trying to get by': Consulting with children and young people on poverty (full report).</p>	<p>During the course of 2010-11 we have sought young people's views of GP services in partnership with UKYP, conducted a survey of young people that gained over 700 responses, and ran three focus groups in different parts of the country.</p> <p>We re-focused our resources from childhood bereavement into ensuring that children's</p>

	<p>children and young people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the Childhood Bereavement Network, continuing to promote the needs and interests of children who have been bereaved including reviewing the bereavement manifesto. • Continuing to support the National Advisory Council's work. 	<p>21) 'Trying to get by': Consulting with children and young people on poverty - CYP version.</p>	<p>views directly influenced the Government's first Child Poverty Strategy.</p> <p>Our work with the National Advisory Council continued throughout the year, and we embarked on work to scope complaints procedures for children in the health service in preparation for a joint project with the Office of the Children's Rights Director in 2011-12.</p>
<p>Education, leisure and cultural activities</p> <p>(appeared as <i>Education</i> in 2010-11 Business Plan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researching children and young people's views on the key elements of effective learning environments. • Working with children and young people on education spending priorities and the possible impact of spending constraints on education. • Examining participation practice within schools and colleges, identifying best practice and promoting this widely across the sector. • Working with children and young people to develop an evidence base on other key education-related issues, including schools admissions policies. 	<p>22) Consultation response on the introduction of a pupil premium.</p> <p>23) Evidence to Professor Wolf's review of 14-19 vocational education.</p> <p>24) The classroom of today: seat of learning or educational warzone?</p> <p>25) Office of the Children's Commissioner - Views on the Education Bill.</p> <p>26) Children and young people's views on school.</p> <p>27) Submission of evidence to the Education Bill Committee by the Office of the Children's Commissioner.</p>	<p>Our work during 2010-11 on 'effective learning environments' evolved into classroom behaviour and discipline to reflect the government's policy direction (evidenced in xxiii, xxiv, and xxvi).</p> <p>We did not pursue the work on collecting children and young people's views on spending priorities, focusing instead on developing a large robust evidence base on their views on key elements of school life.</p> <p>Work on identifying good participation practice in schools was completed by April 2011 and will lead to the publication of <i>Student Voice Good Practice Case Studies</i> in June 2011 together with a short guide for headteachers.</p>
<p>Special Protection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researching offenders' perspectives on the 	<p>28) Joint response by UK Children's Commissioners to 'Policing in the 21st</p>	<p>A significant resources were committed to completing the OCC's</p>

<p>Measures: Youth justice</p> <p>(appeared as <i>Youth Justice</i> in 2010-11 Business Plan)</p>	<p>most effective ways of tackling youth offending and promulgating this work to inform youth justice policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Examining the current provision of services to meet the mental health needs of offenders, identifying how effectively they meet needs, gaps in provision and examples of best practice developing clear recommendations and an action plan. 	<p>century' consultation.</p> <p>29) Submission to MOJ consultation on Breaking the Cycle (Sentencing Green Paper) and distribution/engagement.</p> <p>30) Young people's views on restraint in the secure estate.</p> <p>31) Young people's views on safeguarding in the secure estate (a report by User Voice/ the office of the Children's Commissioner/ Youth Justice Board).</p>	<p>report on the mental health of young people in the youth justice system. The final report, <i>'I think I must have been born bad': Emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people in the youth justice system</i> was completed during the 2010-11 business year, and the report was launched and published in June 2011.</p>
<p>Special Protection Measures: Refugee children</p> <p>(appeared as <i>Asylum</i> in 2010-11 Business Plan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to undertake a national programme of visits to institutions which have contact with young asylum seekers, as well as seeking new ways for them to share their views and experiences directly with us. Report on progress made on realising the implementation of our recommendations of our report into the detention of children, young people and families. Support appropriate strategic legal cases to challenge or clarify law and practice with regards to children and young people being detained. 	<p>32) Alternatives to the detention of children for immigration purposes: a contribution to the review from the UK Children's Commissioner</p> <p>33) Legal intervention in the case of CMX regarding Refugee and Migrant Justice.</p> <p>34) Legal intervention in the case of NXT concerning the application of Section 55 of the Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009.</p> <p>35) Landing in Kent: The experience of unaccompanied children arriving in the UK.</p>	<p>The announcement that the government was to end the detention of children for immigration purposes in May 2010 significantly changed our business plans for the year. Our efforts were directed towards influencing the shape of the new family removals system.</p> <p>Our intention to return to Yarl's Wood was altered and we undertook a visit to Milbank Centre in Kent which provides local authority accommodation and care for unaccompanied asylum seeking boys aged 16-18. In addition we prepared for further visits to other immigration related settings in Kent later in 2011, including (including the UKBA facility in the port of Dover).</p>

<p>Special Protection Measures: Sexual Exploitation</p>	<p>There were no commitments in the 2010-11 Business plan to work on this issue.</p>	<p>There were no reports published during the financial year, however following concerns arising from our work on other issues and visits to several projects and institutions over the course of the year, the OCC commissioned <i>Youth Gangs, Sexual Violence and Sexual Exploitation: A Scoping Exercise for The Office of The Children's Commissioner for England</i> from the University of Bedfordshire. The work was completed before April 2011 and will be published in spring/ summer 2011. In addition, the Deputy Children's Commissioner chaired the launch of Race on the Agenda's (ROTA's) <i>Female Voice in Violence: Final report</i>, authored by Carlene Firmin, as well as contributing the foreword.</p>
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Management report

The Children's Commissioner is a Corporation Sole, established under the Children Act 2004, whose statutory role is to promote awareness of the views and interests of children and young people in England. The Children's Commissioner has a UK-wide responsibility for issues that affect children and young people and which have not been fully devolved. We are administered as a non-departmental public body, sponsored by the Department for Education. Our budget is set by the Secretary of State for Education.

Introduction

Following the Dunford Review of the Office of the Children's Commissioner which reported in December 2010, this year marks the start of a process of transition to a new Office of the Children's Commissioner for England (OCCE) with a strengthened remit to promote and protect children's rights as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Although full implementation of a new UNCRC-focused OCCE requires legislative changes which will take some years to realise, since the review reported we have been working in the spirit of its recommendations. As well as realigning the strategic themes in our business plan under the seven 'clusters' of UNCRC articles used by signatory nations to report on progress to the UN, we are also developing new performance indicators to measure our work, based on the framework used by national human rights institutions.

In line with Dr Dunford's recommendation that the new OCCE should combine the current Office of the Children's Commissioner and the Office of the Children's Rights Director (OCD), the two organisations have been working collaboratively during the transition. The Department for Education has set up a Transitions Board, of which the Children's Commissioner and Deputy Children's Commissioner are members.

