



Policy & Research Briefing

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A short guide for Trust partners on what's new in policy and research

This month has been as busy as ever for Children's Services with some highlights that are of note. As part of the learning from Lord Lamings report into safeguarding services, a conference that a number of staff attended in Leeds provides us with additional information. The key findings from this event have been summarised by the Plymouth Safeguarding Board Team and you can find this on page 4. The next milestone will be the Government's response to the Laming report which will detail how they expect services for children to address the 53 recommendations accepted on receiving the report. Over the next few months, lead by Mairead MacNeil, AD Children's Social Care, we will all be kept up to date on the actions that we will all need to contribute to implementing these recommendations.



A report to Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Panel from Plymouth Youth Offending Service described the new Key Performance indicators which have a greater focus on 'joined up' working between partner agencies. The service will now be reporting 12 indicators quarterly, around Youth Offending. The Youth Offending Service have set ambitious targets;

- over the next year they expect to achieve a 3% reduction in the rates of re-offending;
- a target of 95% of young people who will complete community interventions or
- young people on release from secure estate, who will have access to suitable accommodation.
- the engagement of young people who offend in Education, Employment or Training.

The Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Panel also heard about the effective work that the Streetwise project is conducting across the city. Streetwise forms part of our proposal for the Youth Crime Action Plan funding that the city has attracted (there will be more on this in future issues). Its purpose is to target children and young people in our city who are at high risk of participating in anti-social behaviour and who may have begun to commit offences. Some of the initiatives used in Keyham,

Devonport and Whitleigh aimed at getting young people off the street on a Friday and Saturday night and have proved very successful according to police intelligence in the city.



I hope you find this edition of the Policy Brief helpful and interesting and do let us know if there are services and achievements that we should be featuring.

With Best Wishes
Richenda Broad
 Policy and Planning Manager

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Focus on: Implementation Plans- Being Healthy. Priority 2 Reducing Health Inequalities

Champion: Paul O’Sullivan Children’s Trust Executive, Director for Children & Families Health at PCT



Last month’s briefing referred to the new joint strategy for emotional well being and mental health of children and young people that had been approved by the Children’s Trust board. Alongside the continued improvement in service delivery, **the development of this strategy has been a key element of the implementation plan during 2008/09.** The implementation plan and strategy is led by the Emotional Well Being & Mental Health (EWB & MH) partnership which has representation from a wide range of partners including schools, social care, voluntary & community sector partners, Youth Offending service, Educational support and psychology services and Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services. A wider group of stakeholders were involved during the consultation on the new strategy including parents and children & young people themselves.

Level of Need in Plymouth – in accordance with national prevalence 10% (5,700) of children and young people will have a mental health disorder. At the same time 15% (8,100) of children and young people will have mild emotional and behavioral difficulties or the early stages of an emerging mental health disorder. This is not evenly distributed with some communities experiencing a higher rate of mental health disorder e.g. Children in Care, Young Offenders, Children with Learning Disabilities.

Strategic Aims

Our new strategy builds on some of the excellent developments that have already taken place in the city and that have been recognized as examples of good practice nationally. Most of all it sets out how all partners have a role from creating an environment that promotes healthy development & resilience through to providing effective and timely services for those in need. This is expressed through the following aims:

1. Improve the mental health of all children and young people.
2. Develop shared understanding and collective responsibility for C&YP’s emotional wellbeing and mental health.
3. Agencies will work in partnership to promote good mental health; intervene early when problems first start to emerge; meet the needs of C&YP with established or complex problems.
4. Provide mental health care and support that is based upon the best available evidence and exceeds minimum core standards; being both needs based and provided by staff with the right range of skills and competencies.

Other areas: Success for the Plan: Winning a BID

In addition to developing the strategy the EWB & MH partnership have also been successful in its bid to participate in the national pilot of providing targeted mental health support through schools, commonly know as TAMHS. This will complement the work of SEAL, Healthy Schools and Health Schools Plus. At the same time work is taking place to revise the existing model for the delivery of mental health services to support early identification and support, providing care more locally and in an integrated way where appropriate. With all this underway a more detailed implementation plan is currently being written to guide implementation of our new strategy. The main areas of work are summarised below against the key outcomes.

