



Directorate of Children's Services
Director **Steve Beynon**

ContactPoint Data Quality Strategy

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this Data Quality Strategy is to engage partners that are required or permitted to supply information to ContactPoint in an agreed way forward to assess data quality to enable data sources to supply accurate information in a format that is compatible with ContactPoint requirements.

It is hoped that local ContactPoint data source partners will sign up to this strategy demonstrating their commitment to the place of ContactPoint (and the importance the quality of data it contains) in supporting the Every Child Matters agenda.

Data quality is vital to ContactPoint. Good data allows informed decisions to be made and positive actions to occur.

Data quality targets will be set for Local Authorities by the National ContactPoint Team and may in the future be included in Joint Area Reviews and other periodic audits of an organisation's performance.

Data quality can be maintained two ways;

- Local ContactPoint Administrators working directly with records using the functions provided by ContactPoint; or
- Working with partner organisations to improve data quality at source.

Clearly it will be beneficial for both ContactPoint administration and organisations feeding data to ContactPoint for the best possible data to be in source systems.

2. Background

What is ContactPoint?

ContactPoint will be the quick way to find out who else is working with the same child or young person, making it easier to deliver more coordinated support.

ContactPoint is a basic online directory that will be available to authorised staff who need it to do their jobs. It is a key part of the Every Child Matters programme to improve outcomes for children.

The purpose of ContactPoint is to help improve services to children with a strong emphasis on early intervention and prevention. Currently practitioners can spend days trying to find out who else is working with the same child or unknowingly duplicate work that is already being carried out by another service.

ContactPoint will contain data on every child and young person in England aged 0-18. The data that will be held on ContactPoint will be basic information comprising of:

- Name
- Parents/Carers names
- Address
- Gender
- Date of Birth
- Parents/Carers Contact details
- A unique identifying number
- Other Services involved
- Educational setting
- CAF – if undertaken
- Lead Professional – if appointed
- Primary Medical Practitioner
- Health Visitor
- School Nurse
- Midwife – where the person has not attained the age of one

3. Timescales

ContactPoint is planned to 'go live' in a number of Early Adopter Local Authority areas from September 2008. The Isle of Wight is scheduled to go live in March 2009.

4. National Project Milestone

It is a required implementation milestone of the national ContactPoint project that Local Authorities produce a Data Quality Strategy and data quality plans for agreed local high priority data sources that will connect to ContactPoint by 30th April 2009. These are to be agreed by a ContactPoint Project Board or equivalent body.

5. Statutory Basis

Children Act 2004

Local Authorities, National Partners and persons or bodies identified in Section 12 of the Children Act 2004 must provide information to ContactPoint. (See Appendix A)

Every Local Authority in England is responsible for all of the child/young person records that appear on ContactPoint within their geographical boundary. For this they are classed as the *Accountable Body*. To ensure that all records are updated and fed in to ContactPoint close partnership working is needed.

Data Protection Act 1998

All data controllers have existing responsibilities under principle 4 of the Data Protection Act 1998, which states that *“Personal data shall be accurate and, where necessary, kept up to date”*, ContactPoint does not introduce anything new in this regard. However, the implementation of ContactPoint will make data quality issues more visible because the user-base will be much larger than that of a single case management system and because data from individual systems will be matched with and compared to data from many other systems. Also, any source system data that cannot be matched automatically to the ContactPoint dataset will generate an exception that will need to be addressed by a local or national ContactPoint Management Team.

6. Good Practice

The Information Commissioner’s Office *Framework Code of Practice for Sharing Personal Information* section 3, Information Standards suggests that organisations should have:

- Methods for making sure that shared information is recorded in a compatible format.
- Methods for checking regularly that shared information is of sufficient quality.
- Methods for making sure that any problems with personal information, for example, inaccuracy, are also rectified by all the organisations that have received the information.

The Framework Code goes on to suggest that; Different organisations may record the same information in different ways. For example, a person’s date of birth can be recorded in various formats. This can lead to records being mismatched or becoming corrupted. Before sharing information you must make sure that the organisations involved have a common way of recording key information, for example by deciding on a standard format for recording people’s names. If you cannot establish a common standard for recording information, you must develop a reliable means of converting the information.

7. Local Standards around data quality

To ensure that data is of good quality and therefore will ensure accurate information to be supplied to ContactPoint, principles that support improvement of data quality need to be followed. Such principles are contained in each partner organisation’s data quality strategies and policies.