Investment in fixed assets

Investment in fixed assets was £35,000 in 2010-11. Set-up costs for the new office at 33 Greycoat Street at a cost of £29,000. Office

furniture was purchased at a cost of £6,000 (desks and chairs).

Future fixed asset investment

No costs are anticipated during the transition period.

Our staff

We spent £1,374,000 on staff costs in 2010-11 a 7% reduction on the prior year. During 2010-11 the total number of working days lost due to sickness absence amounted to 191.

This is an average of 8.68 days' absence per employee (2009-10: 7.36 days). However, a significant proportion of the sickness absence total relates to two members of staff who took long term sick leave; one has now retired on health grounds and the other took time off due to a health condition and is now back at work (representing 82 days and 29 days sick leave respectively). Excluding long term sickness, the average number of sickness absence days per employee was 4.95 days. Office of the Children's Commissioner employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Services Pension Scheme (PCSPS). Further details of this can be found in notes 1 and 2 of the accounts.

Operating costs

We spent £1,255,000 on operating costs during 2010-11, an increase of 18% on the prior year. Operating costs are significantly higher than last year due to dilapidation costs for 1 London Bridge of £427,000.

Strategic theme expenditure

The spend on strategic themes in 2010-11 £289,000. This was a decrease of 46% on the prior year. This was due to dilapidations for 1 London Bridge. This excludes the direct and indirect cost of staff investment in these areas. Details of this project expenditure can be found on page 43 of the financial statements.

Efficiency and value for money

For the first five years of its existence, the resource allocation of the organisation stood still at £3 million. Managing within this limitation in the context of inflation has demanded year-on-year savings. In 2010-11 the organisation was required to make further savings of 5% (£150,000) as a result of efficiency savings across Government which reduced the annual

budget to £2,850,000. This total resource allocation equates to 24 pence per year for each child and young person in England, significantly lower than the costs of other UK children's commissioners.

Future financial risks

We are still negotiating with our landlords at 1 London Bridge in order to secure a release from the lease. At present the landlords are not minded to settle and as a result we have provided £427,000 in our accounts for dilapidations. The negotiations are being managed by DTZ on the advice of the Department for Education.

Supplier payments

During 2010-11, we paid 78% of our suppliers within 30 days (2009-10: 91%). This decrease was due to changes in staffing and invoices been sent to our old address. The aggregate amount owed to trade creditors at 31 March 2011 compared with the aggregate amount invoiced by suppliers during the year, expressed as a number of days in the same proportion to the total number of days in the financial year, is equal to 24 days. (2009-10: 32 days).

Governance

The Children's Commissioner continues to be well served by the Commissioner's Board and Audit and Risk Committee. The Remuneration Committee carried out its duties scrutinising the operation of our pay and reward policy.

During the year issues came to light surrounding the breakdown of good internal controls. Work has been undertaken to address the issues identified. Further reference to this can be found on the Statement of Internal Control, Internal Control Issues.

We are committed to improving the control environment within our organisation, and to improving our systems further and devoting resources to this work. More details on this can be found within the Statement of Internal Control.

Child Protection

We are committed to ensuring the safety of children and young people who become involved in our work in any way. All staff are checked by the Criminal Records Bureau to an enhanced level. We have a comprehensive safeguarding policy, and we ensure that all third party

suppliers who come into contact with children and young people are enhanced CRB checked.

Opportunities and diversity

We aim to provide support and assistance to enable staff to manage their own career development in partnership with us and to reach their full potential regardless of race, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, ethnic origin, disability or age. We have reviewed and updated our equality and diversity framework to ensure we are meeting the legal duties outlined in the Equality Act 2011, which came into force on 6 April 2011. We are now looking at going beyond these requirements to develop a more nuanced policy which better reflects the nature of our work.

Health and safety management

The Commissioner's Board has agreed our health and safety policy. The Office of the Children's Commissioner is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all employees, consultants, agency workers and children and young people as specified by the occupational health and safety requirements in the Health and Safety at Works Act 1974 and subsequent legislation or amendments. The ultimate goal of the health and safety policy is to prevent injury and ill health in the workplace.

Environmental policy

The Children's Commissioner is committed to best environmental practices including recycling. We have a recycling contract and staff are encouraged to recycle all paper and plastic waste. Our corporate social responsibility policies and procedures are in the process of being finalised, and we anticipate implementing these in 2011-12.

Data security

We have taken significant steps to ensure that all of our information data is effectively managed and we have robust policies and practices over how data is stored, transmitted and destroyed. We have a comprehensive staff handbook on information data security and all staff are required to undertake Cabinet Office training on information data security as soon as they come into post. We suffered no incidences of data loss during the year.

Each Department and sponsored body is required to submit an annual report to Cabinet Office on its performance in the management of information risk. The Office of the Children's Commissioner has made good progress in introducing the mandatory requirements of this Security Policy Framework with a 71% implementation level. The scoring is lower than the prior year due to changes to the framework. Responses to the assessment are analysed as follows: 28 of the 79 requirements were non-applicable, 36 of the remaining 51 were fully completed, and work is on track to address the other 15. A post-annual report action plan is being designed and we will ensure we are fully compliant in 2011-12.

Audit

In accordance with the Children Act 2004, our financial accounts are audited by the National Audit Office under direction from the Comptroller and Auditor General. So far as the Accounting Officer is aware, there is no relevant information of which the auditors are unaware. The Accounting Officer has taken all steps that she ought to have taken to make herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.



Dr Maggie Atkinson
Children's Commissioner and Accounting Officer
16 June 2011

Remuneration report

Remuneration committee

The Office of the Children's Commissioner has appointed an Audit and Risk Committee. From May 2007, the Children's Commissioner established a separate remuneration committee as a sub-group of the Audit and Risk Committee, whose terms of reference include remuneration for all staff in the Office of the Children's Commissioner. A merit-based pay review system has been introduced from April 2007. The Children's Commissioner's pay is reviewed by the Permanent Secretary in the Department for Education (formerly Department for Children, Schools and Families), in line with average Senior Civil Service pay increases.

Service contracts

The Children's Commissioner is appointed by the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families (Secretary of State for Education since May 2010). At the end of February 2010, Sir Al Aynsley-Green retired from his post as Children's Commissioner. During 2009-10, the Secretary of State appointed Dr Maggie Atkinson as the new Commissioner, who came into office on 1 March 2010. The contract term is for five years which commenced in March 2010 and ends in March 2015. In accordance with the Children Act 2004, her salary is paid for by Grant-in-Aid from the Department for Children, Schools and Families (now the Department for Education). Other appointments are made in accordance with the Civil Service Commissioners' Recruitment Code, which requires appointment to be on merit on the basis of fair and open competition but also includes the circumstances when appointments may otherwise be made. Unless otherwise stated below, the officials covered by this report hold appointments which are open-ended until they reach the normal retiring age. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in the individual receiving compensation as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme.

