



Policy & Research Briefing

Volume 5

Issue 2

February
2010

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

Dear Colleagues

I was really proud to see the consultation for our next Children and Young People's Plan hitting the Evening Herald and Radio Devon . I hope you have all taken the opportunity to read the consultation document for our next Children and Young People's Plan and let us know your thoughts. The document was created by our partners across Plymouth Children and Young People's Trust, including Plymouth City Council, the Police, the NHS, Plymouth voluntary and community sector and many more. It lays out the priorities for how we give the right support to our children to live, grows, achieve and exceed in their hopes for the future. The consultation closes on 28 February but don't hesitate to contact the Policy and Planning Team to get involved in setting out actions, email policy&planning@plymouth.gov.uk.

You will be aware that priorities for children and young people's services over the next three years will be closely aligned to the priorities for the city as a whole. This will enable the Trust and partners to forge even stronger relationships and get everyone working for the people of Plymouth to understand how children and young people are affected by their work and will be essential to the shape and prosperity of the city in the future.



With Best Wishes

Bronwen Lacey

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



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Focus On... Strengthening families: reforming the child maintenance system	2	Local Safeguarding Children Board toolkit	4
National E-Safety day in Plymouth	3	The Education Bill	4
International Women's Day: intergenerational work in Plymouth	3	Intervening to improve outcomes for vulnerable young people: a review of the evidence	5
Research in Practice (RiP) new resource: analysis and critical thinking	3	Effective classroom strategies for closing the gap in educational achievement	5
HealthTec boys into health event	3	Transition to adult services for disabled young people	5
Munro Review of child protection: Interim report	4	Research messages for health professionals	5
New Equality Duty – are you ready?	4	Training and events	6

Focus on: Strengthening families: reforming the child maintenance system

There is currently a consultation underway on the Government's strategy for reforming the child maintenance system. It is based on the Government's principle of enabling parents to take responsibility for their families. To achieve this for child maintenance the Government is proposing to:

- Encourage separating families to recognise their ongoing responsibility for their children after they separate;
- Enable parents to make their own family-based arrangements;
- Deliver a more efficient statutory service for those who need it;
- Provide greater value for money for the tax payer, and
- Work closely with colleagues across government and with stakeholders in developing these proposals.

The consultation is aimed at those who are interested in child maintenance issues, particularly parents who live apart, representative organisations for parents who live apart or their children, organisations that represent families and children, and members of the general public with an interest in child maintenance issues - to read the proposed strategy and to respond click [here](#).

Family separation is not just about separation of financial resources and issues around financially supporting the children. Separation can have impacts on children and young people far beyond who is paying for their day to day living costs. Parents as well as children may need some emotional support as well as practical advice.

[The Centre for Separated Families](#) is a national charity that works with Government and other agencies to help deliver best practice in services delivered to separated families. It offers information, support and advice to mothers and fathers, whatever their parenting status, and has a range of innovative education programmes to support co-operative parenting. The centre has a research programme and aims to inform and influence public policy through this and its direct work with families. They have worked with the Department for Work and Pensions to create the Child Maintenance Options service. Visit the website for more details www.cmoptions.org.

What are we doing to in Plymouth to help strengthen families?

The Centre for Separated Families has been working with **Parents Apart**, which is a separated families project run by **Routeways** in Plymouth. Parents Apart is a pilot project to help separating and separated parents. They support parents with practical and emotional issues as a result of their separation to enable them to focus on their children's needs. Support that has been offered includes: telephone support; one to one support from a caseworker to identify priorities; group parenting support; money advice; individual counselling; help with benefits and tax credits; family counselling; children's workshops; opportunities to socialise with other separating parents; legal drop in; therapeutic mediation; and options for child maintenance. The project will see its funding end in March; however, the work that it has been doing in the community has been so well received that the charity has been looking for ways to secure its long term future. Sally Hawken, Parents Apart Project Leader, says *"We know that there is a real and urgent need for this kind of support in the Plymouth area and the feedback we've received has been so positive. Working with the whole family model that the Centre for Separated Families has developed has allowed us to interact with parents in a way that really makes a difference for their children."* To date, Parents Apart has received over 250 referrals. The project seems to have touched a chord with professionals across the city, who see the effects on children of parental separation on a daily basis.