Strategic Outcome 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackling Stigma • Healthy Schools Plus 	Strategic Outcome 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesign of Comprehensive CAMHS
Strategic Outcome 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TAMHS • Targeted Services for LD 	Strategic Outcome 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Commissioning • Workforce Development • Communication • Co-location & IM&T

Performance Measures of the Plan

Progress will be measured using the national indicators for improving Emotional Health and Wellbeing, and Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services

The National Indicators include:

50 – Emotional Health of Children – as measured through the Tell US Survey

51 – Effectiveness of CAMHS – assessed through 4 proxy measures

58 – Emotional & Behavioural Health of Children in Care – measure still being developed

This priority is also a Local Area Agreement in Plymouth.

For further details about the plan and or the strategy please contact: Candice.sainsbury@plymouth.gov.uk

Family Nurse Partnership, Support for young parents – Latest News

This joint DCSF/DoH pilot project has been running in Plymouth since September 2008. It is a structured programme offered to at risk, first time young parents from early pregnancy until the child is 2 yrs old. FNP is underpinned by the theories of attachment, self efficacy and human ecology, and nurses have additional skills and knowledge in areas such as building a therapeutic relationship, motivational interviewing and behaviour change.

An independent evaluation of the first year of the FNP, published in 2008 showed that:

- FNP is welcomed by hard to reach families & reaches clients who are likely to benefit most;
- Engagement with fathers was good;
- FNP nurses are seeing changes take place in health behaviour, relationships, parental role and maternal well-being;
- Early signs that clients now have aspirations for the future and cope better with pregnancy, labour and parenthood.

So far, 53 young women have been recruited to the Plymouth pilot. Most are in the 17-18 age range, and come from those localities with the highest rates of teenage conceptions - North West, South East and South West. Common themes emerging with the more complex cases include low literacy, poor attachment experiences, mental health problems, domestic violence and involvement with social care. Spaces on the programme are filling up fast, so if you know of anyone who would benefit from FNP, please contact :

Anne Dixon 07789 504732.



National Recognition in the House of Lords for Strengthening Families Roll Out



Staff from Parent Partnership were recently invited to the Changing People, Changing Places event at the House of Lords in recognition of the success of the Strengthening Families Programme roll out in Plymouth. Dr Debbie Allen and Lindsey Coombes from Oxford Brookes University invited Angela Archer and Emily Wilson to attend the event after working in Plymouth to train and mentor facilitators for the programme. Strengthening Families is delivered by multi-agency teams of facilitators working with parents and young people to improve family relationships, communication and behaviour. The courses have been so popular that Parent Partnership is now managing a major expansion of this work to increase the number of courses available, both as a universal service and to provide support to Families at Risk. Strengthening Families is just one of the evidence-based parenting programmes being rolled out in the city as part of the Parent and Family Support Strategy. Current courses being planned include Incredible Years 6 – 8, Incredible Years Babies and Toddlers 0 – 3, and Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities.

If you would like more information about any of the parenting programmes mentioned here, please contact

Parent Partnership on 01752 258933 or email angela.archer@plymouth.gov.uk

Integrated Children's System (ICS) - Update

Staff are reminded to familiarise themselves with the recent communications on recording in CareFirst. It is particularly important when duplicating activities and classifications across sibling groups that details are accurate for each individual child. Questionnaires should be authorised promptly after completion. You will have hopefully noticed some improvement in the performance of CareFirst recently following the moving of the database to new servers. This forms part of a broader improvement plan for CareFirst with the aim of creating a more user friendly system. Further suggestions on improvements can be made via philip.segurola@plymouth.gov.uk or the ICS Delivery Team.

With the launch of the Policy Toolkit managers are asked to be pro active in including the ICS Delivery Team at an early stage as new policies invariably have an impact on recording/reporting on CareFirst.

RIP Prompt-The Path to Independence

Research in Practice Publishes Prompts biannually to help inform local policy and strategy development. Prompt 5 Focuses on care leavers and how their transition into adulthood is often 'accelerated and compressed' compared to young people in the general population. They form a very vulnerable group and need holistic support to help them achieve positive outcomes.

The Children Leaving Care Act 2000 charges LA's Corporate Parenting with duties to coordinate support up to 21 years of age and to keep in touch beyond this if they are in full time education or have disabilities.

A key conclusion of the report is that Corporate Parenting must be developed to mirror what most parents do to support their young people into their early 20's. To read the full document email Abigail.jago@plymouth.gov.uk

POLICY

Policy Toolkit

We all know that effective policies and procedures provide the essential framework that informs our actions during the course of our work. Over the past year, the Policy and Planning Team has been working closely with colleagues from across social care teams and the corporate centre to develop and review relevant policies and procedures.