Salary and pension entitlements (audited information)

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the senior officials of the Office of the Children's Commissioner.

Remuneration (salary and payments in kind)

	2010-11		2009-10	
	Salary	Benefits in kind (to nearest 100)	Salary	Benefits in kind (to nearest 100)
1. Dr. Maggie Atkinson – Commissioner Executive Contract for five years. March 2010 – February 2015.	£135,000 - £140,000	£10,000	£10,000 - £15,000	£2,000
2. Sir Al Aynsley-Green – Commissioner Executive	-	-	£125,000 - £130,000	-
3. Susan Berelowitz – Deputy Commissioner/ Chief Executive Three months' notice From October 2008	£95,000 - £100,000	-	£95,000 - £100,000	-
4. Lisa White – Director of Communication and Participation Executive Three months' notice From January 2006. On secondment until November 2010.	£25,000 - £30,000	-	£25,000 - £30,000	-
5. Ross Hendry – Director of Policy Executive Three months' notice From June 2009	£60,000 - £65,000	-	£50,000 - £55,000	-
6. Anne Mason – Director of Participation Executive Three months' notice From October 2009	£60,000 - £65,000	-	£25,000 - £30,000	-
7. Peter Bennett – Director of Corporate Services Executive Three months' notice From February 2010	£15,000 - £20,000	-	-	-

8. Oliver Berman – Director of Communications Executive Three months' notice From September 2009	£50,000 - £55,000	-	£35,000 - £40,000	-
9. Sandra Hines - Director of Corporate Services Executive Three months' notice From June 2010	£30,000 - £35,000	-	-	-
10. David Ryan – Head of Finance and Performance Executive Three months' notice From March 2010	£0 - £5,000	-	-	-
11. Paul Evans – Director of Corporate Services Executive Three months' notice	-	-	£55,000 - £60,000	-
12. Terry Price – Chairman Audit & Risk Committee Non Executive From March 2006	£0 - £5,000	-	-	-

2010-11 salaries

2. Figures quoted for the period 1 April 2009 – 28 February 2010. The full year equivalent is £135,000 - £140,000.
4. Figures quoted for the period 1 December – 31 March 2011. The full year equivalent is £75,000 - £80,000.
7. Figures quoted for the period 1 April 2010 – 11 July 2010. The full year equivalent is £60,000 - £65,000.
8. Figures quoted for the period 1 April 2010 – 31 December 2010. The full year equivalent is £50,000 - £55,000.
9. Figures quoted for the period 23 June 2010 – 6 January 2011. The full year equivalent is £60,000 - £65,000.
10. Figures quoted for the period 1 March 2011 – 31 March 2011. In addition £14,153 was paid to a third party for the period 17 December 2010 – 28 February 2011.
11. Figures quoted for the period 1 April 2009 – 28 February 2010. The full year equivalent is £60,000 - £65,000.
12. Non executive directors are paid on a daily rate basis.

Remuneration (salary and payments in kind)

Salary

'Salary' includes gross salary; overtime; reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances; recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation. This report is based on accrued payments made by the Office of the Children's Commissioner and thus recorded in these accounts. This total remuneration, as well as the allowances to which they are entitled, is paid by the Office of the Children's Commissioner and is therefore shown in full in the figures above.

Benefits in kind

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefits provided by the Office of the Children's Commissioner and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument.

Bonuses

Bonuses are based on performance levels attained and are made as part of the appraisal process. Bonuses relate to the performance in the year in which they become payable to the individual. The bonuses reported in 2010-11 relate to performance in 2010-11 and the comparative bonuses reported for 2009-10 relate to the performance in 2009-10.

No bonuses were paid in 2010-11 (2009-10 bonuses NIL).

Pension benefits 2010-11

	Accrued pension at pension age as at 31/3/11 and related lump sum £'000	Real increase in pension at pension age as at 31/3/11 and related lump sum £'000	CETV at 31/3/11 £'000	CETV at 31/3/10 £'000	Real increase in CETV £'000
1. Dr. Maggie Atkinson	85 -90	82.5 - 85	1,044	3	119
3. Susan Berelowitz <i>Three months' notice</i>	35-40	0 -2.5	493	439	15
4. Lisa White <i>Three months' notice</i>	5-10 (20-25)	0-2.5 (0-2.5)	88	81	2
5. Ross Hendry <i>Three months' notice</i>	0-5	0-2.5	16	7	6
6. Anne Mason <i>Three months' notice</i>	5-10 (25-30)	0-2.5 (2.5 – 5)	121	100	10
7. Peter Bennett <i>Three months' notice</i>	0-5	0-2.5	9	3	5
8. Sandra Hines <i>Three months' notice</i>	5-10 (20-25)	0-2.5 (0-2.5)	122	109	10
9. David Ryan <i>Three months' notice</i>	0-5	0-2.5	1	-	1

1. The CETV as at 31 March 2011 includes a transfer in of £922K from a previous pension scheme.

7. CETV from 31 March 2010 to 11 July 2010

8. CETV from 23 June 2010 – 6 January 2011

9. CETV from 1 March to 31 March 2011

Non executive Directors are not members of the pension scheme

The actuarial factors used to calculate CETV were changed in 2010/11. The CETV at 31/3/10 and 31/3/11 have both been calculated using the new factors for consistency. The CETV at 31/3/10 therefore differs from the corresponding figure in last year's report which was calculated using the previous factors

Civil Service pensions

Pension benefits are provided through the Civil Service pension arrangements. From 30 July 2007, civil servants may be in one of four defined benefit schemes; either a final salary scheme (**classic**, **premium** or **classic plus**); or a whole career scheme (**nuvos**). These statutory arrangements are unfunded with the cost of benefits met by monies voted by Parliament each year. Pensions payable under **classic**, **premium**, **classic plus** and **nuvos** are increased annually in line with Pensions Increase legislation. Members joining from October 2002 may opt for either the appropriate defined benefit arrangement or a 'money purchase' stakeholder pension with an employer contribution (**partnership** pension account).

Employee contributions are set at the rate of 1.5% of pensionable earnings for **classic** and 3.5% for **premium**, **classic plus** and **nuvos**. Benefits in **classic** accrue at the rate of 1/80th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. In addition, a lump sum equivalent to three years initial pension is payable on retirement. For **premium**, benefits accrue at the rate of 1/60th of final pensionable earnings for each year of service. Unlike **classic**, there is no automatic lump sum. **classic plus** is essentially a hybrid with benefits for service before 1 October 2002 calculated broadly as per **classic** and benefits for service from October 2002 worked out as in **premium**. In **nuvos** a member builds up a pension based on his pensionable earnings during their period of scheme membership. At the end of the scheme year (31 March) the member's earned pension account is credited with 2.3% of their pensionable earnings in that scheme year and the accrued pension is updated in line with Pensions Increase legislation. In all cases members may opt to give up (commute) pension for a lump sum up to the limits set by the Finance Act 2004.

