



Policy & Research Briefing

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

Dear Colleagues

We have been kept very busy this month with inspections. Our Adoption Service had their announced Ofsted inspection at the beginning of the month and we've just had an unannounced inspection in Social Care Advice and Assessment. Initial feedback has been positive for both, look out for the Policy pages of future issues for more detailed feedback on these.

Also keeping us busy are the exciting developments around locality working. Over the coming months we will be taking a really big step towards making locality working a reality to ensure we provide a more effective and holistic service for children, young people and their families. It seems like we've been talking about localities for a long time and although lots of excellent work has been done to set the stage for this to happen, it has not yet translated into real life for the majority of staff in Services for Children and Young People. See July's issue for more news on what we are doing in Services for Children and Young People to make locality working a reality for everyone.

Plymouth has been celebrating Refugee Week this month. Plymouth receives refugees from across the world. When refugees first arrive in the city they are called 'asylum seekers' until they gain refugee status. Plymouth has a number of Asylum Seeking Families and there are also children who arrive alone or with siblings but no adults. These young people are often vulnerable and need additional support. For details of our local policy and procedures for working with Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children please contact Policy&Planning@plymouth.gov.uk.



With Best Wishes

Bronwen Lacey

Chair of the Plymouth Children and Young People's Trust Executive

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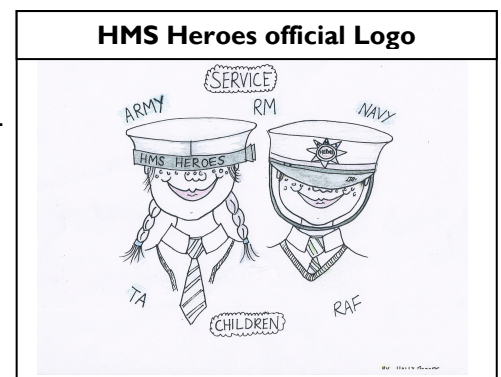
Focus on: Service families

[Armed Forces Week](#) (18 – 26 June) was celebrated in Plymouth and there was a whole calendar of events and activities in the city. The official [Armed Forces Day](#) 25 June in Plymouth was a day for the whole family and included exhibitions and displays on land, sea and in the air, featuring the Armed Forces, veterans, Cadet Forces, Merchant Navy, support agencies and charities, the Emergency Services and the young people of Plymouth. The day included the annual RAF and Allied Air Forces Monument Service and a grand parade review to celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the Royal British Legion and a number of marching bands including the young people of the [Plymouth Youth Music Service](#).

Over 3500 school children took part in the event, including designing the programme and the official 2011 badge. Throughout the celebrations, schools visited venues such as the Citadel, HMS Courageous, the Heritage Centre (HMS Drake) and HMS Raleigh to find out about their function and history. In addition, schools hosted veterans' talks and provided stunning displays for the weekend events on Plymouth Hoe.

At the heart of the celebrations were the unique **HMS (Her Majesty's Schools) Heroes**. **HMS Heroes** is a unique pupil voice group formed in the City of Plymouth for the support of Service children and young people. This tri-Service group works actively in harmony to ensure that every member has a voice and is able to use it for the benefit of all. Members of HMS Heroes are Plymouth's ambassadors and young advocates for Service families. Most importantly, they are friends for each other, especially in times of need. HMS Heroes is a fast growing group, both locally and further afield, supported by the Royal British Legion and SERCO. Their autumn target is to raise over £900 for the 90th anniversary of the Royal British Legion. They have already created a Heroes school passport, interviewed an MP and a Cabinet member of Plymouth City Council. They have also been at the heart of the 70th Anniversary of the Blitz and have recently dedicated their own standard in the church of St. Nicholas, HMS Drake.

HMS Heroes (now a central group of 30, representing 1000 children) are noted in the recently published Ofsted [report](#) which looks at the quality and impact of partnership provision for Service family children. Plymouth, as a unitary authority with a considerable number of Service children, played a key role in the research done by Ofsted for this report. Service children face challenges that often go beyond the experience of the majority of families and children living in the UK. The families of Service personnel who are deployed in overseas Commands, and/or are actively deployed, are often highly mobile. The combination of deployment of a family member and regular moves of home and school can cause anxiety and stress for Service families whether living in the UK or overseas: education is disturbed, social networks are disrupted and parents left behind have to cope with the effects of being a 'single parent'.



