

Newcastle Children's Services
Annual Performance Assessment
2008



PART A - BACKGROUND

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<p>Arrangements for joint working Newcastle's Children's Trust Arrangements are led by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) which is a delivery partnership of the LSP. All key partners are actively engaged in the CYPSP, which is supported by outcome, locality and commissioning groups. Representation is good from across partners, including full and active engagement of the Voluntary and Community Sector. A Children's Trust Governance Agreement and A Fit for Purpose Partnership Handbook have been agreed by the CYPSP. The governance agreement was approved by the City Council Executive in June 2008.</p> <p>Partnership involvement in completing the self-assessment The CYPSP Executive is systematically involved in reviewing performance, agreeing priorities for improvement and monitoring progress. In addition, specific performance review and self-assessment activities have included:</p> <p>CYPSP Executive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> February 2008 – agreed priorities for Improving Outcome Plans (action plans to support NPCYP) and indicators for LAA and CYP scorecard <p>CYP Scrutiny panel (Newcastle City Council)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dec 2007 - reviewed performance and consulted on priorities for 2008/09 NPCYP and LAA June 2008 – reviewed self-assessment <p>CYPSP development sessions - senior managers from City Council and partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 2007 – reviewed performance and identified priorities for 2008/09 – contributing to NPCYP and development of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and LAA May 2008 - reviewed and amended initial self-assessments <p>CYPSP / NSCB annual conference in March 2008 attended by 180 people from a range of organisations and communities reviewed performance and priorities for the next year</p> <p>Outcome leads and multi-agency groups</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feb – June 2008 – reviewed performance and produced plans for 2008/09 (supporting review of NPCYP and APA), incorporating views of children, young people, parents and carers from a wide range of participation activities and completed self-assessment <p>Children and young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1600 children and young people communicated through the latest Tellus survey (900 in 2007) A range of activities by the Youth Parliament including a consultation with 70 young people from 11 schools in March 08 where they voted on their top 3 priorities <p>Parents and carers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 100 Voices Event in June 2007 and stakeholder events in Autumn 2007 identified priorities for parenting support and development of services <p>Other partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> November 2007 – Priorities conversation with DCSF CSA 	

PART B – CONTEXT

Newcastle upon Tyne has emerged from the industrial decline of the previous decades and re-established itself as a vibrant regional capital attracting investment, creativity and jobs. Continuing, innovative regeneration is transforming public spaces and further advancing Newcastle's reputation regionally, nationally and internationally.

Children's Services have a crucial role to play in the continuing regeneration of the City. We are improving outcomes for our children and young people at faster rates than nationally and many similar areas. This narrowing the gap is contributing to Newcastle's revitalisation.

Around a quarter of the population of Newcastle is aged 0-19 years old. A higher proportion of children and young people are from black and minority ethnic communities than the population as a whole.

- There are 270,500 people living in Newcastle, 62,800 children are aged 0 -19 years. Of these, 51% are male and 49% are female.
- Of the school population, 17% are from black and ethnic minorities; 15% have a first language which is other than English; 21% have special educational needs; and 25% are registered for free school meals. The ethnic diversity of the school population is growing – 24% of nursery pupils (age 4) are from black and minority ethnic groups, compared with 19% of year 4 pupils (age 9), 15% of year 7 (age 12) pupils and 12% of year 11 pupils (age 16).

Levels of deprivation in Newcastle are much higher than the national average. Compared to the overall population, a much higher proportion of children and young people live in the most deprived areas of the city.

- Newcastle is ranked 37th most deprived out of 354 local authorities in the country (IMD 2007), improving from 20th in 2004. The 2007 'Local Concentration' analysis shows Newcastle has the 13th highest level of locally concentrated deprivation in the country in 2007.
- 25% of the overall population, and 33% of children and young people (19,000) aged 0-18 years, live in areas in the 10% most deprived nationally; 5.3% (3,100) of children and young people live in areas in the 1% most deprived.
- In January 2008, 35% of the school age population lived in areas in the 10% most deprived, reducing from 40% in 2004. 25% of children in LA schools are registered for free school meals.
- Our most deprived areas have made up some ground against city averages but there remains a wide gap to the most affluent areas
- On average, people in Newcastle earn less than the GB average and the gap in average earnings between Newcastle and GB widened between 2002 and 2006.
- In 2005/06, 15,300 children lived in out of work families – approximately 30% of all children living in Newcastle, compared with 20% in England. Of the 15,300, just over 10,000 live with out of work lone parents – approximately 20% of all children living in Newcastle.