The overarching Isle of Wight Council Data Quality Policy and Strategy has the following objectives:

- To ensure that the information we use is of high quality, relevant, consistent, timely, comprehensive and held securely and confidentially.
- To put in place arrangements at senior level to secure the quality of data we use to manage our

services and demonstrate our performance

- To make clear what we expect from our staff and members in terms of the standards of data quality
- To put in place systems, policies and procedures to ensure the highest possible data quality, particularly where information is shared with partners.
- To ensure that we put in place the right resources, and in particular have the right people with the right skills, to ensure we have timely and accurate performance information
- To ensure we have the right controls in place to ensure we meet what is expected of us by central government and the electorate
- To ensure that data is stored, used and shared in accordance with law including the Data Protection Act and Freedom of Information Act.

The ContactPoint Data Quality Strategy both follows and supports these objectives and recognises those of partner organisations in relation to maintaining and supporting data quality.

8. Data Quality Principles

The Audit Commission has defined six dimensions of data quality:

1. **Accuracy:** data should be accurate for its intended purpose
2. **Completeness:** data should be complete – should not contain invalid records or missing data
3. **Relevance:** data captured should be relevant to the purpose for which it is used
4. **Reliability:** data used should reflect stable and consistent data collection processes
5. **Timeliness:** data collection should be captured as quickly as possible after the event
6. **Validity:** data should be recorded in compliance with relevant rules and definitions

The Isle of Wight ContactPoint Data Quality Strategy will use these as the basis for assessing data quality in potential source systems and expects that data controllers of the required and permitted data sources to be used by ContactPoint will seek to address data quality and plan for improvement where risks and issues are recognised, by undertaking a regular cycle of quality assurance.

9. National and Local ContactPoint feeds

How can data be improved in the main local feeds?

This strategy suggests that required and permitted local data sources feeding data to ContactPoint to use to following tools to ensure the best possible data quality supply:

- a. Local Data Quality Tool
- b. Impact Appraisal and Options Assessment
- c. Data Quality Campaigns

A. Local Data Quality Tool

ContactPoint pre-deployment work includes testing the quality of data sources using the Local Data Quality Tool (LDQT), and facilitating improvements where indicated. It is important to remember that partners, as data controllers, already have a duty to ensure the quality of the data in their systems, under the Data Protection Act 1998.

The LDQT is a centrally hosted, secure web-based software application that allows authorised users to log in and submit a data file to be tested in a specified XML format. The tool tests the data against a set of validation rules, and then sends a results file back to the user with record IDs, error codes, and reformatted addresses, as appropriate. It also creates a statistical report showing Red/Amber/Green (RAG) status by validation rule and for the file overall. Users can only see the statistics for their own organisation and their partners, but the national team can see statistics for all.

Screen shot example of LDQT report:

Report Statistics

[View Validation Rule Boundaries](#)

44 items found, displaying 1 to 10. [First/Prev] 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 [Next/Last]

Error	Statistic	Count	Records	RAG
53	Service Provision - missing all Service Provider details	1860	100.00%	Red
46	Service Provider - invalid Address	1860	100.00%	Red
51	Service Provision - Missing Service Provision information	1860	100.00%	Red
18	Parent/Carer - invalid Address	1860	100.00%	Red
52	Service Provision - missing key Service Provider details	1860	100.00%	Red
13	Child - invalid Address	608	32.69%	Red
11	Child - Date of Birth more than 18 yrs or in the future	122	6.56%	Red
4	Child - missing Date of Birth	46	2.47%	Red
5	Child - invalid Family Name format	2	0.11%	Amber
25	Potential non-unique record	21	1.13%	Green

Export options: [CSV](#) | [Excel](#)

User Comments

Nothing found to display.

The LDQT does not perform any data matching tests, as it does not store any child data. A thorough risk assessment has been undertaken for the LDQT and approved by the ContactPoint Security Architect, the DCSF IT Security Officer, the ContactPoint Project Director, and SRO. Independent testing and numerous other measures have been taken to ensure the LDQT is secure and compliant with the relevant legislation.

Local Authorities were trained on the LDQT between May and August 2007 with LA nominated users being granted access upon completion of the training. We now have the capability locally to assist partner organisations in using the LDQT.

This tool is suggested as the first part of the process of improving data quality in source systems.

Use of the LDQT on potential data sources is considered a requirement of the Isle of Wight ContactPoint Data Quality Strategy. However, partner organisations may have alternative methods to improving data quality than suggested in b. and c.