The **partnership** pension account is a stakeholder pension arrangement. The employer makes a basic contribution of between 3% and 12.5% (depending on the age of the member) into a stakeholder pension product chosen by the employee from a panel of three providers. The employee does not have to contribute, but

where they do make contributions, the employer will match these up to a limit of 3% of pensionable salary (in addition to the employer's basic contribution). Employers also contribute a further 0.8% of pensionable salary to cover the cost of centrally-provided risk benefit cover (death in service and ill health retirement).

The accrued pension quoted is the pension the member is entitled to receive when they reach pension age, or immediately on ceasing to be an active member of the scheme if they are already at or over pension age. Pension age is 60 for members of **classic**, **premium** and **classic plus** and 65 for members of **nuvos**.

Further details about the Civil Service pension arrangements can be found at the website www.civilservice.gov.uk/my-civilservice/pensions/index.aspx

Cash Equivalent Transfer Values

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member's accrued benefits and any contingent spouse's pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme. The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The figures include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the member has transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their buying additional pension benefits at their own cost. CETVs are worked out within the guidelines and framework prescribed by the Institute and Faculty of Actuaries and do not take account of any actual or potential reduction to benefits resulting from

Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

Real increase in CETV

This reflects the increase in CETV that is funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

Statements of responsibilities of the Children's Commissioner

Under the Children Act 2004, Schedule I, Clause 8, the Children's Commissioner is required to prepare accounts in accordance with HM Treasury requirements. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the Children's Commissioner's state of affairs at the year end, and of its income and expenditure and cash flows for the financial year just ended.

In preparing the accounts the Children's Commissioner is required to:

- observe the accounts direction set out in the Financial Memorandum and Accounts Direction issued by the Secretary of State for Education, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;
- make estimates on a reasonable basis;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departure from these in the financial statements; and
- prepare financial statements on the going concern basis, unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Children's Commissioner or its functions will continue.

The Principal Accounting Officer for the Department for Education has designated the Children's Commissioner as Accounting Officer for the Office of the Children's Commissioner. The Accounting Officer is responsible for the proper management of resources and staff, for ensuring that Government guidance on regularity, propriety and value for money is complied with, and is responsible for the following:

- keeping proper records and safeguarding the Office of the Children's Commissioner's assets;
- advising the Audit and Risk Committee on financial, risk and remuneration issues;
- ensuring the efficient, economic and effective management of the Children's Commissioner's resources, including cash, liquid assets, capital assets, equipment and personnel;
- signing the final statement of accounts and sending copies of the statement to the Secretary of State for Education and the Comptroller and Auditor General in accordance with the timetable; and
- observing the guidance in Managing Public Money and all other guidance on the responsibilities of accounting officers that the Treasury or the Cabinet Office may issue from time to time.

A copy of the accounts is available from the Office of the Children's Commissioner at 33 Greycoat Street, London SW1P 2QF or via our website at www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

Statement of internal control

Introduction

The Children's Commissioner is a Corporation Sole, set up by the Children Act 2004. I was appointed in October 2009 and took up my post as Children's Commissioner on 1 March 2010. My appointment as the Accounting Officer was made on 1 March 2010. The financial year April 2010 to March 2011 is the sixth year of our operation.

Scope of responsibility

As Accounting Officer I have a personal responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the Office of the Children's Commissioner's aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and assets for which I am personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to me in "Managing Public Money." I am also accountable to Parliament for maintaining effective systems for identifying, evaluating and managing the principal risks of the Children's Commissioner as detailed in the Management Statement.

In order to meet my statutory responsibilities a structure has been designed for the Office of the Children's Commissioner that establishes robust scrutiny and governance arrangements for the Corporation Sole.

Our governance process is led by the Commissioner's Board which consists of me, the Chief Executive Officer, the Director of Policy, the Director of Communications, the Director of Participation, Head of Finance and Performance and the Chair of Audit and Risk Committee. In addition, to provide independent scrutiny, we appointed, through the Cabinet Office's public appointments procedure, an Audit and Risk Committee, comprising a Chair and three Members. The remit for this committee covers the oversight of audit and risk management. The Audit and Risk Committee met six times in 2010-11. A separate Remuneration Committee has also been established responsible for approving pay reviews developed by the Commissioner's

Board. This committee met twice during 2010-11. This Statement of Internal Control was reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee at its meetings on 11 May and 9 June 2011.

The role of the Commissioner's Board is to determine the Children's Commissioner's strategy. It sets the organisation's risk management culture and behaviours, decides on an appropriate level of risk exposure, and approves major decisions within the organisation's risk profile. It also has responsibility for monitoring management of corporate risks, for satisfying itself that risks are being actively managed, and annually reviewing the Children's Commissioner's approach to risk management. The Audit and Risk Committee scrutinises the working of the Commissioner's Board in these areas.

The Children's Commissioner's relationship with its sponsor department, the Department for Education (formerly Children, Schools & Families), is defined in the Management Statement with its accompanying Financial Memorandum, and is maintained through regular meetings with the Department for Education sponsor team and periodic meetings with ministers. The sponsor has observer status on the Audit and Risk Committee. I continue to meet regularly with the Department's Accounting Officer, the Permanent Secretary, to review my function as Accounting Officer.

The Department for Education Accounting officer requested a review of the governance arrangements of the Office of the Children's Commissioner during 2009 undertaken by the Department's internal audit. While some recommendations for improvement were identified a) for clarity and delineation of strategic and operational roles and b) for consistent application of key business processes, the final report in November 2009 concluded that "The internal systems have, in the main, now developed to a level where they are effective on a day to day basis for the organisation to discharge its public finance responsibilities, whilst at the same time ensuring that they will be able to deliver their annual and strategic plans."

The purpose of the system of internal control

The system of internal control is designed to manage risk to a responsible level, rather than eliminate all risk of failure to achieve aims and objectives. It can therefore only provide reasonable assurance of effectiveness. The system of internal control is designed to identify and prioritise the risks to the achievement of the Children's Commissioner's aims and objectives; to evaluate the likelihood of those risks being realised; and to manage them efficiently, effectively and economically.

The system of internal control has been operative for the year ended 31 March 2011 and up to the date of approval of the Annual Report and Accounts. It accords with HM Treasury guidance.