Our Priorities

We recognise that our context is very challenging so it is our mission to **reduce child poverty and its impact on outcomes for children and young people** as identified in Newcastle's new Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and Local Area Agreement

Our key priorities for children and young people in 2008/09 from our self-assessment, analyses of need, what children, young people, parents and carers and partners tell us are to:

- **Reduce the rate of teenage pregnancies**
- **Reduce obesity in children under 11 years**
- **Raise levels of educational achievement and increase school attendance**
- **Further develop early intervention and preventative services to support parents, carers and families for example through locality working.**
- **Safely reduce the number of children needing protection and care by preventing family breakdown, supporting families to tackle domestic violence, substance misuse and mental ill health**

Further information

- The [Newcastle Plan for Children and Young People](http://www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk) including annual reviews and other plans, strategies and information - www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk
- Newcastle Partnership, SCS and LAA - www.newcastlepartnership.org.uk
- Newcastle City Council - www.newcastle.gov.uk/
- Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board guidance and procedures - www.newcastle.gov.uk/lscb
- Newcastle Families Services Directory – www.newcastle.cyp-directory.org.uk/

PART C – ANALYSIS, INVOLVEMENT AND IMPACT

BE HEALTHY

Performance remains good overall and has further improved in 2007/08.

Our self assessment, analyses of need, consultations with children, young people, parents, carers and partners and our review of the Children and Young People Plan tell us we have the following:

Strengths

- Improved Be Healthy outcomes
- Good leadership, governance and partnership delivery structures in place making co-ordination and decision-making more transparent and effective.
- Engagement and consultation with parents, carers, children and young people in developing and delivering services.
- Vibrant voluntary and community sector providing services in partnership with the LA
- CAMHS provision is progressively more focused on early intervention and prevention.
- A well established MALAP includes a Be Healthy work stream
- Clinical and local authority services are co-ordinated through a shared management partnership, which develops “wrap around” services for children with disabilities.
- Joint protocol for the transfer of targeted and specialist LDD and CAMHS cases.

Areas for Development

- Continue to reduce Teenage pregnancy rates and levels of sexual infection (**Key Priority**)
- Further reduce childhood obesity rates (**Key Priority**)
- Implement Drugs and Alcohol Action Plan including a preventative approach to alcohol misuse
- Improve CAMHS prevention and early intervention by increasing capability and capacity in universal (Tier 1) CAMHS and the use of CAF
- Implement the pathway for children with ADHD
- Continue to develop joint Commissioning arrangements for LDD children and young people.

(1.2) In relation to healthy lifestyles, outcomes are good and have improved in 2007/8.

- The Child Health Commissioning “Be Healthy” Partnership and several multi-agency groups are delivering health promotion, through schools, health, early years, play, leisure, youth and voluntary and community services. Targeted services address the needs of vulnerable groups.
- Teenage conception rate has decreased by 10% since 2004 - from 58.9 per 1000 young women aged 15-17 years in 2004 to 52.6 in 2006 - but is still higher than the England average of 40.4. This remains a key priority for further improvement.
- Teenage Kicks, a newly established SRE outreach team, has made contact with over 1400 young people since July 2007. Over 50% of pharmacies now have trained pharmacists who are able to provide free emergency contraception. Health 4U (health nurse drop-ins) provision now available in all schools with additional sessions in “hot spot” areas for teenage pregnancy
- A new 2008–10 Teenage Pregnancy Strategy further develops key areas of work which emerged from the review, the recommendations from the NST and the views of children and young people ([JAR recommendation – good progress](#)).
- Smoking during pregnancy has reduced from 23% in 2005/2006 to 18% in 2007/08 and is lower than in similar areas. The target for proportion of women continuing to smoke in pregnancy has been exceeded.

- Infant mortality rates have reduced significantly from 5.44 per 1,000 live births in 2002 to 2.77 per 1,000 in 2007, below similar authorities and national figures.
- Rates of breastfeeding are increasing and are now higher than similar areas. 56% of women initiated breastfeeding in 2007/08 (43% in 2005/06) ([APA recommendation – good progress](#))
- 79% (75) of schools have achieved National Healthy Schools Status, surpassing the national target of 75% by December 2009
- The Tell us survey indicates that children and young people in Newcastle believe they lead healthier lifestyles than their peers nationally
- Child obesity levels are high but decreasing - 10.9% of reception and 21% of Year 6 children in Newcastle were obese in 2006/07, compared to 11.8% and 22.9% in 2005/06 (9.9% of reception and 17.5% of Y6 nationally in 2006/07). Obesity in reception pupils is in line with similar areas, but at Y6 is above average for similar authorities. Following positive evaluation of the 'Lean East' project by Northumbria University, some aspects of this will be implemented in other parts of the City ([JAR recommendation – good progress](#)).
- A total of 4281 Chlamydia screenings were completed in 2007/08, which is 8% of the 15-24 year old population. Although below the 15% target, we reached the second highest proportion of the 15-24 year old population in the country ([APA recommendation – good progress](#))
- 88% of pupils in Newcastle spend at least 2 hours in a typical week on high quality PE and out of school sport, compared with 58% in 2003/04.
- Children and young people including those who are vulnerable are actively engaged in reviewing and reshaping services designed to meet their health needs. They participate well in consultations through schools, youth service, the voluntary and community sectors and specific events.

