



Policy & Research Briefing

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

Dear Colleagues

Welcome back to the new school term. I would like to congratulate our schools and young people for the great success seen this year in GCSE and A levels results and wish them all the best for the future in achieving their aspirations.



We have opened three brand new schools in Plymouth. This means a new start for over 1,000 primary school pupils who will be starting lessons at Shakespeare School in Honicknowle, Mayflower Community School in North Prospect and Oakwood Community Primary School in Southway. These schools herald a new direction in learning, as all the buildings have been designed to take into account the latest education technology as well as incorporating eco-friendly building standards and community facilities.

The beginning of September also saw the launch of the "Improving the State of our Minds" - The Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy for Plymouth' which was greatly received. The day was combined with and the introduction of the 'Framework for Fun' in support of Priority 6 of the Children and Young Peoples Plan ' - to enable children and young people to have fun'. The Guildhall was full of stalls featuring useful information for practitioners, the public and our young people, including information about the new inpatient unit for young people to be built at Derriford. An interactive drama production from Exeter University provided a powerful medium for increasing knowledge and understanding of early psychosis and reducing the stigma associated with mental health issues. The Education Catering team provided healthy school food and refreshments which were very much enjoyed.

The day was a success and despite the high winds the Bucking Bronco and Bungi Run managed to stay grounded and were well used. Media coverage of the day was excellent and I'd like to thank all of you who helped put this day together.



With Best Wishes
Richenda Broad
 Head of Service for Strategic Planning and Children's Trust Business

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Focus on: Priority 7 – Improve attainment for children and young people, in particular raise achievement including Maths and English at all stages

Champion – Colin Moore, Assistant Director, Life Long Learning

Work towards this priority is ongoing and there are numerous activities and achievements happening across the city. This area has demonstrated clearly how the good use of partnership working has helped improve outcomes for young people. Collaborations include:

- Community and commercial groups linked with primary schools in a city-wide event to raise awareness of the importance of reading. Over 40 venues hosted story times, free of charge for pupils aged 5-11.
- A joint initiative with the Library Service produced an anthology of children and young people writing over 550 entries with approximately 100 published in the anthology.
- Working with the Museum Service to develop the History Centre with a view to accessibility and stimulation for children and young people.

This priority has done a lot of consultation with young people and is currently working towards meeting their needs. Children and young people in Plymouth are quite clear about what they want from lessons. More active learning, the opportunity to learn in different places, inter-related subjects and more help for people with learning difficulties. Work towards these include:

- Work with schools on restructuring the curriculum to place greater emphasis on active learning that has a strong outdoor element. The Primary Curriculum Innovation Group meets regularly to support schools in achieving this. A number of secondary schools have implemented an integrated curriculum at KS3. This is theme-centred and involves interactive team-teaching, activities-based learning, and cross-curricular links.
- Plymouth Drama Steering Group are devising a suite of training offers to schools to support active learning across the phases that includes a comprehensive conference and a range of exciting opportunities for children and young people that are linked across the curriculum.
- One to one tuition for children and young people with learning difficulties is being introduced but there is also support for schools in improving the support they give to pupils with special educational needs.
- Work with School Sports Partnerships to ensure that every child gets access to 5 hours of PE and sport each week in and out of school.
- Outdoor education is a priority and the concept of a city farm and country park is being developed, with colleagues in the capital planning team, which will give an excellent venue for this type of learning.

The Priority Coordinator for this issue is John Seanson – please contact john.seanson@plymouth.gov.uk for further information.