Karen Woodall, Director of the Centre for Separated Families says *"We think that the work that Parents Apart is doing is making a real difference to children and families in Plymouth. This partnership brings together the expertise that we have developed nationally over the last decade with Routeways' understanding of local needs and the relationships that they have with other professionals and organisations within the city."*

Whilst the team at Parents Apart will continue to explore all possible avenues for ongoing service delivery, since Christmas they have had to offer a scaled down service for any new referrals. Case workers will continue to support those families they are currently working with but any new referrals received will be offered an opportunity to book onto parenting workshops, children's workshops or drop in surgeries focused on separation support. Parents Apart are happy to continue to support professionals who work with families with separation issues and will be offering sessions on lessons learned from the pilot for groups of professionals. If you would like to find out more about supporting separated parents, visit the Routeways Centre [website](#) or call the Parents Apart Team on 01752 856704

News

Safer Internet Day in Plymouth

Safer Internet Day is organised by [Insafe](#) each year in February to promote safer and more responsible use of online technology and mobile phones, especially amongst children and young people across the world. The theme this year was 'our virtual lives' using the slogan, *it's more than just a game it's your life*. The topic 'virtual lives' encompasses online gaming, from simple games to MMOGs (Massively Multiplayer Online Game) and social networking, i.e. the two online activities most popular with Europe's youth. As such, it will draw attention to all of them and its key messages will encapsulate opportunities and protection against risks.

This year, Plymouth Safeguarding Children Board (PSCB) joined with the Youth Service and Police to deliver an exciting day of workshops and information to parents, children and young people about the need for safe behaviour on-line.

Two "Urbies" – mini-buses equipped with internet consoles – offered workshops to children of all ages at Coombe Dean and Eggbuckland Schools, and a specially equipped public bus offered instruction and ideas to parents passing by in the City Centre. PSCB research in conjunction with Plymouth University was also published, showing 75% of under-5's now regularly use the internet. The PSCB offers e-safety training to practitioners: to book, go to www.plymouthscb.org.uk



International Women's Day Intergenerational Work in Plymouth



[International Women's Day](#) is due to take place on 8 March 2011. Plymouth Youth Service is currently working in partnership with Plymouth Age Concern to engage young women in initiatives as part of International Women's Day. There are three main themes that have come from young people as ideas that will form part of the International Women's Day event:

- A fashion show reflecting clothes and fashion through the ages
- Music over the generation, written and performed by women
- A singing group (choir).

Schools in Plymouth have been approached to take part in preparations for International Women's Day and a number have already expressed their support by releasing students from lessons to attend the tea dances at Plymouth Age Concern on the Barbican in preparation for the event in March 2011. The partnership with Plymouth Age Concern provides a number of exciting opportunities to engage young people in intergenerational work, both now and in the future. Contact Plymouth Youth Service on 306596 for more information.

Also members from the newly elected Youth Parliament will be speaking at the Lord Mayor's Civic Ceremony Launch event on 8 March 2011 about how young women see their future in Plymouth.

Research in Practice (RiP) new resource: Analysis and critical thinking in assessment

RiP is an online resource (www.rip.org.uk) that provides a range of materials to help people who work with children, young people and families. A recent addition to the website is a raft of resources about how to apply critical thinking. Whilst the resources do have a social care focus the principles can be applied to wider service areas. Resources include a core publication, which contains key research and practice messages around analysis and critical thinking in assessment that form the basis of this package of materials. There are also briefings for practitioners, supervisors and strategic leads which contain a summary of the key messages and practice recommendations about improving analysis within the assessment process. If you need help accessing these resources contact Abigail.jago@plymouth.gov.uk as your RiP link officer.