(1.4) In relation to children and young people's mental health, outcomes are good and significant reshaping has taken place in 2007/8 to improve services at a local level

- Children and young People were actively involved in the Programme Budget Marginal Analysis (PBMA) exercise that established the priorities for the CAMHS Strategy and reshaped service provision
- Newcastle has fully comprehensive CAMH services for children and young people with learning disabilities, 16 and 17 year olds and a 24 hour service. Protocols for children and young people with complex, persistent and severe behavioural and mental health needs will be fully operational within the next 6 months.
- The number of under 18 year olds who are admitted to adult wards has decreased: 2005/06 - 8; 2006/07 - 6; 2007/08 - 5
- CAMHS has been realigned. Priorities include a focus on early intervention and prevention resulting in more support to schools, young people and parents.
- More CAMHS are available in community-based settings through other services and projects, e.g. Children's Centres and Connexions
- A needs assessment, self assessment matrix and Programme Budgeting Marginal Analysis (PBMA) have been completed and will form the basis for the next CAMHS Strategy (2008-11) due for completion in August 2008.
- Almost all under 18s receive treatment in young people's services (98%). The proportion of those in substance misuse treatment who are under 18 years has increased from 8% in 2005 to 12% in 2007.

(1.5) In relation to looked after children, health outcomes are good and improved in 2007/8

- In 2006/07, 322 out of the 365 (88%) children who had been looked after for the year had up to date immunisations (86% in 2005/06) compared to 80% nationally.
- 270 (74%) had their teeth checked by a dentist (78% in 2005/06) compared to 86% nationally.
- 313 (86%) had an annual health assessment (82% in 2005/06) compared to 84% nationally.
- 100% of LAC identified as having a substance misuse issue were offered an individual appointment with a worker within 10 working days.
- 5 'Lets Talk About Sex and Relationships' courses for foster carers, social workers and residential care workers were delivered in 2007/08.
- A Healthy Care Audit of looked after children's needs has been completed
- A Tier 3 multidisciplinary CAMHS team for LAC are currently involved in direct work with 98 children/young people and their foster or residential carers.

(1.6) In relation to the health needs of children and young people with learning difficulties and / or disabilities, outcomes are good and have continued to improve in 2007/8.

- Increased provision of therapy services into special schools has increased parent's confidence and reduced requests for children to be educated outside the authority.
- Increased number of places for 16+ year olds with LDD by 40 to improve vocational options.
- An ASD pathway, designed with parents and carers, has been produced to guide parents through services and is available through the Family Services Directory
- The number of children with LDD receiving support into play groups, nurseries, school and play schemes in 2006 was 34 with a further 25 in 2007. By April 2008 7 more children have received support.
- Currently 3 children with a tracheotomy receive support in nursery and reception year, funded 50:50 between health and education.
- A newly developed home based family support service for children with life limiting conditions using a joint Health and LA pathway and assessment has supported six families between February and June 2008.
- A successful health and local authority Key Worker pilot has been positively evaluated and will be expanded during the next year.
- A High Care Needs System is well established, providing added value to children placed out of authority.
- The Children with Disabilities and Special Needs Management Partnership is ensuring a cross agency strategy for LDD children is being delivered ([JAR recommendation – good progress](#)).
- Involvement/participation of children and young people with LDD is good.

STAY SAFE

Performance is now good. There is clear evidence that services are having a stronger impact leading to improvement and that outcomes are better than similar authorities.

Our self assessment, analyses of need, consultations with children, young people parents, carers and partners and our review of the Children and Young People Plan tells us we have the following:

Strengths

- Improving Stay Safe Outcomes
- NSCB provides strong leadership for performance improvement and policy development on all safeguarding issues
- Reshaping of children's social care has had a positive impact on application of thresholds for referral and consistency and timeliness of response
- Performance in relation to child protection and placement stability of LAC remain in the best performance categories
- Development of targeted family support services, e.g. Changing Trax, Strengthening Families are contributing to a decrease in child protection registrations and LAC population
- A high proportion (87%) of children who are looked after are in family placements

Areas for Development

- Further embed locality working to support Early Intervention and Prevention. (**Key priority**)
- Sustain downward trends in the number of referrals, the LAC population and number of Children subject to Child Protection Plan as key outcomes of successful integrated working and development of family support services (**Key priority**).
- Fully implement CAF across all agencies by April 2009 and further embed the thresholds between levels of services
- Implement the 'Think Family' approach across the Children's Trust.

(2.2) In relation to children and young people being provided with a safe environment outcomes are good, and improving

- There has been a significant improvement in the downward trend of children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents with a 60% decrease since 1997 and a further 40% reduction between 2004 and 2007. An increase in 20mph traffic zones has had a positive impact.