Improving outcomes post-16 is a high priority: Working with schools and Further Education colleges, a wide range of actions have been put in place to improve outcomes:

1. Appointment of a full time permanent 14-19 adviser with responsibility for post-16
2. An extensive student voice exercise has been carried out in order to establish their views on the quality of Teaching and Learning
3. The introduction of a leadership course for existing and/or aspiring heads of post-16
4. Establishment of eight city subject networks for the most underachieving A level subjects
5. Piloting of a post-16 literacy intervention project
6. Work with the University of Plymouth to run conferences on study skills for post-16 learners
7. Expanding the range of qualifications available post-16
8. Involvement in the pilot of the Framework for Excellence with eight sixth forms
9. An advisor is supporting the head of sixth forms in all schools where the sixth form was judged to be either satisfactory or one grade lower than the whole school grade

Plymouth's Substance Misuse Work and Hidden Harm Agenda deemed 'Pioneering'

The DCSF and the National Treatment Agency (NTA) have visited Plymouth to conduct a 'Deep Dive', looking at our substance misuse work and the associated Hidden Harm Agenda. The Deep Dive is a learning process - it is not an inspection and the findings are used to inform national policy and best practice.

The responses from the DCSF and NTA were extremely positive. The DCSF / NTA felt it was the best visit they have carried out so far. This is the 5th out of six Deep Dive visits planned.

The work around young people's substance misuse showed that Plymouth have a very strong strategic direction and robust analysis of need and that the work is both innovative and effective. There was much that the DCSF / NTA felt would be transferable to other partnerships to learn from our work and Plymouth is likely to be one of the leading partnerships in the country.



The work around Hidden Harm was felt to be pioneering and ahead of many other partnerships. There was significant interest in all our activity in this area. There was no comment about areas of improvement with respect to the Hidden Harm work. We are likely to be asked to deliver a session at the National Think Family Conference: Supporting families with drug and alcohol problems in November.

For further information please contact Dave Schwartz:
Dave.Schwartz@plymouth.gov.uk

'Turn Your Life Around' project has been awarded £77,053 to work in Honicknowle



Thirteen projects in the South West region are sharing more than £3.3 million from BIG Lottery's Young People's Fund 2. All the projects are led by young people and they come at a vital time when the under 25's unemployment rate has soared and job prospects have shrunk.

Locally, the project 'Turn Your Life Around' in Honicknowle will help young people improve their life chances and avoid becoming involved in anti-social behaviour.

Honicknowle Commnet's Phoenix Centre will run the project, which will see young people who have been through the Criminal Justice System taking on the role of youth workers and using their experiences to work with younger peers aged 10-14 from the area, particularly young men.

An individually tailored programme of activities for each young person will be developed and will include group work and residential visits that will help them to improve their social, team-working and leadership skills. The project will explore different ways of managing their behaviour and will encourage where appropriate the young people to access specialist support services such as drug and alcohol services.

To find out more about this funding and the projects involved please go to:

http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/pr_260809_sw_ypf_south_west_youth_skills_focus?regioncode=sw&status=theProg&title

Building parent's confidence online with 'myguide'

Myguide (which was set up to help provide the next steps in implementing Dr Byron's review on internet safety) has now added a new interactive guidance course and quiz to help families manage the risks while enjoying the web, and to enable parents to catch up with their children when it comes to internet use.

Myguide can be used independently or with support from experts. The tool addresses common parental concerns such as phishing and spam, online rogue traders and extremist websites, chat rooms, music file sharing, stealth marketing and safety filters.

For further information go to:
<http://www.myguide.gov.uk/myguide/MyguideHome.do>

A new website for Early Years and childcare practitioners

The Family and Parenting Institute (FPI) has created a new website, <http://www.earlyhomelearning.org.uk/> funded by the DCSF, which is a one stop shop for practitioners and parents. There you will find

- guidance on how to set up an early learning project or service
- lessons learned around workforce development and training
- information for practitioners on how to get parents involved in early learning
- tips for parents on how to do early learning activities in the home

The FPI has also written a book with good practice guidance go to
<http://www.familyandparenting.org/item/publication/71/1>

POLICY

Implementation of the Foundation Learning Tier – 14-19 year olds

Foundation Learning (FL) is the learning suite for 14-19s at entry level and level 1. All areas should be preparing for delivery on a 14-19 basis by 2010/11.