The risk and control framework

Risk identification and assessment are now integral parts of the Children's Commissioner's corporate and business planning. The process of risk assessment is led by the Commissioner's Board, with inputs from managers and staff. All risks have designated senior manager and managers responsible for reporting the status of each identified risk. New risks which are identified during the year are added to the risk register.

We have reviewed our approach to risk and control, including the risk framework and register during 2010-11. The risk register is now reviewed at every meeting of both the Commissioner's Board and the Audit and Risk Committee. This review covers the top ten risks and changes to the register since the last review. The Strategic Management Board and the Audit and Risk Committee also review the whole register several times a year. The Audit and Risk Committee remain content that appropriate consideration is being given to risk management.

Review of effectiveness

As Accounting Officer, I am responsible for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal control. My review is informed by the work of our internal auditors and the Office of the Children's Commissioner's senior managers with day-to-day responsibilities for the development and maintenance of the internal control framework. RSM Tenon provide our internal audit function, and were re-appointed for a one-

year period ending in March 2012.

Since implementation the effectiveness of the system of internal control has been and will continue to be maintained by:

- Regular monitoring of the status of corporate risks by the Commissioner's Board
- Review and approval by the Commissioner's Board of key policies which underpin internal control systems
- Oversight of the status of all risks by the Audit and Risk Committee when it meets
- Scrutiny of all internal and external audit reports by the Audit and Risk Committee, supported by follow-up reports on the management response
- Receipt of the Internal Auditor's Annual Report
- Receipt of the Audit and Risk Committee's Annual Report. (See 'Internal control issues' below.)

Data management

During the year, data management policies were reviewed and all staff have received training on handling data. In May 2009 a printed guide for employees on information data security was made available to all employees, contract staff and freelance workers. The Head of Finance and Performance is appointed as the Senior Information Risk Officer, in accordance with the Cabinet Office requirements on data security. Processes have been developed to incorporate information data security management into our risk assessment framework. No incidences of data loss occurred during the year.

Each Department and sponsored body is required to submit an annual report to Cabinet Office on its performance in the management of information risk. The Office of the Children's Commissioner has made good progress in introducing the mandatory requirements of this Security Policy Framework with a 71% implementation level. The scoring is lower than the prior year due to changes in the reporting framework. The responses are analysed as follows; 28 of the 79 questions were non-applicable, 36 of the 51 are fully completed. For the remaining 15 requirements work is on track. A post annual report action plan is being designed in order that we are fully compliant in 2011-12.

Internal control issues

My review of the effectiveness of the internal control system highlighted the breakdown of good internal controls. The internal control issues were reported to Audit and Risk Committee, National Audit Office, RSM Tenon, to the Permanent Secretary in November 2010. The Director of Corporate Services left the organisation in December 2010 and an Accountant was hired to re-instate robust internal controls. Significant work has been undertaken to resolve internal control issues and to ensure that there are no material errors on the accounts. The Accountant discovered a serious data corruption on the system in March 2011. This resulted in a significant amount of extra work and resourcing being deployed in order to be able to place reliance on the system and the reporting. The management continue to experience problems with the integrity of the system and have lost confidence in the system. In order to gain reasonable assurance, checks have been undertaken to ensure daily back up for the system are taken by IS support.

The Commissioner's Board will select a new system in June 2011 with an anticipated go live date of 1 October 2011.

The Accountant produces a monthly audit file for review and sign off by the Deputy Commissioner and me as Accounting Officer. This is consistent with good accounting practice and good internal controls. Any issues are clearly highlighted and time frames are recorded for resolution. These are subsequently followed up on a monthly basis to provide assurance.

I am now satisfied that we have adequate and effective risk management, control and governance processes to manage the achievement of our objectives in line with the Security Policy Framework and Information Assurance Maturity Model.

During the year our internal auditors RSM Tenon reviewed our internal operational processes and provided us with adequate assurances that these key areas of internal control are working well. They concluded that the management of the organisation's core financial controls continues to be largely adequate and effective.

The annual report of the Audit and Risk Committee for 2010-11 concluded as follows:

"The Commissioner's draft 2010-11 Statement on Internal Control was reviewed at the May 2011 meeting. The draft Annual Audit Report provided by RSM Tenon, (which was also presented at the May meeting), stated that, based on their work undertaken during the year, their opinion regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of the arrangements for governance was "amber", risk management was "amber" and control was "red", mainly due the weaknesses identified in the financial control environment since December 2010. The committee can thus confirm that the organisation has met HM Treasury requirements for risk management and corporate governance, but whilst progress has been made in rectifying weaknesses, further actions are required to improve and sustain the internal control environment.

"The Committee would like to thank the current staff of the Office of the Children's Commissioner, and representatives of Department for Education, RSM Tenon and the NAO for their openness and level of engagement during the year. Whilst papers presented at the Committee have been variable in standard during the year, presenters have generally been knowledgeable, open and willing to debate points and issues with the Committee.

"Committee members note the difficult task faced by the organisation in delivering its objectives. The Committee acknowledges that while it is not possible to eliminate risk, it believes that progress has been made during the year in identifying and managing risk in a professional and considered way."

A final important note is that an Accounting Officer, in signing off the statement of internal control and accounts for 2010-11, in effect takes responsibility for public accountability for the year as a whole.

A year-end external audit assurance review of the activities of the Office of the Children's

Commissioner provided assurance that the controls upon which the organisation relies to provide assurance that the Office has acted in a transparent manner, with all interests declared and undertaken solely for the benefit of the organisation, are effective. In 2011-12 there are two significant areas for my continued attention as Accounting Officer. The first concerns the challenge of continued budget constraints and the requirements for savings from an already limited budget. The second concerns any risks associated with this period of on-going transition after the Dunford review. This second is likely to be an issue in the medium to longer term. Both of these challenges are known by organisation and by me and will be managed appropriately. Their on-going significance should be noted.



Dr Maggie Atkinson
Children's Commissioner and
Accounting Officer
16 June 2011

Audit certificate

THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Office of the Children's Commissioner for the year ended 31 March 2011 under the Children Act 2004. These comprise the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure and the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows, the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers' Equity and the related notes. These financial statements have been prepared under the accounting policies set out within them. I have also audited the information in the Remuneration Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

Respective responsibilities of the Accounting Officer and auditor

As explained more fully in the Statement of Responsibilities of the Children's Commissioner, the Accounting Officer is responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view. My responsibility is to audit, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Children Act 2004. I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland). Those standards require me and my staff to comply with the Auditing Practices Board's Ethical Standards for Auditors.