- An anti-bullying accreditation scheme is being rolled out in schools Newcastle. Young people have actively participated in process and tell us that they feel safe (Tellus, 2007)
- Increase of 38% in reports of domestic violence made to Police as a result of Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) established in 2007. 115 highest risk victims and 225 children have received protection through this process. Northumbria Police have appointed 6 MARAC co-ordinators to ensure effective co-ordination of process
- Newcastle Safeguarding Children's Board (NSCB) is the responsible authority for licensing applications. 'Safe Clubbin' a collaborative initiative with night clubs in the City, provides young people who attend under 18 nights with a safer environment (a single event attracts over 1000 young people). The work has assisted night club managers to provide a safe environment, raise staff awareness of the issues in relation to staff safety, safeguarding, child protection and how to respond to practice guidelines if they have a concern.
- The Child Care Safeguarding and Compliance Service has extended its remit to ensure that all registered and non-registered day care provision complies with locally agreed standards which are above minimum requirements
- A Respect Action Plan, tackling causes of anti-social behaviour, includes a Family Intervention Programme (FIP) and Parenting Programmes. To date the FIP has successfully worked with 11 families with a total of 50 children.

(2.3) In relation to the incidence of child abuse and neglect being minimised, outcomes are good, and are improving

- Improved threshold criteria for referrals to Social care have been established and referrals are decreasing. Introduction of ICS has resulted in improved data collection regarding referrals. The rate of referrals has reduced substantially; and the proportion of referrals leading to Initial Assessment is currently 68% (May 2008), above national rates ([JAR & APA recommendation – good progress](#)).
- Reshaping of Children's Social care from a geographical to a functional model is now demonstrating a positive impact in improving the timeliness of assessments. Since the introduction of ICS, 79% of Initial Assessments have been completed within 7 days (May 2008) compared to 33% in 2006/07 ([APA Recommendation – good progress](#)).
- The numbers of children subject to Child Protection Plan and Looked after Children have been safely reduced in 2007/2008.
- CAF is increasingly used across the City and a number of agencies have adapted their processes to incorporate it, e.g. all young people at risk of homelessness have a CAF. A target date of April 2009 has been agreed by the CYPSP for adoption of CAF across all agencies in the City
- An infrastructure is in place through locality working to support Early Intervention and Prevention. This is leading to improved commissioning arrangements of services to meet locally identified need e.g. Children's Fund
- CAF Practitioner support groups in each locality ensure consistency of practice and application of thresholds
- Complex Child in Need procedures are effective in preventing registration, re-registration and accommodation
- 'Never Shake a Baby' Campaign has been positively evaluated and will roll out into schools during 2008. 99 staff from health visiting teams have been trained; 97% report an increase in knowledge, confidence in raising the issue with parents, and having an impact on their practice. Parents indicated that they were able to recall the advice and information provided to them 10 months earlier and that the information had helped them to understand and cope with a crying baby.
- A dedicated Independent Reviewing Officer promotes awareness of and monitors private fostering arrangements of which there are 7 currently (2008) Community Arrangements Panel provides independent scrutiny of individual arrangements.
- Changing Trax, a joint Adults and Children's social care project, provides intensive family support to families in crisis where parental substance misuse places children at risk of accommodation or registration. In 2007/2008 the programme worked with 15 families with 27 children to enable them to remain safely at home.

- A Strengthening Families parenting programme for families where a child is at risk of offending, anti-social behaviour or substance misuse has supported 31 families to remain intact in 2007/2008.
- Community Support Fostering Scheme provides family support, respite and day care to families in crisis. It worked with 30 families in 2007/2008 to prevent accommodation into care.
- Performance against PAF indicators for Child Protection e.g. A3, C20 and C21 remain in the best possible bands. Proportion of children reregistered has marginally increased due to impact of re-registration of two sibling groups of 6

(2.4) In relation to agencies collaborating to safeguard children, outcomes are good

- NCSB provides strong strategic leadership regarding the development and monitoring of policies and procedures and acts as a driver for improvement of outcomes and performance
- A LADO has been appointed to oversee and manage allegations against staff working with children. All agencies have a designated manager to manage allegations. This has led to an effective and consistent approach across agencies.
- Police have improved the formal process for submitting child concern notifications to social care by differentiating between referral and information sharing thereby ensuring that social care thresholds are met.
- Children's Safeguarding Standards Unit provides a multi-agency integrated approach to safeguarding and quality assurance, e.g. designated nurse for child protection.
- NSCB has a high uptake of e-learning safeguarding courses compared to other LSCBs nationally. Newcastle has 1947 "passes" in Child Abuse and 311 in Domestic Violence awareness. Evaluations are excellent
- One Serious Case Review took place in 2007/2008 and was concluded in time. As a result a multi-agency action plan has been put in place which includes a review of housing provision for 16 to 18 year olds and a review of Vulnerable Young People's Guidance.
- An Information Sharing Protocol is in place between Police and social care to share information about adults who pose a risk to children and vulnerable adults

(2.5) In relation to services that are effective in establishing the identity and whereabouts of all children and young people aged 0-16, outcomes are good and improving.

