

Documents and news from and for local authorities and Children's Trusts



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Early years

[Excellence Strategy for Early Years and Childcare](#)

North Lincolnshire, November 2010

The overall aim of this strategy is to improve the outcomes for children and young people across all of North Lincolnshire and, through a range of challenge and support strategies, ensure that all early years' providers, childminders and children's centres have access to the resources that will enable them to improve life chances for young people. The aspiration is for all schools, early years providers, childminders and children's centres to be rated good or better by 2012.



Early Years Quality Improvement Strategy 2010-11

Oxfordshire, August 2010

This document provides an overview of the Quality Improvement Scheme offered by the Early Years Service and sets out what schools and settings can expect from it.

Some components of what works are identified:

- The quality of the early years environment and the calibre and qualifications of staff and leadership are key to making a difference to whether and how each child reaches his or her potential in later years.
- The pedagogy needs to be developmentally appropriate to enable children to achieve their potential. It needs to include a balance of child-initiated and play-based learning and adult-led activities.
- Initiatives that boost the home learning environment by providing culturally sensitive outreach and family support can reduce the damaging influences of poverty on children's life chances.
- Providing affordable childcare to support low income families returning to work is essential to reduce child poverty. It also allows children from all backgrounds to access the benefits of an early curriculum.
- Strategies and practices that help children and their families make a positive transition to early years provision and then into mainstream school are particularly helpful for all children, but particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- Interventions designed to develop communication, language and literacy may help narrow the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers and benefit children with English as an Additional Language.



Disability

[Identifying Children with Disability in Luton: A Data Matching Exercise](#)

Luton, September 2010

An executive summary of work which aimed to support joint planning and commissioning by helping to identify the number of children in Luton with a disability through understanding which children are in contact with statutory services.

This work follows on from a needs assessment carried out in 2009 and compares numbers of children with disability in contact with services to prevalence estimates of children with disability provided by that report. This work also provides a breakdown of service contacts by geographical area, age, ethnicity, and category of disability. The results should help identify gaps in service provision, or at least prompt questions on why service contacts are low in certain geographical areas or population groups.

Partnership working

[Breaking Down the Barriers](#)

Bury, November 2010

A report on a Bury Children's Trust Network Event, which was held on November 2, 2010. Network events allow those who deliver services to children and young people to increase their understanding of each other. Given the changes brought about by the new government, and as part of the continual need to increase understanding between the public and third sectors, it was thought that a network event based around these issues would be opportune.

The resultant network working group included both third and public sector colleagues and agreed the objectives for the event, which were to identify:

- the barriers that exist between the third sector and the public sector
- ways in which to improve partnership working and input into the next Children and Young People's Plan
- some common areas of concern in a changing environment.



Workforce

[Children's Workforce Strategy 2010-12](#)

Havering, November 2010

This updated workforce strategy identifies key actions to be undertaken in order for the workforce to support the realisation of the outcomes set out in the Children and Young People's Plan.

It has been developed by the Children's Workforce Strategy Group, which consists of representatives from key stakeholders across the Children's Trust, including public, private and voluntary sectors, as well as children and young people and their families. This strategic group reports directly to the Havering Children's Trust Executive.

Early intervention

[Nottingham, Early Intervention City: Moving to Phase Two](#)

Nottingham, October 2010

Nottingham is seen as one of the leading lights in driving the shift towards effective early intervention. After an innovative two-year grant-funded pilot programme, this discussion paper outlines the next steps to create a mainstreamed approach.

Early intervention is high on the national agenda as a key principle to achieve better outcomes at less cost. Early intervention is an approach to prevent a problem which is likely to escalate. It is often targeted and intensive and may be a model of support or a prescriptive programme. There is a clear, interlinked relationship with prevention, which is seen as a broader continuum of more universally applied support systems to increase protective factors and decrease risk factors.

There is an embryonic and emerging evidence base for early intervention nationally. It is not a one-off fix, but a sophisticated process and a way of thinking that could be applied and tested across most services and systems. Establishing what works best at local level, providing effective return on investment, is critical and long-term.

This paper looks at the respective characteristics of the early intervention projects that are working well and not working well and at the proposed work strands for phase two.



Engagement Strategy

Stoke-on-Trent, November 2010

This document sets out the context for strategic engagement with children, young people and their families and how the Children's Trust will drive forward its commitment to ensuring that services are designed and delivered to respond to their needs and ultimately improve outcomes for children and young people.

It provides staff within the Trust with clear guidance and expectations in relation to engagement and will enable children, young people and their families to see how engagement in Stoke-on-Trent shapes change.

The strategy has been developed by the Trust's Engagement Implementing Change Group and takes on board the comments provided during consultation with children and young people and their families and wider stakeholders.

Engagement Toolkit

Stoke-on-Trent, October 2010

This toolkit is designed to support the engagement strategy by providing practitioners with knowledge, understanding and examples of practical applications and ideas that will help them to develop their skills and inform their practice, as well as providing systems to help partnership working and prevent duplication.

Report on the Have Your Say Survey, 2010

Essex, January 2010

The Have Your Say questionnaires were developed in 2009 as part of consultation activities to evaluate services provided to children and young people by the Essex Children's Trust. They were completed between February and October 2010 and included targeted groups of Traveller children and looked after children, plus a range of pupils in primary schools, secondary schools and FE colleges.

In total, 724 children and young people answered the questionnaires during 2010, of whom 185 were at primary school, 256 at secondary school and 283 at FE college.

The total number of respondents who are looked after or who have special needs is sufficient to be able to analyse these two groups in comparison to all respondents. It is also possible to look qualitatively at the findings for young carers and primary pupils from a Traveller of Irish heritage background, although some caution must be taken in interpreting the results.



Are we Listening?: Evaluation of Looked After Children's Participation in LAC Reviews

Luton, September 2010

This is a summary report on a project commissioned by The Corporate Parenting Board to gather the views of all key stakeholders - children and young people, carers, Independent Reviewing Officers and social workers - about the processes by which children in care are listened to, with a particular focus on the statutory review system.

The project identified areas where stakeholders want change. At the 'Your Day Your Say' event for looked after children on 27th July 2010, young people said they felt the following were amongst the most important areas where some improvements could be made:

- follow-up on actions/views
- getting feedback when it was needed
- being able to chair one's own LAC review
- better LAC review planning.

Children in Care Strategy 2010-12

Luton, November 2010

Nationally, and locally, there remain a number of gaps between the achievements and outcomes of children in care and other children, and this strategy outlines how the council will work to bridge that gap. Children in care often face negative outcomes in their adulthood and research indicates they are over-represented amongst:

- people with no formal educational qualifications;
- the homeless;
- the prison population;
- the unemployed;
- people using Mental Health Services;
- teenage parents;
- those who are not in employment, education or training on leaving school.

An evidence-based approach to the strategy has been adopted including:

- identifying and analysing performance and activity data on children in care;
- drawing on national research;
- working with, and listening to, stakeholders including children and young people in care.