Learners and practitioners negotiate and agree an individual learning programme, reflecting both the learner's entry point and intended destination – to Diplomas, GCSEs, and Apprenticeships or, in some cases, to supported employment and/or independent living. Learning programmes integrate vocational/subject learning, personal and social development, and functional skills. They also comprise a wider 'wrap-around' of initial engagement and assessment, information advice and guidance and on-going learner support. Two guidance documents have just been published which provide clarity on Foundation Learning including the timeline for implementation.



1. Guidance for 2009/10 for LAs, schools and other providers – including those who may be engaging with FL developments for the first time – on what is involved in planning and delivering FL provision.
<http://qfr.lsc.gov.uk/flt/support/>
2. DCSF guidance on LAs strategic role in driving FL developments, part of the wider guidance on submissions LAs will prepare for 'Gateway 4' in November 2009.
www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?go=site.home&sid=57&pid=498&lid=668&ctype=None&ptype=Contents.

Improving Access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services



This joint DH/DCSF guide offers Support to those providing and commissioning child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) in their efforts to reduce waiting times for children, young people and families.

It describes approaches that services have used to reduce waiting times and provides case studies showing how they have been applied in practice and what the results were. The guidance also clarifies how the rules on the 18 weeks referral to treatment standard apply to CAMHS.

It sets out key strategic and operational steps for both implementing mandatory waiting time standards and supporting the delivery of low wait, accessible, multi-disciplinary CAMHS.

The guide describes four service improvement models that can be used alone or creatively combined

- 10 High Impact Changes
- Choice and Partnership Approach
- Lean Thinking
- New Ways of Working

These overviews are supported by local case studies which illustrate how the service improvement models have been applied to improve access to local services.

Advice is provided for both commissioners and providers of CAMHS and web links are used to signpost readers to a range of implementation tools and supporting resources. For full guidance go to:

http://www.careknowledge.com/uploadedFiles/CareKnowledge_CMS/Public/Documents/200908/DH_103647.pdf

Common Assessment Framework: managers and practitioners guides

Existing guidance has now been refreshed to include recent policy changes and to make them more accessible. The CAF guidance now includes links to other specialist assessments which should help transitions between services as well as new advice on sharing and storing CAF forms. It is presented in an accessible way and is interspersed with case studies and handy tips and hints. There are two documents, one for managers and one for practitioners. To see either document in full please follow the link below:

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00063/>

For local CAF information contact:
Amanda.paddison@plymouth.gov.uk

Integrated practice on the frontline: A handbook

The handbook developed by numerous agencies in the Research in Practice network includes guidance, tools and films where people talk about their own experiences of integrated working and using materials in the handbook. It provides a framework for reviewing and evaluating progress with integrated working. It includes self-audit tools from which an action plan can be built to overcome difficulties or blocks and take the work forward. The handbook should enable practitioners to link behaviours, systems and changed ways of working and help them to be more confident in working with other professions. For the full handbook follow the link:
http://www.careknowledge.com/uploadedFiles/CareKnowledge_CMS/Public/Documents/research_in_practice/IP%20ndbook%20plus%20tools.pdf

Research & Consultation

The parental experience of services for disabled children - National survey

One of the commitments of the 'Aiming High for Disabled Children' was to track and monitor progress by collecting parents views. This generated a new performance indicator to measure performance at a national and local level. For the 2008-09 baseline survey, data was collected in 30 pilot local areas. But in 2009-10 and 2010-11, the survey will be conducted in all local areas, with indicator scores produced for all LAs and Primary Care Trusts.

The baseline overall national indicator score for 2008-9 is **59 out of 100**. A higher score denotes greater satisfaction with services. Across the 30 LA's, scores ranged from 55 to 65.

Compared with health and education services, parents were least satisfied with the level and quality of care & family support services received. A third (31%) of those who considered they had a care & family support need said they received little or none of the services they required, and 22% rated the service they did receive as poor.

Respondents from BME groups were generally less satisfied than average. The findings reinforce the fact that parents want to be consulted and listened to and to feel more supported. Parents were also keen to see services work together better to deliver for their children.