- The SCARPA (Safeguarding Children At Risk Prevention and Action) Project launched in November 2007 provides service to young people in Newcastle who go missing, are trafficked, runaway or sexually exploited. So far the project has worked with 41 young people
- A "Missing from Education Placement" Protocol has recently been implemented. The SCARPA Project will record and monitor data.
- Joint police and social care "Missing from Care" protocol is in place to ensure a co-ordinated approach to young people who abscond or go missing from care
- Education Welfare Service truancy patrols are undertaken regularly. Between 1 April 2005 and 31 March 2008 there have been 316 truancy patrols. In total 1913 children were stopped; 1031 (54%) were with an adult, 882 (46%) were unaccompanied. (See Enjoy and Achieve).
- Information and data sharing agreement with key agencies regarding young carers has resulted in early intervention and support. 36 young carers are receiving a service and direct work with schools is taking place ([JAR and APA Recommendation – good progress](#)).

(2.6) In relation to action which is taken to avoid children and young people being accommodated, performance is adequate and is improving

- A multi-agency strategy to reduce LAC has made a sustained impact on the proportion of LAC per general population and is now in line with Core Cities
- The main reasons linked to accommodation - parental substance misuse and domestic violence - are being addressed by multi-agency strategies such as the Parenting Strategy; Hidden Harm; Think Families; Domestic Violence. An increased range of family support services had led to reductions in the LAC population and children subject to Child Protection Plans
- A dedicated team in the Initial Response Service provides support to families where there is risk of an adolescent being accommodated.
- Family Group Conferences are being systematically rolled out to avoid accommodation and support reunification

- An Emergency Residential Unit works closely with LAC Prevention Team to promote reunification within 6 weeks

(2.7) In relation to Looked after Children living in safe environments and being protected from abuse and exploitation performance is good.

- Placement stability of LAC (PAF A1) remains very good at 8.3% and compares favourably with similar Local Authorities and nationally.
- A high proportion of LAC 0-16 years are in family placements (87%)
- No child under 10 is placed in residential care
- Highly successful “Foster a Future” campaign has increased placement choice through the recruitment of 70 families who have been approved or are going through assessment and training, including five new BME families ([JAR Recommendation – good progress](#)). In 2006/07, only 7 foster families were recruited.
- Outcomes for LAC as measured by PAF indicators and OC2 return are good
- Adoption of LAC is ‘very good’ (10%) and demonstrates the impact of improved permanency planning
- Recent inspections of Residential Homes have been ‘good’ with outstanding features in several key judgement areas
- 110 children are financially supported with families through Residence and Special Guardianship Allowances rather than Kinship Fostering Arrangements to promote permanency
- Placement arrangements are safeguarded by monthly visits to LAC by social workers, monthly carers’ interviews and a multi-disciplinary Care Team approach to support care planning
- Placement Panel ensures good placement matching, monitoring of moves and admissions to care.

(2.8) In relation to children and young people with LDD living in safe environments and being protected from abuse and exploitation, outcomes are good.

- Aiming High for disabled children is being developed. LA, health and voluntary sector, children, young people, parents and carers are involved in designing the programme.
- The Families Information Service provides good information to Children and Young People and their parents and carers. It includes pathways to services for children with autism
- Current short break provision has been audited in line with Aiming High for disabled children and has been assessed as good.
- A new Family Support Service for children with life limiting conditions has been launched.
- New in-house short break unit has recently opened and has now received accreditation by the National Autistic Society
- Residential Short Break Unit has been judged by Ofsted to be good.
- Children placed out of authority in residential placements are managed by the joint High Care needs system ensuring multi agency quality assurance and compliance with standards. All placements have robust and transparent monitoring arrangements in place.
- Protocols are in place between mainstream social work teams and CwD social work team to ensure children/young people are fully included in initial and core assessments
- The “Response” anti bullying team is successfully raising awareness regarding bullying of children with disabilities
- Transition protocols are in place between CwD social work team and Adult with Learning Difficulties team and also between Leaving Care team and Adult with Learning Difficulties team.
- Newcastle is the first Children’s Service in the country to provide young people with an individual budget and we will support more people to access self directed support.
- Direct payments are available and promoted to families and disabled 16 and 17 year olds with 47 young people accessing services via direct payments.
- The needs of carers are assessed through CAF, Initial and Core Assessments. Carers are also offered a carer’s assessment.

ENJOY AND ACHIEVE

Performance remains adequate overall but with some good features. There is strong evidence that services are now having a stronger impact leading to improvements.