Scope of the audit of the financial statements

An audit involves obtaining evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the financial statements are free from material misstatement, whether caused by fraud or error. This includes an assessment of: whether the accounting policies are appropriate to the Office of the Children's Commissioner's circumstances and have been consistently applied and adequately disclosed; the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Office of the Children's Commissioner; and the overall presentation of the financial statements. In addition I read all the financial and non-financial information in the Annual Report to identify material inconsistencies with the audited financial statements. If I become aware of any apparent material misstatements or inconsistencies I consider the implications for my certificate.

In addition, I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income reported in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Opinion on Regularity

In my opinion, in all material respects the expenditure and income have been applied to the purposes intended by Parliament and the financial transactions conform to the authorities which govern them.

Opinion on Financial Statements

In my opinion:

- the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of the Office of the Children's Commissioner's affairs as at 31 March 2011 and of its net expenditure for the year then ended; and
- the financial statements have been properly prepared in accordance with the Children Act 2004 and Secretary of State Directions issued thereunder.

Opinion on other matters

In my opinion:

- the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited has been properly prepared in accordance with the Children Act 2004 and Secretary of State Directions issued thereunder; and
- the information given in the Management Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements.

Matters for which I report by exception

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements and the part of the Remuneration Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records or returns; or
- I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
- the Statement on Internal Control does not reflect compliance with HM Treasury's guidance.

Report

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

*Amyas C E Morse
Comptroller and Auditor General
National Audit Office
157-197 Buckingham Palace Road
Victoria, London, SW1W 9SP*

17 June 2011

Statement of comprehensive net expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2011

			Restated
	Note	2010-11 £000	2009-10 £000
Expenditure			
Staff costs	2	1,374	1,479
Project costs	3	289	536
Other operating expenses	4	1,255	1,025
Total expenditure		2,918	3,040
Income			
Grants	5	(20)	(14)
Other operating income	5	(1)	(6)
Total income		(21)	(20)
Net expenditure for the year		2,897	3,020

The accounts have been restated following the removal of the requirement to recognise a notional cost of capital. See note 1M on page 41.

Note:

A) All of the income and expenditure of the Children's Commissioner is in respect of continuing operations.

The notes on pages 40 to 50 form part of these accounts.

Statement of financial position as at 31 March 2011

	Note	2010-11 £000	2009-10 £000
Assets			
Non-current assets			
Property, plant and equipment	6	36	240
Intangible assets	7	27	63
Total non – current assets		63	303
Current assets			
Trade and other receivables due after more than one year	8a	89	93
Trade and other receivables due within one year	8b	22	20
Cash and cash equivalents	9	143	24
Total current assets		254	137
Current liabilities			
Trade and other payables	10	(161)	(285)
Provisions	11	(372)	-
Assets less liabilities		(216)	155
Taxpayers' equity			
General reserve		(216)	155
		(216)	155

The financial statements on pages 36 to 50 were approved by the Children's Commissioner on 16 June 2011.



Dr Maggie Atkinson
Children's Commissioner and Accounting Officer
16 June 2011

The notes on pages 40 to 50 form part of these accounts.

Statement of cash flows for the year ended 31 March 2011

	Note	2010-11 £000	2009-10 £000
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net expenditure		(2,897)	(3,020)
Depreciation and amortisation	6 & 7	257	307
Loss on Disposals	6	18	-
Decrease/(increase) in trade and other receivables	8	2	77
Increase/(decrease) in trade payables	10	(124)	(31)
Increase/(decrease) in provision	11	372	-
Net cash outflows from operating activities		(2,372)	(2,667)
Cash flows from investing activities			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	6	(35)	-
Net cash outflow from investing activities		(35)	-
Cash flows from financing activities			
Grant received from parent department		2,526	2,670
		2,526	2,670
Net financing			
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents during the period		119	3
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the period	9	24	21
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the period	9	143	24

Statement of changes in Taxpayers' Equity for the year ended 31 March 2011

Changes in taxpayers' equity for 2009-10	Restated £000
At 1 April 2009	505
Net expenditure on continuing operations	(3,020)
Grant-in-aid received from parent department	2,670
At 31 March 2010	155
Changes in taxpayers' equity for 2010-11	£000
At 1 April 2010	155
Net Expenditure on continuing operations	(2,897)
Grant-in-aid received from parent department	2,526
At 31 March 2011	(216)

Notes to the Accounts

1. Statement of Principal Accounting Policies

a. Basis of preparation

The Children's Commissioner was created as a Corporation Sole under Schedule 1 of the Children Act 2004 and was established following the appointment of the Commissioner in March 2005. Accounts are drawn up in accordance with Treasury Guidance, Annual Reports and Accounts guidance, the Children Act 2004, and the Accounts Direction and the financial memorandum between the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families and the Commissioner dated 12 September 2005, copies of which can be obtained from the Children's Commissioner or Department for Education (DfE). They are drawn up in accordance with the Government Financial Reporting Manual (FRoM). The accounting policies contained in the FRoM apply International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adapted or interpreted for the public sector context. Where the FRoM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of the Children's Commissioner for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. The particular policies adopted by the Children's Commissioner are described below. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items that are considered material to the accounts.

The particular accounting policies adopted by the Children's Commissioner are described below. In accordance with IAS 8, the accounting policies and estimation techniques used are those that are judged to be the most appropriate for the purpose of giving a true and fair view. These policies are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain the most appropriate. They have been applied consistently in dealing with items considered material in relation to the accounts. The OCC considers changes in accounting standards and adopts these when necessary. These accounts have been prepared on a going concern basis.

b. Accounting convention

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention modified to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment, intangible assets and inventories. The Statement of Financial Position at 31 March 2011 shows net liabilities of (£216,000), which takes into account

a provision for dilapidations costs relating to the Children's Commissioner's previous premises of 1 London Bridge. This provision will be due in future years and will be met by future Grant in Aid from the DfE. This is because, under normal conventions applying to parliamentary control over income and expenditure, Grant in Aid may not be issued in advance of need.

c. Grant in aid

Grant in aid received from the in respect of revenue expenditure or relating to general capital expenditure is recognised in the general reserve in the year it is received.

d. Income recognition

Grant income that is receivable for a specific purpose or project is credited to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure over the duration of the activity to which it relates. Other income is recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure on an accruals basis.

e. Pensions

Past and present employees are covered by the provisions of the Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS). The defined benefit schemes are unfunded and are non-contributory except in respect of dependants' benefits. The Children's Commissioner recognises the expected cost of these elements on a systematic and rational basis over the period during which it benefits from employees' services by payment to the PCSPS of amounts calculated on an accruing basis. Liability for payment of future benefits is a charge on the PCSPS. In respect of the defined contribution schemes, the Children's Commissioner recognises the contributions payable for the year. PCSPS also permits employees to opt for a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. The defined benefit schemes are treated for accounting purposes as a defined contribution scheme as required by IAS 26. The defined benefit scheme prepares its own financial statements. A description of the pension schemes is at Note 2a.

f. Project costs

Expenditure on projects funded from grant-in-aid is charged to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure as it is incurred. Project grants payable by the Children's Commissioner are recognised when they fall due for payment.

g. Property, plant and equipment and intangible assets

Assets purchased for use on a continuous basis at a cost in excess of £2500 are initially recorded at cost price. Assets other than construction in progress are re-valued to current replacement cost as at 31 March using price indices for current cost accounting published by the Office for National Statistics, when the effect of their revaluation over time is material. In instances where there are separate individual items of IT hardware which individually fall below the capitalisation threshold, similar items are grouped together and the combined cost is used for the purposes of determining whether they fall with the threshold.