All three tools will be used by Isle of Wight Council Children's Services as they there are considered good practice.

B. Impact Appraisal and Options Assessment

The ContactPoint project is supported by a number of tools that are supplied to Local Authorities via the Local Authority Readiness Assessment (LARA) website. A data quality improvement tool is available. One element of this tool is a 'Data Quality Appraisal and Impact Assessment'. This tool has been adapted and simplified to produce a form (Appendix B) that can be used by potential local data sources to:

- Identify problems with data quality using the 6 Audit Commission dimensions
- Describe the risk, and impact of the risk, if identified data quality problems are not addressed
- Describe strategies to address the risk
- Describe the benefits of addressing the risk

This tool is suggested as the second part of the process of improving data quality in source systems

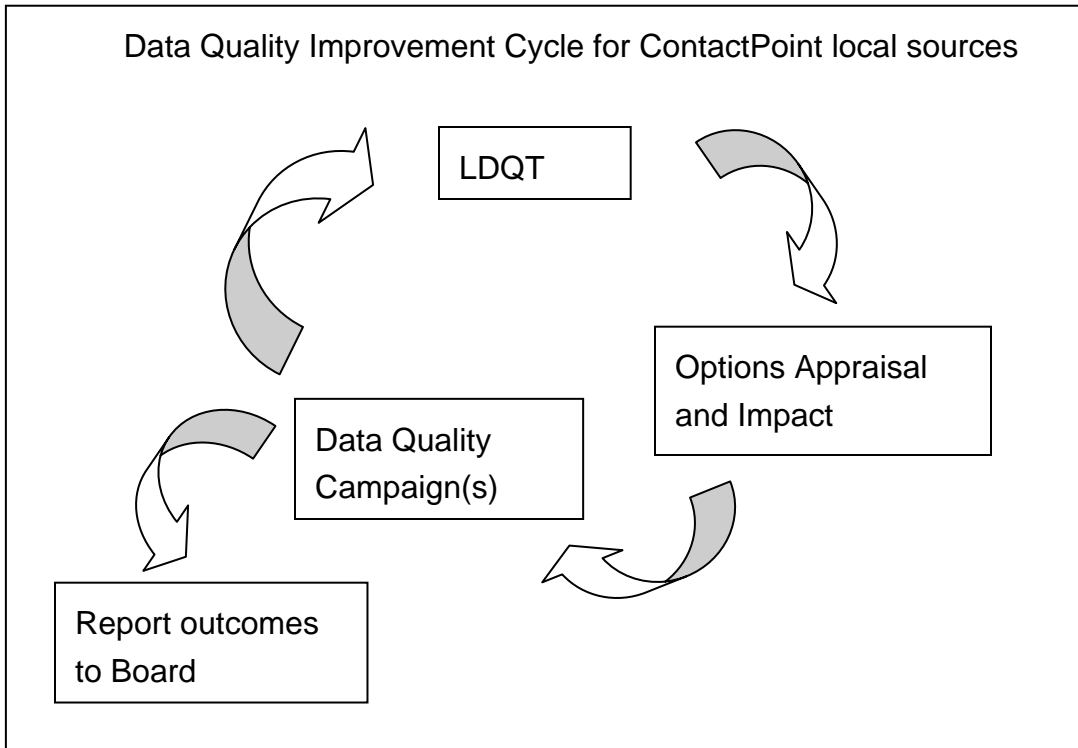
C. Data Quality Campaigns

What is a data quality campaign?

A data quality 'campaign' is a time-limited project with the aim of improving an aspect of data quality. This might be as specific as agreeing the format for postcode data or as broad as running a general awareness campaign about the benefits of good record keeping.

In the context of this strategy a data quality campaign will be undertaken to address the issues identified from the Impact Appraisal and Options Assessment. A form is offered in Appendix C to record the campaign. This in essence becomes the data quality plan for a source system.

Once a campaign has been run its success can be reviewed using the LDQT so that the process becomes cyclical. Outcomes of campaigns will be reported to and monitored by the Integrated Working Board.