In Plymouth – via services for Children and Young People a range of support for Service children, young people and their families is provided, including:

- Briefings for head teachers and school governors when appropriate, i.e. when there is a large deployment of Services personnel.
- Support service for schools with Service children to enable them to improve their educational achievement and make best use of the Service Pupil Premium.
- Coordination and support of a Service Schools Group who meet three times a year to share best practice and raise awareness of the issues for Service families.
- Coordination and support of HMS Heroes, a support group for Service children and young people.

For more information contact: Heather Ogburn email: heather.ogburn@plymouth.gov.uk

Useful link:

[Naval Personnel and Family Service & Royal Marines Welfare \(NPFS\)](#)

News

Plymouth's pupils learn vital 'life skills'

It's fun, it's exciting and it has the potential to save lives and reduce the casualty rates of thousands of Plymouth's youngsters. Plymouth Junior Life Skills is now in its fourth year and to date more than 7,500 ten and eleven year old school pupils have attended the event, which aims to increase safety and the appreciation of risk as part of their Citizenship and Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHEE). Junior Life Skills 2011 will promote personal and community safety through practical and interactive demonstrations and activities, including a chip pan fire demonstration, what to do if you find an unexploded bomb on our moors or beaches and potentially life saving first aid. 2,400 children are set to attend between 13 – 30 June, this year.

The event is hosted by the Royal Navy at the MOD Sports Training Facilities, and organised by Services for Children and Young People's (Citizenship, PSHEE & Healthy Schools Team) in collaboration with Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service, Devon and Cornwall Police, Western Power, Office of Rail Regulations, RNLI, Plymouth Transport & Highways (Road Safety), Public Protection, Behaviour Support Team, Plymouth Citybus, Plymouth Community Safety Partnership, Plymouth University and the Devonport Explosives Safety Team. For further details, contact the Junior Life Skills coordinator, Michael House michael.house@plymouth.gov.uk



Student Dissolve

This is a new and exciting way of teaching children and young people about healthy eating and physical activity designed in Plymouth.



'Student Dissolve' is a flexible approach to health improvement which uses 'social (Peer) learning' to influence decision making. Influential students are identified and recruited to the programme (approximately 20% of a year group). The recruited students receive intensive training away from the school site. The training includes healthy lifestyle education, teamwork, problem solving, body image and self esteem raising activities. The students are then encouraged to share this with their peers in innovative ways. The students are supported throughout the programme and their efforts are celebrated. Surveys are completed before and after the intervention to track effectiveness. A pilot is taking place at Notre Dame Roman Catholic School. As part of the school's Healthy Schools Plus work, they have identified 'healthy body weight' and 'body image' as health areas to address this year. One of the range of activities which the schools are putting in place is the 'Student Dissolve' programme. It is hoped that, following a successful pilot, this method of teaching will be used in other areas of PSHE Education.

The Student Dissolve Programme is fully supported with teaching materials, but is not overly prescriptive. This method of teaching PSHE is open to Primary and Secondary settings. For more information or if you would like your school to get involved, please contact Michael House (course designer) michael.house@plymouth.gov.uk.

Burns and scalds – guidance for Practitioners on prevention

The Child Accident Prevention Trust has some online information for practitioners to support parents in [preventing burns and scalds](#).

A key message for parents is about precautions they can take in their home, for instance:

- Curly flex on appliances like kettles means that the wire coils near the plug are kept out of reach of young children.
- Thermostatic mixing valves (TMVs) on bath taps mix hot and cold water to a safe temperature before it comes out of the tap.
- Fireguards. These prevent young children from crawling, walking or falling onto fires.
- Heatproof bags for hair straighteners help to keep them away from young children's feet and fingers.

National Bookstart Week

[Bookstart](#) distributes free books and other learning materials to all young children. Bookstart recognises the educational, cultural, social and emotional benefits that an early introduction to books can achieve. The programme aims to inspire a love of books from as early an age as possible, encouraging parents and carers to share books with children. In Plymouth, Bookstart is co-ordinated by libraries who work in partnership with Booktrust, health visitors and Early Years services in the city. In Plymouth, libraries have been supporting National [Bookstart Week](#) by inviting parents and children under four to join them during the week for stories, books and rhymes for children under four. A special 'All Aboard' booklet, illustrated by Jess Stockham, has been produced for the week and was also given to families at the Rhymetime and Family Week events, along with colourful illustrated posters, stickers and Rhymetime sheets.