Our self assessment, analyses of need, consultations with children and young people, parents, carers and partners and our review of the Children and Young People Plan tells us we have the following:

Strengths

- Overall effectiveness of early years provision and schools is good
- Robust Schools Causing Concern Policy has led to rapid improvement of schools in Ofsted categories
- Some of the most vulnerable pupils make good progress e.g. LDD, BME.
- Inclusion of children and young people with LDD.
- Faster improvement rates for KS2, 3 & 4 compared to national, narrowing attainment gaps
- Good provision for LAC and LDD pupils which is leading to good standards of achievement
- Good progress in implementing our ambitious Building Schools for the Future programme
- City Council is funding access to free leisure activities for all children and young people

Areas for Development

- Improve attendance and reduce persistent absence (**Key priority**).
- Raise levels of educational achievement and narrow attainment gaps with a specific focus on English and Maths (**Key priority**).
- Reduce the numbers of pupils who are permanently excluded from school, improve the quality of provision for their learning and rates of reintegration
- Ensure that the capital investment in Primary and Secondary Schools leads to greater personalisation of learning and improved outcomes for children and young people

(3.2) In relation to Early Years, performance remains good with more improvements in 2007/8:

- Impact of intervention by the LA in 3 targeted areas of the EYFP since 2005 has been good, showing an improvement of between 1 and 3% compared to a declining national picture although overall, standards remain below national. **This is an area for further improvement.**
- No nursery education settings are inadequate and 70% of all early years' settings are good or outstanding – top quartile performance.
- Better moderation is now effectively challenging teacher assessment. In 2006/7 100% of settings were moderated.
- A wide and flexible range of good quality childcare is in place though in some areas there is a need to increase choice and encourage greater take up. Deprived areas are well served.
- The majority of settings are well placed to implement the EYFS curriculum in September 2008 following training by the LA which was very positively evaluated.

(3.3) In relation to education provision for 5-16 year olds outcomes remain adequate overall with some improvements in 2007/8:

- Levels of educational achievement are satisfactory overall and improving. Some good improvements e.g. KS4 5A*-C have been achieved in 2007 and attainment gaps are narrowing. (**APA 2007 recommendation – satisfactory progress**).
- Standards at KS1 remain below national and statistical neighbours (SN) for reading and writing though maths is now in line with SN rate of improvement.
- Standards at KS2 are below national averages in English, maths and science. Trends since 2003 show a rate of improvement greater than statistical neighbours in all subjects and greater than national for English and science. Attainment gaps are narrowing.
- Poor conversion rates between KS1 and KS2 are being addressed e.g. in maths there has been a narrowing of the gap for two level progress to -3.8% from 6.2% in 2006.
- Despite improvements in performance at Level 5+ at KS3, performance remains below SN and national for English, maths and science.

- KS4 performance is now above the national average for 5+ A*-C and has been above statistical neighbours for the last four years. For 5+ A*-C including English and maths, performance is below national average and SN. However, the rate of improvement is better than national and statistical neighbours so narrowing the gap between Newcastle and the national average from -11% to -8%.
- Progress for KS3 L5+ performance for English and maths between 2006/7 and 2007/8 is in the top quartile nationally.
- Progress for performance at 5 A*-C, with and without English and maths, for 5A*-G and for Average Point Score is in the top quartile nationally.
- KS2-4, CVA for 2007 was well above national in 2006 and 2007 showing that the average rate of progress in the secondary phase is good.
- Targeted support for schools in disadvantaged areas has had good impact. Between Key Stages 1 & 2 and 2 & 4 CVA data shows pupils in the 1% most deprived areas of the City perform better than the city average and better than expected.
- Audit Commission Survey of Schools shows very effective school improvement services with 26 of the 33 statements in the top quartile.
- In the secondary phase no schools are in an Ofsted category. In the primary phase there are three in special measures. Decisive intervention by LA has resulted in one being closed (July 08) and the two remaining schools are on track to be removed from their category in the expected timeframe.
- An effective school improvement strategy identifies schools requiring intervention and support is appropriately differentiated. Four schools have successfully moved out of a cause for concern category within timescale in the last 2 years.
- Inspection outcomes compare favourably to statistical neighbours and core cities. The overall effectiveness of schools is good or outstanding for 65% of schools which is above the national average, and well above in the secondary phase.
- The impact of LA challenge and support is good. There has been faster improvement in schools targeted by the LA for intervention and support. For example primary schools receiving intensive support have improved by +6.4% in maths and +1.9% in English. Significant 5A*-C improvement also occurred in 3 out of 4 priority secondary schools.
- Partnership working is good. Increased use of consultant leaders, NLEs, leading teachers and ASTs as well as LA consultants has successfully built capacity for further improvement in schools. Increased partnering of schools is supporting improvement across a wider range of schools.

(3.4) In relation to children and young people's attendance and enjoyment, outcomes are adequate with some improvements seen in 2007/8.