Construction in progress is capitalised at cost. When complete the cost of a construction project is transferred to the relevant asset class as a single item of expenditure.

h. Depreciation and amortisation

Modified historic cost of a non current asset is depreciated or amortised to expected residual value by equal annual instalments from the date of bringing of into operation as follows:

Equipment

- **Equipment** – over four years capital equipment is depreciated over its estimated useful economic life from the month of acquisition.
- **Furniture and fittings** – the cost of improvements to leasehold buildings that have been made are depreciated over the remaining life of the lease.
- **Intangible fixed assets** – intangible fixed assets are amortised over expected useful economic life from the beginning of next calendar month after the acquisition.
- **Software licenses and website** – over four years.

i. Notional charges

The Treasury Financial Reporting Manual requires that the result of operations disclosed in the Operating Cost Statement should reflect the true value of resources consumed. Where a supply of goods or services is received at less than full cost a charge equivalent to the estimated difference is introduced into the Operating Cost Statement.

j. Leases

Leases in which a significant portion of the risks and rewards of ownership are retained by the lessor are classified as operating leases. Payments made and due to be made under an operating lease of real property (net of any benefit received from the lessor) are charged by equal annual instalments to the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure over the period from the date of first occupation until expiry of the lease. Resulting debit balances are classified as prepayments in the Statement of Financial Position. Resulting credit balances that will be eliminated within one year are classified as current liabilities. Operating lease cost are charged to expenditure as they are incurred (see Note 12 for further details).

k. VAT

During 2008-09 the Children's Commissioner became registered for VAT. The majority of the VAT incurred on its expenditure does not relate to a business supply, and as a consequence, it cannot reclaim VAT charged by suppliers. VAT costs incurred are included in each expenditure category and are not identified separately in the accounts. During 2009-10 Children's Commissioner submitted a claim to HMRC for a VAT refund which relates to previously capitalised fit-out costs for our premises. It was determined by HMRC that the output tax was equal to the input tax and the net claim zero. The consideration of these matters resulted in a reduction in the value of the original capitalised fit-out costs and an increase in the amortised rent accrual by an equivalent amount. The net effect on tax payers' equity was zero.

m. Cost of capital

As a result of changes in the FReM for 2010-11, the requirement to recognise a notional cost of capital charge has been removed. The comparative figures for 2009-10 have been restated to reflect the change. However, this changes has a nil impact of either the financial performance or position of the OCC.

n. Segmental analysis

The Children's Commissioner is not required to show a segmental analysis. This is because the quantitative thresholds required for segmental reporting, in accordance with IFRS 8, have not been met.

Notes to the Accounts (continued)

2a. Staff costs

	Staff with a permanent (UK) contract £000	Contract Personnel £000	Total 2010-11 £000	Total 2009-10 £000
Costs of employment				
Salary	1,019	-	1,019	1,136
Social security costs	93	-	93	95
Pension costs	186	-	186	185
Cost of non-employed staff	-	76	76	63
Total	1,298	76	1,374	1,479

The average number of persons employed by the Children's Commissioner during the period expressed as full time equivalents was:

Executive	5	-	5	5
Other personnel	14	3	17	21
Total	19	3	22	26

The salary costs include an accrual of £10,920 for outstanding staff leave in accordance with IAS 19 Employee Benefits. No staff bonuses were paid in 2010-11.

The Principal Civil Service Pension Scheme (PCSPS) is an unfunded multi-employer defined benefit scheme but the Children's Commissioner is unable to identify its share of the underlying assets and liabilities. A full actuarial valuation was carried out as at 31 March 2007. Details can be found in the resource accounts of the Cabinet Office: Civil Superannuation. <http://www.civilservice-pensions.gov.uk/>

For 2010-11, employers' contributions of £186,000 (2009-10 £185,000) were payable to the PCSPS at one of four rates in the range 16.7 to 24.3 per cent of pensionable pay, based on salary bands. Employer contribution rates are reviewed every four years following a full scheme valuation by the Government Actuary. The contribution rates reflect benefits as they are accrued, not when the costs are actually incurred, and reflect past experience of the scheme.

Employees can opt to open a partnership pension account, a stakeholder pension with an employer contribution. No employer's contributions were paid to any of the panel of three appointed stakeholder pension providers.

Notes to the Accounts (continued)

2b. Exit packages

2010-11

There were no exit packages in 2010-11.

2009-10

1	Exit package cost band	Number of compulsory redundancies	Number of other departures agreed	Total number of exit packages by cost band	
2	<£10,000		6	-	6
3	£10,000 - £25,000		3	-	3
4	Total number of exit packages		9	-	9
5	Total resource cost /£0'000		78	-	78

No exit packages were paid in 2010-11. The exit packages above relate to 2009-10. In total £78,000 was paid in respect of redundancy costs.

Redundancy and other departure costs have been paid in accordance with the provisions of the Civil Service Compensation Scheme, a statutory scheme made under the Superannuation Act 1972. Exit costs are accounted for in full in the year of departure. Where the Children's Commissioner has agreed early retirements, the additional costs are met by the Children's Commissioner and not by the Civil Service pension scheme. Ill-health retirement costs are met by the pension scheme and are not included in the table.