HealthTec 'Boys into Health' event 18 March 2011

The event is suitable for boys who may already have an interest in health, be unsure about their future career choices or have an interest in science and working with people but may not know what to do with these interests. Boys into Health is also useful for those who have no specific interest in a career in health but may benefit from an alternative view to health and the stereotype which suggests it is traditionally women's work. This event is open to all male students from Key Stages 3 and 4. Previous Boys into Health events have led to an increase in the number of males opting to take Science and Health & Social Care qualifications. There can be up to 15 boys per group and there is a cost of £50 per group.

For more information contact HealthTec, visit the [website](#) or email admin@healthtecsw.org.uk or call us on: 01752 695300



Policy

Munro review of Child protection: Interim report

Professor Munro signals a new approach in her [interim report on child protection](#), which focuses on helping children rather than on the regulations, inspections and procedures that have thrown the system out of balance. The areas for reform in the interim report include:

- A management and inspection process that monitors whether children are getting the help they need rather than being a tick-box exercise;
- Developing social work expertise by keeping experienced, more senior social workers on the front line so they can develop their skills and better supervise more junior social workers;
- Giving other professionals – health, police and family support services – easier access to social work advice when they have concerns about abuse and neglect;
- Revising and reducing the statutory guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children, which is now 55 times longer than it was in 1974, so that core rules are separated from professional advice;
- Ofsted no longer evaluate SCRs, with external scrutiny provided by publishing all SCR overview reports;
- Moving from announced and unannounced inspections to unannounced inspections only, which cover all children's services.



New Equality Duty - are you ready?

The new public sector equality duty was created under the Equality Act 2010. This duty will ensure that public functions are carried out in a way that promotes equality of access and opportunity. The new equality duty will take effect from 6 April 2011.



The general duty requires public bodies to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different groups

Specific duties for public bodies

The specific duties are designed to help public bodies ensure they deliver an inclusive and non-discriminatory service. The new equality duty extends the three duties above to give protection to people who feel that they have been treated unfairly because of their age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, or race. Service delivery and decisions need to evidence that they have taken different people's needs into account. To do this the Act requires services to publish 'equality objectives', details of who they have engaged with when making decisions and details of what the workforce looks like. The deadline is 31 July 2011 to start publishing information about what service providers and employers are doing to reflect this; however, schools will have until December 2011.

For further information or for a team briefing on the Equality Act 2010 and how it will affect your service please contact the Social Inclusion Unit on 304321 or email: inclusion@plymouth.gov.uk

The Education Bill

[The Bill](#) is an important step in implementing the Government's education reform programme and helping to create an education system that delivers ever higher standards for all children. The Education Bill takes forward the legislative proposals in the [Schools White Paper, The Importance of Teaching](#).

The Bill will ensure that teachers have powers to help maintain good behaviour standards, such as powers to search pupils and issuing same day detention. Schools will be able to have more freedom as bureaucratic burdens are removed. Accountability will be supported by reforming the school inspections and providing the Secretary of State with powers to intervene where schools are failing their pupils. The Bill will enable resources to be used fairly; for example, giving parents of disadvantaged two-year-olds a right to 15-hours free Early Years provision a week.

Local Safeguarding Children Board Toolkit

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) have a statutory obligation to communicate and raise awareness of their activity as outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working. This includes ensuring that partner organisations, such as statutory and independent agencies and employers, are aware of safeguarding arrangements. It is also important that members of the local community have an increased understanding of the work that is being carried out to help keep children safe.

[This toolkit](#) is a guide on how to communicate the work of the LSCB to partners, stakeholders and the wider public. In doing so, the LSCB can engage partners to help deliver objectives and keep children safe.

Research & Consultation

Effective classroom strategies for closing the gap in educational achievement for children living in poverty

[This research review](#) tells us what works in closing the gap in educational achievement for children and young people living in poverty, including white working-class boys.

Key messages include:

- Classroom strategies shown to be effective for one ethnic or socio-economic group tend also to be effective for others.
- Emerging research in the UK suggests that schools are adopting a number of promising strategies to improve outcomes for children living in poverty. These include:
 - rigorous monitoring and use of data
 - raising pupil aspirations using engagement/aspiration programmes
 - engaging parents and raising parental aspirations
 - developing social and emotional competencies
 - supporting school transitions
 - providing strong and visionary leadership.