- Despite some improvements, attendance figures remain too low (in the lowest decile) and persistent absence too high. **(Key priority).**
- Robust challenge and effective support to schools where attendance is an issue has led to a fall in overall absence rates in Newcastle in 2007. Persistent absence is a particular issue, though with targeted intervention it has fallen by 0.6% in line with the national improvement rate.
- Fast track case management has led to 34% of cases being withdrawn due to improvements.
- A traffic light system to monitor absence rates led to a fall of 3% in one secondary school in 2007/8 and this system is now being introduced to primary schools.
- Truancy patrols are undertaken regularly – 316 between April 2005 and March 2008. 1913 Children identified.
- Ofsted inspections indicate that attendance in schools overall is satisfactory, but it is the only area where Newcastle school Ofsted judgements are below national rates.
- Fixed term exclusions are below the national and statistical neighbour averages in both primary and secondary schools.
- Permanent exclusions are above the national average in both primary and secondary sectors but are reducing. **This remains a priority for further improvement.**
- Children with SEN Statements account for 5% of all permanent exclusions and 5% of fixed term exclusions compared to national figures of 11% and 12% respectively. Performance is good.
- Performance of vulnerable pupils in relation to behaviour and attendance is good. Exclusion and attendance of vulnerable groups is carefully monitored and is better than the citywide indicators. All secondary schools have significantly redesigned their curricula to increase access to

alternative learning programmes and provide more personalised learning. The uptake of vocational qualifications has improved.

- Ofsted judge behaviour as good or better in 93% of all schools and a recent evaluation of the Behaviour Support Service showed 96% of schools rated it as helpful and 75% as very helpful.
- Very good progress has been achieved with extended services in schools and 2008 targets have already been exceeded. 74% of schools are currently providing the full Extended Services Core Offer (DCSF target is 50% by 2008).
 - 100% of primary schools are meeting the wraparound childcare offer
 - 100% of secondary schools are open 8 am to 6 pm if needed
 - 90% schools are providing swift and easy referral
 - 91% are offering a varied menu of activities, and
 - 87% are offering community use of the school.
- The percentage of pupils enjoying school is broadly in line with the national figure (Tellus 2)
- There are sufficient suitable and accessible school places.
- Children and young people are engaged in a wide range of culture and leisure activities:
 - Through a 'Kids Can Choose' event, children have been actively involved in a Big Lottery bid for improving play spaces and deciding how the money should be spent
 - Council leisure centres are freely accessible
 - Children and young people are engaged in programming leisure activities e.g. Young People's Forum, engagement day at Eldon Leisure, Children's Gym at Lightfoot Centre.
 - More children and young people are accessing reading groups in libraries. Some of the most vulnerable children and young people have been targeted, e.g. young people in the forensic medium secure unit of St Nicholas' Hospital where a visiting author facilitated.
 - 19 Schools have Arts Mark awards.
 - Cultural activities have been targeted at children and young people living in some of the most disadvantaged wards, e.g. music making, arts-in-health exploring obesity, poster design for alcohol abuse, drama project about teenage pregnancy and a multi-cultural samba project
 - The third sector has run education and outreach activities such as the Ouseburn and East End festivals and the Mela and Community Green Festivals. These have actively engaged the Pakistani, Polish, Russian and Chinese communities.

(3.5) In relation to educational provision for children who do not attend school, outcomes are adequate with some improvements in 2007/8:

- In relation to improving the levels of reintegration for excluded pupils, adequate progress has been made. **This remains a priority for further improvement.**
- All pupils are now registered at the PRU from the date of removal from roll at the excluding school. The majority of excluded pupils are not returned to mainstream settings at KS4 ([APA Recommendation – satisfactory progress](#))
- The quality of provision at the PRU is excellent, (Ofsted, 2008).
- Improved accreditation and employability skills for pupils have led to improvements in the number of learners who go on to EET and in 2007 this was above the national average.
- The LA has clear procedures for monitoring the quality of the provision for young people who are educated at home. There is an accurate and well managed database and effective action is taken to ensure that individual needs are met. Numbers are low (38).
- The range of curriculum provision and support for permanently excluded pupils and those at risk of disaffection and disengagement has improved but more needs to be done. Capacity for further improvement is good ([APA Recommendation – satisfactory progress](#))
- The support provided by the Bridges School for young people not able to attend school because of medical needs is judged by Ofsted to be good with outstanding features.

(3.7) In relation to Looked after Children's achievement, outcomes are good with some further improvements achieved in 2007/8:

- In 2006/07 at the end of KS1 and KS3 Newcastle achieved above the national outcomes for LAC. The lower performance at KS2 was due to a high number of pupils placed outside the LA not doing the maths test.

	KS1			KS2			KS3		
	R	W	Ma	En	Ma	Sc	En	Ma	Sc
Newcastle LAC	92%	85%	85%	41%	31%	59%	44%	50%	38%
National LAC	55%	51%	64%	46%	44%	59%	30%	31%	29%

- In 2007, 92% of LAC were in Employment, Education or Training. The Newcastle LAC unemployment rate was 8% compared with a national figure of 17%.
- 98% of LAC have an up to date, comprehensive PEP and their quality is systematically monitored. Recent changes have improved the quality of the information held. In 2006-7 the dedicated central education team supported 62 LAC through 1 to1 support, classroom support and small group work. As a result the progress made by LAC was good. 64% met or exceeded their targets.
- Support for LAC is closing the gap in attainment and achievement with their peers.
- A tracking system has been established to enable close monitoring of LAC with attendance problems. The impact of this is that the % of LAC missing 25 days or more has reduced year on year to the current 10.5% (14% in the previous year and 12% nationally).