Policy

Corporate parenting – the challenge

[Community Care Inform](#) have asked the question if social workers have the time and training to be creative corporate parents. A residential philosopher with 40 years experience recalls taking a group of looked after children for a twilight swim in the sea with staff on a cold evening followed by hot chocolate and says this type of spontaneous fun is very difficult for modern day social workers to deliver in a system that is bureaucratic and regulated.

Community Care offers some tips for success to corporate parents:

- Always consider benefits as well as risks – if a child wants to try an activity, don't just consider the risks, think about whether the child will enjoy it, will it help build their confidence, will it give them positive memories?
 - Think creatively about contact – children can find intense conversation difficult, but bringing in another object, i.e. playing cards, drawing, cake baking can take away the intensity;
 - Avoid jargon - Often professionals use jargon that dissociates staff from the drama and the emotion children go through;
 - Make time to get to know children and develop relationships – creating meaningful relationships and taking time to get to know them is vital;
 - Develop a whole team approach – consider as a team how you are meeting your corporate parenting aims and work together to allow people time to build relationships.



New admissions code: more places in good schools, a fairer and simpler system



The Education Secretary has launched a consultation to make the school admissions process simpler, fairer and more transparent for parents. Together the two current codes are more than 130 pages and include over 600 mandatory requirements on admissions authorities (local authorities, governing bodies or Academy Trusts). [The proposed changes](#) would see two new codes created. Together the two slimmed-down documents will contain around half as many requirements.

The proposals included would:

- Increase the number of good school places available by making it easier for popular schools to take more pupils;
- Improve the current in-year applications scheme so fewer children face delays in finding a new school. (In-year applications happen when a child moves to a new area during the academic year);
- Give priority to children of school staff when a school is over-subscribed, if the school wishes, making it easier for schools to recruit teachers and other staff;
- Strengthen the military covenant by allowing children of armed forces personnel to be admitted to infant classes even if it takes the class over the 30-pupil limit;
- Ban local authorities from using area-wide "lotteries".

The new codes are out for [consultation](#), closing date is 19 August 2011.

New missing children team CEOP

A new dedicated team of experts from the [Child Exploitation and Online Protection \(CEOP\)](#) centre will strengthen and lead the UK's ability to respond to missing children from the 1 July 2011.

The new CEOP capability will include:

- The provision of educational resources and training for the police;
- Supporting police operations through targeted research and analysis (for example, development of problem profiles on the nature and scale of the issues and emerging trends);
- Providing operational support for forces and missing children by extending the CEOP 'one stop shop' to include online missing children resources;
- Ensuring co-ordination arrangements and capability are in place to manage complex or high profile missing children cases.

What makes excellent school governance – Ofsted reports

School governing bodies are responsible for the conduct of maintained schools in England. This [small-scale report](#) aims to help all governing bodies to become excellent by showcasing examples of highly effective governance that is strengthening leadership and contributing to improved outcomes. This report looks at the principles and practices that contribute to outstanding governance in 14 schools, including primary, secondary and special schools and reports. Key characteristics for excellence include:

- Well informed governors given accessible concise information and focused on pupil achievement.
- Absolute clarity about the different roles and responsibilities of the headteacher and governors.
- Governors routinely attend lessons to gather information about the school at work.

Research & Consultation

Research briefing - mental health service transitions for young people

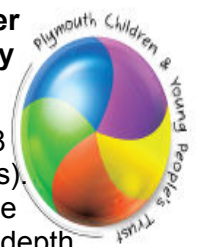
This [briefing](#) looks at recent research literature on the move from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) to Adult Services referred to as 'mental health service transitions'. Despite evidence of some promising and innovative practice, this is an issue of longstanding concern to young people, their families, practitioners and policy-makers, both in the UK and abroad.

Some key messages include:

- Recurrent problems include limited participation of young people, high eligibility thresholds for entry into adult mental health services and inconsistent support during transition. This leads to some young people ceasing to use services until a crisis occurs;
- Service transition is a process and needs to take account of the wider context of young people's lives, including education, employment, housing and overall health needs;
- There are limited adult services for specific groups of young people, including those with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism spectrum disorders;
- Young people need support to help them adapt to the different culture of adult services;
- Many practice developments/service models for improving transitions are at an early stage and there are few robust effectiveness studies currently available.



Care of Looked After Children in Custody



This [review](#) reports on the care of looked after children aged 15 to 18 in young offender institutions (YOIs). It examines the experience of these children, using survey data and in-depth interviews. This report looks at how well YOIs work jointly with local authorities and youth offending services to ensure the needs of looked after children are met during their time in custody and in preparation for release.