The review also looks at some international studies and experimental research. Analysis of interventions for struggling readers and Early Years interventions are also featured.

Intervening to improve outcomes for vulnerable young people: a review of the evidence



There is a continuing commitment to end child poverty in the UK by 2020 and the Government has pledged to increase the focus on supporting the neediest families and those with multiple problems. A commitment to improving the life chances of vulnerable young people has, in recent years, led to the testing and evaluation of a number of initiatives. This [research review](#) sought to identify the common barriers to the effective implementation of new initiatives; elements of effective practice in the delivery of multi-agency services for vulnerable young people and their families; the costs associated with integrated service delivery; the outcomes that can be achieved; and whether fewer and more targeted initiatives might offer better value for money, particularly during a period of fiscal reform. Key lessons from the review of recent initiatives include:

- Effective practice in supporting vulnerable young people requires more understanding of the links between assessment, interventions and outcomes;
- Further progress in implementing the CAF and developing the family CAF is needed;
- Key workers and lead professionals are vital ingredients in the delivery of personalised services;
- There must be a highly skilled social care workforce. Any new workforce strategy needs to find ways of reducing competing demands on practitioners' time.

Transition to adult services for disabled young people

[New research](#) from the Social Policy Research Unit provides evidence of what works well in developing and implementing multi-agency transition services for disabled young people, those with complex health needs and their families. It also assesses the costs of these services. There is considerable diversity in transition services in England. This research took a detailed look at five services which used different models of working. The research looks at user satisfaction with the service, parents' and young people's needs and if they were met or unmet, and the effects on parental stress.

The key factors required to achieve better outcomes in service delivery were:

- Having a transition worker who supported the young person and parents
- The family having a written transition plan
- The manager of the transition service having strategic level involvement.

Research messages for health professionals

[This briefing](#) has been prepared to highlight the key research messages from The Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services (C4EO) for commissioners and providers of health services for children and young people across a number of themes. These messages help to illustrate some of the interventions that have been proven to have a positive impact and make a difference in people's lives. This briefing provides an overview of the key findings about Early Years, Disability, Child Poverty and Safeguarding. The key messages come from literature reviews, case studies and the view of practitioners and children and young people. The briefing also includes case studies of validated local practice. C4EO has looked at cost-effectiveness and has provided costings for some of the validated local practice examples as well. Visit the C4EO [website](#) for other useful research briefings.

Training and Events

Local Training

Exploring belief, faith and culture in the workplace and community

Dates for these course are 2 March 2011 and 8 April 2011 and they are full days 9:00am to 4:00pm.

The day will provide opportunities to:

- Raise awareness and deepen understanding of religious and cultural diversity;
- Identify appropriate sensitivities and skills;
- Explore key issues such as identity and belonging;
- Meet people from different faith and cultural backgrounds.

To book a place on the course, contact Gemma Foster at the Plymouth Centre for Faiths & Cultural Diversity on 01752 254438 or email: info@pcfcd.co.uk

Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Training

Training dates are now available until March 2011.

If anyone is interested in training or would like to speak to Amanda Paddison (CAF Co-ordinator) to discuss a case or for further advice and guidance, please feel free to contact her:

CAF@plymouth.gov.uk

Tel: 01752 307160

Mobile: 07774336579



Local events

What: Personal Finance Education in Plymouth

This event is the culmination of more than eighteen month's work here in Plymouth and represents the combined efforts of four pilot primary schools, PFEG (Personal Finance Education Group) and the Local Authority. The aim has been to produce examples of personal finance education in practice for other schools to use as the basis for their own work in this area. The day will be inspiring and will help to point the way forward for schools over the coming years



When/Where: 10 March 2011 at Boringdon Golf Park Conference Centre

Target Audience: Headteachers, curriculum and pastoral leaders, PSHEE coordinators and teachers,

Contact: For more information contact Linda Barretto, Tel: 307489
Linda.Barretto@plymouth.gov.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:

Abigail Jago, Assistant Policy and Planning Officer
Services for Children and Young People Tel: 307113

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 3	March	3 March 2011
		16 March 2011