The idea of having an easy to follow 'policy toolkit' came from the strong belief that all policies, procedures, guidance and protocols, regardless of their size and impact should be:

- Developed to a consistently high standard
- Up to date & endorsed
- Multi agency in focus where appropriate
- Accessed & understood by all staff
- Implemented and reviewed
- Audited as appropriate

The policy toolkit will outline the key steps required to identify, plan, develop, distribute and monitor any type of policy document, and also provides direction on endorsement, consultation, timeframes, roles and responsibilities.

A series of easy to use templates will also accompany the toolkit. The policy toolkit will be launched next month, and may be extended to other areas within Children's Services at a later date.

Please contact Candice Sainsbury (307387) or Hannah Haines (307335) for further information.



Homelessness Strategy

A new draft protocol has been developed in response to 16/17 year olds in the city requesting assistance. This was a joint effort with the Homelessness Team within Housing Services and the Advice and Assessment service, within Children's Services. The achieved outcome was as a result of both services commitment to the principal that Plymouth city will not allow 16/17 year olds to be homeless. The strategy is a product of consultation with young people on their accommodation requirements, best practice across the country and the 'Joint working between Housing and Children's services. **Preventing homelessness and tackling its effects on children and young people**' was written by Communities and Local Government and the department for Children, Schools and Families, the joint Protocol aims to ensure that 16/17 year olds do not 'bounce' between offices trying to access appropriate accommodation. Supporting the protocol will be:

- Appropriate emergency accommodation at Raglan Court to replace the use of B&B
- Support arrangements for young people and their families to resolve issues of conflict through Family Group Conferencing and an independent mediation service
- 'Move on' pathways to ensure 16/17 year olds can move on into secure permanent accommodation arrangements.
- An increase in information available to children and young people to raise awareness of the homelessness issue.

This draft protocol is undergoing review and will be a thoroughly established working practice in May 2009. For more details please contact

Hannah.haines@plymouth.gov.uk



The Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report: Lord Laming, who had previously chaired the inquiry into the death of Victoria Climbié, was commissioned to undertake an independent progress report on child protection in England, following the tragic death of Baby P in the London Borough of Haringey, by the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), in November 2008. His report was published on the 12th March 2009. The review looked at what good practice had been achieved in safeguarding since the Victoria Climbié Inquiry Report, what key barriers existed which prevented efficient and effective safeguarding and what actions should be taken by Government and local agencies. The DCSF is due to publish a response at the end of the month. **Key messages include:** Lord Laming's report presents a constructive analysis of the problems faced by children's services departments in councils, as well as the resourcing difficulties they have, in recruiting and retaining social workers. Most importantly, Lord Laming makes it clear that responsibility for child protection and safeguarding must sit across all partner agencies, at both a local and national government level. **Key recommendations include:** The National Safeguarding Delivery Unit, Political and professional accountability/ leadership, Governance and organisation - Local Safeguarding Children Board and Children's Trust arrangements, Social worker training and retention, Inspection, Social work and the role of ICT and Funding: <http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/socialcareandhealth/childrensocialcare/localsafeguardingchildrenboard/pscbnews.htm>. Follow the link for more details.

Research & Consultation

Findings of Raising Aspirations

A report from York Consulting for the DCSF which reviews the 2-year Re-Ach pilot to help deprived young people through challenging workshops and performance coaching to raise their aspirations and achievement comes to mixed conclusions.

It was delivered by Hanover Foundations and Youth at Risk (YaR), who have complementary approaches and over ten years experience of delivering this type of work. The pilot was intended to support the wider 14-19 agenda. Three strategic outcomes for Re-Ach to contribute towards were to:

- Increase proportion of 19 yrs olds who achieve Level 2
- Decrease the number of 16-19 yrs old not in education, employment or training.
- Reduce the under 18 conception rate.

Only the first outcome was really achieved as the pilot did not engage with the hardest to reach groups.

In Plymouth this is a subject area that we all feel strongly about, reflected in Priority Ten in our CYP Plan, 'Raising Young People's Aspirations with particular support to young people who are not in education employment or training.'



The project group to address Priority 10 in Plymouth is just about to start an audit of the data, current service provision and what we **want and need in the future** to raise aspirations in the city. We want to hear from YOU! If you can contribute: Contact:

Theresa.brooks@plymouth.gov.uk

Using Sport and Leisure Activities to prevent anti-social Behaviour.



There is intense debate as to whether this behaviour is a result of boredom or if the social values of young people are in decline. In the British Crime Survey of 2007/2008 it was found that teenagers hanging around, rubbish lying around and vandalism are the top three anti-social behaviour concerns.