For the full report go to:
<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RR146.pdf>



Care and Prejudice – Ofsted report

This report is a survey of 362 children from children's homes and foster care arrangements from across the country. The children were asked to discuss their experience of being in care and any prejudices they face as a result of being in care. In response to what was good about being in care responses included

- Meeting new people (25% of children)
- Having good carers or staff (22% of children)
- Being looked after properly (22% of children)
- Activities (20% of children)

In response to the worst thing about being in care children answered

- Being away from your family (47% of children)
- Rules (19% of children)
- 'Nothing' (12% of children)

What ways had children been treated differently for being in care, the most repeated responses were

- Being bullied (16% of children)
- People making assumptions about you (7% of children)
- Being treated worse at school (3% of children).

The main things the children told us about the general public's view of children in care, as they saw it included

- That they are bad and uncontrollable (48% of children)
- That they are troublemakers (23% of children)
- They feel sorry for children in care (13% of children)

For full document go to:

http://www.careknowledge.com/uploadedFiles/CareKnowledge_CMS/Public/Documents/200908/Care%20and%20prejudice.pdf



Survey to build knowledge on female genital mutilation (FGM)

According to information from social workers and health care agencies, around 24,000 girls in the UK face the possibility of undergoing this practice. It can cause long-term mental and physical suffering, difficulty in giving birth, infertility and even death. It is illegal in the UK. Health workers who specialise in maternity, obstetrics gynaecology and sexual health can now complete an online form (throughout September) to help improve knowledge of FGM. The findings will be published in 2010 in a cross government strategy addressing violence against young women and girls.

The study will be used to identify the need for extra training for health professionals and provide information for sexual health services. To take part follow the link:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Recentstories/DH_104661

Virtual Heads boost GCSE results for children in care

The virtual head role introduced in the Care Matters green paper involves giving one person responsibility for looked after children in schools in a particular area.

Research from the DCSF found that the two year programme saw the 11 LAs in the pilot scheme performing better than the national average on GCSE grades for looked after children. Research also found that heads with a strong educational background performed better in this role.

In Plymouth, Virtual School Head Teacher Valena Jones is pleased with the progress being made by our children in care. They have performed well above the National average in their Key Stage 2 SATs and GCSEs. For further information please contact:
valena.jones@plymouth.gov.uk

Training and Events

Local Events

Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and Information Sharing Training 2009/2010

The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) is a core element of the Every Child Matters Agenda. In Plymouth we have a comprehensive programme of training for 2009/2010 to support both practitioners and managers with the implementation of the CAF. If you are interested in training for either yourself or your team or have any CAF related enquiries please contact Amanda Paddison Plymouth CAF Coordinator on Tel: (01752) 307194 or email amanda.paddison@Plymouth.gov.uk

Supervision Skills for Child Protection

The aim is to ensure understanding of the requirement to promote safer practice through formal advice, guidance and support to practitioners who are involved with safeguarding and promoting the welfare of child, or Child Protection.



Participants will be required to have already attended the PSCB Understanding Child Protection (CP2) or recent equivalent.

Contact 01752 307535 to book a place. Or email pscb@plymouth.gov.uk

National Events



What: Capita's 7th National Conference: Not in Education, Employment of Training (NEET)

When/Where: Wednesday 7 October
– Central London

Target Audience: Anyone involved with NEET young people

Contact: benkhali@capita.co.uk

What: Capita's National Conference: Protecting Public Sector Lone Workers

When/Where: Monday 5 October – Central London

Target Audience: All public sector heads of departments and line managers from services ranging from health and social care to library services and revenues and benefits.

Contact: Follow the link below for more information:

<http://www.capitaconferences.co.uk/NR/ronlyres/CE90A5E2-45D8-4D71-B6B5-DF74E08E012A/0/ProtectingPublicSectorLoneWorkersEMMK.pdf>

Useful Links

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's Safeguarding Children Board

www.plymouthscb.org.uk

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:

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To download previous Policy Briefs go to

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

Next Months Issue	Submission deadline	Publication date
Issue 13	October	2 October 2009
		5 October 2009