This tool is suggested as the third part of the process of improving data quality in source systems

10. Local Sources identified on the Isle of Wight

The following local data sources have been identified:

Source organisation	System	Required/permitted to supply data	Priority for feed to ContactPoint
Children's Services	SWIFT	required	High
Children's Services	Capita EMS	required	High
Children's Services	Early Intervention Service Database	required	High
Children's Centres and LA funded nurseries	Variety – EXCEL databases	Required (where not held centrally)	High
IoW NHS Primary Care Trust	Child Health Database	required	High
St.Catherine's Non-maintained Special School	Phoenix	required	High
Ryde Independent School	West Country Business System	required	High
IoW College	System to be identified	required	Low
IoW Fire and Rescue	No system identified	permitted	Low
LA Housing Dept	No system identified	permitted	Low
Local Third Sector organisations	No systems identified	permitted	To be determined locally

Local Cross-Border data sources:

Source	System	Lead Local authority	Required/permitted	Priority for feed to ContactPoint
Connexions	CareerVision Core Plus	Portsmouth	required	High
Wessex Youth Offending Team	YOIS	Hampshire	required	Medium
Hampshire Police	No system identified	Hampshire	required	Medium

11. Proposed Timescale for connecting local sources to ContactPoint

Source	March 09	April 09	May 09	June 09	July 09	Aug 09	Sept 09	Oct 09	Nov 09	Dec 09	Jan 10	Feb 10	Mar 10	April 10	May 10	Jun 10	July 10
SWIFT																	
Capita EMS																	
EIS																	
Health Database																	
Non-maintained and Independent Schools																	
Connexions*																	
YOIS*																	
IoW College																	

*Dependent on cross-border deployment

12. In Summary

For each data source:

- Measure current quality of data
- Identify where there are errors
- Analyse the cause
- Take action to resolve
- Measure for improvement
- Cyclic activity – show evidence of improvement

Appendix A

Bodies required to provide information	Bodies permitted to provide information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Authorities • Primary Care Trusts • Acute Care Trusts • Strategic Health Authorities • Special Health Authorities • Police and British Transport Police authorities • Police forces including the British Transport Police • Local probation board • Youth offending team • Prisons • Youth Offending Institutes • Secure Training Centres • Any person providing services under section 114 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 (Connexions) • Learning and Skills Council • Maintained schools • FE institutions • Special Schools (including non-maintained special schools) • Independent Schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government departments headed by a Secretary of State • Childcare providers (registered under part 3 of the Childcare Act 2006) • Voluntary organisations which hold data on children in the area • Registered social landlords • Healthcare professionals (regulated by a body specified in Section 25(3) of the NHS Reform and Health Care Professions Act 2002) • The Fire and Rescue Authority • Children and Family Court Advisory Service (CAFCASS).

National Partners

- 1) KIDS
- 2) Barnardo's
- 3) The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children
- 4) NCH
- 5) Church of England Children's Society
- 6) The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP) (an affiliate of the Serious Organised Crime Agency), so far as it is exercising functions in relation to the sexual abuse of children
- 7) The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CaFCASS)

Appendix B: Data Quality Options and Impact Assessment

Improving Data Quality – Options Appraisal and Impact Assessment

Data Source _____

Date _____

Data Owner _____

This appraisal and impact assessment of data quality is part of a process to improve Data Quality and assist compliance with the Data Protection Act.

- 1. Identify the problem (is it one or more of the following? Tick dimension(s) and describe briefly))**

Dimension	Audit Commission Description	Tick	Describe the issues
Accuracy	Data should be accurate for its intended purpose and the need for accuracy balanced against the importance of the data attribute, in terms of its use and the cost or effort of collection		
Completeness	Data should be complete – should not contain invalid records or missing data		
Validity	Data should be recorded in compliance with relevant rules and definitions		
Reliability	Data should reflect stable and consistent data collection processes		
Timeliness	Data collection should be captured as quickly as possible after the event		
Relevance	Data captured should be relevant to the purpose for which it is used		
No issues with any of the above			

2. Describe the risk if this problem is not addressed:

There is a risk that...

3. Who is best placed to deal with the risk? _____

4. What is the impact of the risk? (e.g. on practitioner time, running costs, quality of service?)

5. Options to reduce the risk:

Options	Possible Strategies	Recommended course of action (tick)
Prevent the risk occurring		
Reduce the risk		
Accept the risk		
Contingency if risk occurs		
Transfer the risk		

6. What are the benefits to the business of addressing this problem?

Appendix C: Possible Template for recording a Data Quality Campaign

Objectives	Strategies to be used	Expected Outcomes	Who responsible?	By When?	Resources Required	Objective achieved?
<i>Relating to the finding of LDQT reports and Options and Impact assessment</i>	<i>Relating to the finding of LDQT reports and Options and Impact assessment</i>	<i>What do you expect to achieve by implementing this campaign?</i>				<i>If 'no' review strategies used and plan new campaign</i>