Key findings in this report include:

- A lack of clarity in most establishments about where the responsibility for looked after children should lie;
- Young people who reported that they had been in care were more likely to report problems on arrival, problems with drugs and alcohol and were more likely to report having mental health issues;
- Less than half of safeguarding teams (five) said they would routinely keep a looked after child's social worker informed of their wellbeing and progress in custody;
- Only half of the young people interviewed said they had received a visit from their social worker during their time in custody. The frequency of these visits ranged from weekly to once in three months;
- Half of the young people interviewed said they were receiving financial support from the LA during their time in custody. Young people not receiving financial support said that they could not always afford to make phone calls.

What works in combating childhood obesity?

This [review](#) highlights the fact that there is limited evidence of successful prevention strategies that could be replicated elsewhere. The review does however identify some good practice examples and strategies that could be further developed.

Some key considerations in this review include:

- Current guidelines emphasise universal prevention strategies but more intensive efforts could target those at particular risk of obesity (for example, children with parents who are obese or children in more deprived areas).
- A comprehensive intervention will be more effective than a single one. Both healthy nutrition and physical activity need to be promoted in a variety of ways.
- When developing strategies, the target audience, as well as enablers, needs to be considered, i.e. the children and the local shop owner, youth leader, parents etc.

Children's experience and attitudes towards the police, personal safety and public spaces

This [report](#) outlines findings from the British Crime Survey. The key areas discussed in this report are:

1. Children and the Police, in terms of their experiences of the police, including their perception of the police and contacts with and visibility of the Police in their local areas;
2. Personal safety and bullying, discussing attitudes towards knife crime, experiences of bullying and safety precautions taken with personal property;
3. Children's use of public space and access to leisure facilities, including children's perceptions of teenagers 'hanging around' and their use of leisure facilities, in terms of thinking there is enough for them to do in their local area or not.

Training and Events

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF)

The Common Assessment Framework process of multi agency co-ordinated packages of support is now the primary delivery mechanism for a high percentage of agencies delivering services to children and their families. This has benefited thousands of children in Plymouth.

Over 2400 practitioners across agencies have been trained to work with the process and over 2000 CAF assessments have been completed to date.

Work to build the confidence of practitioners has been happening and the impact of this work has been reflected in the enthusiasm that they have shown in working with the CAF process across the city.

The CAF Team offers advice, support and guidance and you can contact them to discuss individual cases or the CAF process in general.

The Team also offers a comprehensive FREE training package of both multi agency and in house training. If you would like to speak to the team to discuss a case, or your training requirements, they can be contacted on:

01752 307160 or email:
CAF@plymouth.gov.uk



Safer Recruitment Training



The Children's Workforce Development Council has an online FREE training programme for all staff involved in the recruitment of staff to work with children, young people and their families. Click [here](#) to get started.

The training covers:

- What abuse is;
- Recruitment processes that should be followed;
- How to manage allegations.

Other areas of interest available on the website are:

- Safer recruitment training for schools;
- Safer recruitment resources;
- Frequently asked questions (FAQs).

The [Plymouth Workforce Development Team](#) is also offering some face to face training around safer recruitment at a cost of £40. The full day programme involves what abuse is, recruitment processes that should be followed, Vetting and Barring Scheme, Role of the Criminal Records Bureau and the Independent Safeguard Authority and How to Manage Allegations.

For future dates contact Kate Maidment on: 01752 306688 or email: kate.maidment@plymouth.co.uk

Useful Links

Plymouth Children and Young People's Trust

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

Research in Practice

www.rip.org.uk

Care Knowledge

www.careknowledge.com

Department for Education

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

Plymouth Parent Partnership

www.plymouthparentpartnership.org.uk

Safeguarding Children

www.safeguardingchildren.org.uk

Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board

www.plymouthscb.org.uk

Department of Health

www.dh.gov.uk

Children and Young People Now

www.cypnow.co.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.plymouthparentpartnership.org.uk/index.php?p=4>

Plymouth's Public Interpretation and Translation Service

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/communityandliving/socialinclusion/translateplymouth.htm>

Printing Schedule

For further information contact:

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To download previous Policy Briefs go to:

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/socialcareandhealth/childrensocialcare/pcypt/pcyptpolicybrief.htm>

Next Month's Issue	Submission deadline	Publication date
Issue 7	July	4 July 2011
		13 July 2011