The Audit Commission carried out a study into using sport and leisure to prevent anti-social behaviour. They found that 72% of young people would rather be involved in activities than hanging around at home or on the streets, however they feel that there is not enough for them to do. This could be due to a lack of awareness but also a lack of accessible opportunities.

Key messages from the report are

- Sport and leisure have an important role in preventing anti-social behaviour.
- Definitions and perceptions of anti-social behaviour differ, particularly between adults and young people.
- Previously tackling anti-social behaviour has been done via enforcement measures i.e. ASBO's. This is now shifting towards preventative measures.
- National funding arrangements are inefficient and often unreliable and short term.
- Effective solutions will engage the young people at risk; they will be delivered through local joint working, and national and local funding is coordinated.

We will be using information from this to inform Priorities 6 & 8.

For full document contact abigail.jago@plymouth.gov.uk

Ofsted Inspection results of children in care

The Ofsted report presents findings of the 82 inspections of private fostering carried out by Ofsted between 1 April 2007 and 11 December 2008.

It provides a detailed analysis of inspection findings, key issues and policy implications arising from inspections and examples of good and poor practice. Some key findings include -

- Only 34 of the 82 authorities inspected were judged good or better, while 21 were inadequate.
- Compared to Ofsted inspections of other forms of provision private fostering had the most inadequate judgments.
- Large difference between the performance of those authorities that are doing well and those that are judged inadequate.

However we would like to remind you that Plymouth achieved outstanding! To see either report contact

Abigail.jago@plymouth.gov.uk

Refresh of both the substance misuse and teenage pregnancy / sexual health needs analysis

A refresh of the substance misuse and teenage pregnancy / sexual health needs analysis has been undertaken. These refreshes support our annual requirement to submit a substance misuse treatment plan and also the completion of a new 'Sexual Health and Wellbeing of Children and Young People' strategy. The latter covering the teenage pregnancy agenda.

For the key findings please contact Dave Schwartz dave.schwartz@plymouth.gov.uk or telephone 307561.

Training and Events

Local Events

Giving Evidence in Court

These events are designed for staff who could potentially be called into court to give evidence. This course enables delegates to gain an understanding of these procedures and give them the confidence to give evidence in a professional manner, whilst under cross examination.

The event is held on **30 April 2009 9.30 to 4.30 pm** in the Plymouth Magistrates Court and the cost is 130+ VAT per delegate.

To book go to www.aquila-training.co.uk

Safeguarding Children Conference: Plymouth University – 23 April 2009

This course is being held annually and hosted by the Faculty of Health and Social Work. This year the focus will be around practice issues in relation to working with Children and Families where abuse is suspected. Never has there been such a time when dealing with children and their families in safeguarding terms created such anxiety for a professional. The conference aims to develop excellence in practice.

For further info contact:

k.thornton@plymouth.ac.uk



National Events



What: Child Employment Issues

Where: 7 May 2009- London

Target Audience

Staff who work with Children and Young people in their employment and staff who employ children.

Contact: www.ltkg.co.uk

What: 14-19 Reform Conference and Engaging Employers in 14-19 Education.

Where: 27 April 2009- Central London

Target Audience

Managers and practitioners who work in social inclusion, curriculum designs and delivery, including vocational learning diplomas, IAG workforce development and commission transfer.

Contact: ben.khalil@capita.co.uk

Useful Links

Below is a list of all the useful sites:

Care Knowledge

www.careknowledge.com

The Department of Children and Families

www.dcsf.gov.uk

Plymouth City Council

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/>

Parliament

<http://www.parliament.uk/>

Safeguarding children

www.safeguardingchildren.org.uk

Plymouth Safeguarding Children's Board

www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/socialcareandhealth/childrensocialcare/localsafeguardingchildrenboard.htm

Department of Health

www.dh.gov.uk

NHS stats

www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics

Children and Young People Now

www.cypnow.co.uk

Research in Practice

www.rip.org.uk

Service Directories

National Service Directories

<http://www.careknowledge.com/secure/contenttypes/doc.aspx?id=58466>

Plymouth Service Directory

<http://www.plymouthparentpartnership.org.uk>

Supporting People Service Directory

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/supportingpeopledirectory>

Parents Guide to Plymouth

<http://www.parents-guide-to-plymouth.co.uk/index.htm>

Printing Schedule

For further information contact:

Theresa Brooks or Abigail Jago (Assistant Policy and Planning Officers – Children's Services) Tel: 307113

	Submission deadline	Publication date
May	7 May 2009	12 May 2009