Notes to the Accounts (continued)

3. Project expenses

Project	2010-11 £000	2009-10 £000
Safeguarding children and young people	40	96
Developing Participation Networks	30	-
CYP Advisory Groups	54	20
Education	35	-
Healthy Children and Safer Communities	11	-
Asylum	6	26
Stakeholder Engagement	18	34
Takeover Day	15	23
Promoting Children as Positive Citizens	4	-
Building Safer Communities (Youth Justice)	1	-
Response to key health strategies	4	-
BINOCC	3	3
Corporate Publications	15	-
Press Office	28	38
Web and new media	21	-
Web and social media development	3	-
Developing an e-newsletter	1	-
Youth justice & anti-social behaviour	-	22
Family Research	-	75
Complaints	-	35
UNCRC 20 Anniversary Celebrations	-	30
Mental Health	-	7
Equalities	-	20
Annual Theme - Gun & Knife Crime	-	8
Website maintenance and content	-	42
Participation Programme	-	42
Other Projects	-	14
Project expenditure total	289	536

Notes to the Accounts (continued)

4. Other operating expenses

	2010-11 £000	2009-10 £000
IT Support costs	47	56
Corporate communications	-	10
Travel	16	5
Attendance at meetings and conferences	2	4
Training	14	27
Administration services	39	39
Office supplies	6	8
Legal and professional expenses	10	35
Miscellaneous expenditures	4	8
Recruitment	24	97
Telephone	36	61
Auditors' remuneration		
- External Auditors - statutory audit work	23	23
- External Auditors - other assurance work	-	2
- Internal Auditors	19	27
Governance Costs	1	14
Accommodation costs	300	292
Heating & Lighting	6	10
Dilapidations Costs – 1 London Bridge	55	-
Relocation Costs	6	-
Non-cash items		
Depreciation & amortisation	257	307
Loss on Disposal	18	-
Provision provided for in year	372	
	1,255	1,025

The Children's Commissioner lease at No 1 London Bridge expired in March 2011. At the cessation date of the lease rent payable over the five year term was £ 655,000. The rent forms part of the accommodation costs charged under Other Operating Expenses above. A new occupancy agreement is due to be signed in June 2011 for a period of three years. The rent payable over the term is £254,693. A rent free period from 11 February to 31 March 11 was provided as part of this agreement.

The auditor has not received any remuneration for non-audit work.

5. Income

	2010-11 £000	2009-10 £000
Project specific grant	20	14
Other operating income	1	6
	21	20

Notes to the Accounts (continued)

6. Property, plant and equipment

	Furniture & Fittings £000	Equipment £000	Total £000
Valuation/cost			
At 1 April 2010	1,143	134	1,277
Additions	29	6	35
Disposals	(18)	-	(18)
At 31 March 2011	1,154	140	1,294
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2010	918	119	1,037
Charge for Year	206	15	221
At 31 March 2011	1,124	134	1,258
Net book value			
At 31 March 2011	30	6	36
At 1 April 2010	225	15	240

	Furniture & Fittings £000	Equipment £000	Total £000
Valuation/cost			
At 1 April 2009	1,321	134	1,455
Capitalisation VAT	(178)	-	(178)
Additions	-	-	-
At 31 March 2010	1,143	134	1,277
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2009	779	97	876
Capitalisation VAT	(108)	-	(108)
Charge for year	247	22	269
At 31 March 2010	918	119	1,037
Net book value			
At 31 March 2010	225	15	240
At 1 April 2009	472	37	509

The Assets are stated at cost as the net change in value when using modified historical cost convention is not material. The Children's Commissioner owns all of these assets and none of them are leased.

Notes to the Accounts (continued)

7. Intangible assets

	Software Licenses £000	Website £000	Total £000
Valuation/cost			
At 1 April 2010	100	50	150
Additions	-	-	-
At 31 March 2011	100	50	150
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2010	62	25	87
Charge for Year	28	8	36
At 31 March 2011	90	33	123
Net book value			
At 31 March 2011	10	17	27
At 1 April 2010	38	25	63

	Software Licenses £000	Website £000	Total £000
Valuation/cost			
At 1 April 2009	100	50	150
Additions	-	-	-
At 31 March 2010	100	50	150
Amortisation			
At 1 April 2009	37	13	50
Charge for year	25	12	37
At 31 March 2010	62	25	87
Net book value			
At 31 March 2010	38	25	63
At 1 April 2009	63	37	100

Notes to the Accounts (continued)

8. Trade and other receivables

	2010-11 £000	2009-10 £000
8a. Amounts falling due after one year		
Rent deposit	89	89
Pre-payments	-	4
	89	93
8b. Amounts falling due within one year		
Pre-payments	9	17
Trade receivables	-	1
Staff receivables	13	2
	22	20
8c. Intra-Government balances	-	-
Balance with other central Government bodies	-	3
Intra-government balances	-	3
Balances with bodies external to government	111	110
Total trade and other receivables at 31 March 2011	111	113

Notes to the Accounts (continued)

9. Cash and cash equivalents

	2010-11 £000	2009-10 £000
Government Banking Service	137	16
Commercial Bank & cash in hand	6	8
	143	24

10. Trade and other payables

Amounts falling due within one year

10a. Analysis by type	2010-11 £000	2009-10 £000
Trade payables	26	107
Accruals	136	128
PAYE	(1)	18
National Insurance contributions	-	13
Pension contributions	-	19
	161	285

The accruals include £10,920 (2009-10 £11,500) in relation to untaken staff leave at the year end, in accordance with IAS 19 Employee Benefits.

10c. Intra-government balances	2010-11 £000	2009-10 £000
Balance with other central Government bodies	-	71
Balance with local authorities	-	1
Intra-government balances	-	72
Balance with bodies external to government	161	213
Total creditors at 31 March 2011	161	285

Notes to the Accounts (continued)

11. Provision for Dilapidations - 1 London Bridge

	<u>2010-11</u>	<u>2009-10</u>
	£000	£000
Balance at 1 April	-	-
Provided for in year	372	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Balance at 31 March	372	-

The provision relates to estimated dilapidation costs for 1 London Bridge.

12. Commitments under leases

Operating leases

The Children's Commissioner has entered into operating lease contracts for the provision of a photocopier, post franking machine, hot and cold water systems and office accommodation. At 31 March 2011, the total future minimum lease payments will be met on the following dates:

<u>Year of payment</u>	<u>2010-11</u>	<u>2009-10</u>
	£'000	£'000
Buildings		
Not later than one year	85	115
Later than one year and not later then five years	170	-
Later than five years	-	-
Other		
Not later than one year	3	2
Later than one year and not later then five years	7	3
Later than five years	-	-

13. Related party transactions

The Children's Commissioner is sponsored by the Department for Education which is regarded as a related party. There were material transactions with the Department for Education in respect of Grant-in-Aid. None of the Board members, key managerial staff or other related parties has undertaken any material transactions with the Children's Commissioner during the year.

14. Financial instruments

The Children's Commissioner has no borrowings and relies primarily on departmental grants for its cash requirements, and is therefore not exposed to liquidity risk. It has no material deposits, and all material assets and liabilities are denominated in sterling so it is not exposed to interest rate risk or currency risk.

15. Events after the reporting period

There have been no events after the balance sheet date requiring an adjustment to the financial statements. The Accounting Officer issued the accounts for issue on 17 June 2011.



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ISBN 978-0-10-297176-7



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