(3.8) In relation to C&YP with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, outcomes are good with further improvements in 2007/8:

- The Newcastle Speech and Language Team provide a seamless multi disciplinary service for young children with severe speech and language difficulties through a joint referral system between education and health. This has resulted in significantly improved outcomes for children and eradicated waiting lists for the Speech and Language Additionally Resourced Centres. Many are now able to continue their education in their local school whilst having their speech and language needs met.
- The percentage of KS1 – KS2 pupils working below NC levels making at least 2 steps progress is 90.3% which is a 10% improvement on previous year and above the national.
- Increased funding has been targeted at School Action Plus (SA+) to support individual pupils and has led to improved outcomes. This group makes better progress than expected. Contextual Value Added is positive (i.e.) KS1 - KS2 100.1; KS2-4 -1015.23; KS3 – 4 is 1010.35. Better than expected performance across all key stages.
- The SEN workforce is well trained providing good support for pupils with special needs
- Thorough Person Centred Planning Reviews are leading to children and young people having a stronger voice and making them central to the review process.
- There has been a year on year reduction in the number of statements (from 169 in 2005 to 54 in 2007) and the progress of pupils at School Action plus is good.
- The low number of cases to tribunal confirms quality of working in partnership with parents.
- Statements are carried out efficiently and are of good quality.
- Increased use of P-Levels and PIVATS over time is providing increasingly detailed information on pupil attainment –2 special schools have been identified as models of good practice by the National Strategies. Both have been judged to have outstanding achievement.
- Of the 88 mainstream schools inspected under the revised Ofsted framework (Sept 2005) pupils with LDD make outstanding progress in 14% and in 82% they make good or better progress (national 13% outstanding and 66% good or better for academic year 06/07).
- Achievement in special schools is consistently judged to be good or outstanding. In 40% of special schools children make outstanding progress. In 80% of special schools children make good or better progress (national 21% outstanding and 79% good or better in 06/07).
- The achievements of children and young people with LDD and their schools is celebrated through a range of activities including head teacher meetings, sharing of good practice, publicity, websites, SEN conferences, achievement of the Inclusion Quality Standard ([JAR Recommendation – good progress](#)).
- The number of low attaining pupils and SEN pupils making 2 steps of progress is increasing faster than regional and national comparators, thus narrowing the gap.
- A wide range of sports, leisure and cultural activities are available to children and young people with LDD, particularly in special schools and ARCs, e.g. Football coaching and Disability Dance in Newburn Activity Centre.

POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION

Performance is now good overall. There is clear evidence of services having a strong impact and that gaps are narrowing between the outcomes of most children and young people and those who are most vulnerable.

Our self assessment, analyses of need, consultations with children, young people, parents, carers and partners and our review of the Children and Young People Plan tells us we have the following:

Strengths

- Strong political leadership with a deep commitment to involve children and young people in the democratic process and service development.
- We listen to the views of children and young people in school and in their community and that we perform better than national and statistical neighbours on this indicator
- Participation and Engagement Strategies are innovative and elements of them have been nationally recognised as very good and ground-breaking practice.
- Investment in YOT has improved performance with reduced entrants to the criminal justice system and reduced re-offending rates
- Strong partnership working.
- Anti Social Behaviour protocol and strong work of the YISP is having a positive impact, reducing exclusions and criminal activity
- Involvement of children and young people in the development of services, including those from vulnerable groups such as LAC and LDD.
- Stability of placements for LAC and their participation in reviews is good.
- Services working with children with LDD involve children well in deciding how services are delivered. Seven services have achieved Investing in Children accreditation.

Areas for Development

- Our YOT is effective and further improvement in education and training support to meet the needs of young offenders, thereby closing the gap to national averages, is required
- Reduce re-offending.
- Further develop the participation of children and young people who are looked after in the work of Corporate Parents.
- For children and young people with LDD provide easier access to leisure services and further develop person controlled planning.
- To fully implement our Integrated Youth Strategy and deliver targeted youth support using a project management approach

(4.3) In relation to children and young people being encouraged to participate in decision making and in supporting the community, outcomes are good and improving. Some innovative practice is evident.

- Connexions provides young people at risk of becoming NEET with opportunities to meet with their Personal Adviser in a range of settings making the service more accessible. NEET performance has improved substantially.
- The Viewpoint survey is used to ensure children and young people are involved in their LAC reviews. As a result the service has been revised in line with young people's feedback, and has gained Investing in Children status. LAC are involved in appointing staff within social care.
- Through 'U Decide', a Participatory Budgeting pilot, young people decided to spend money on services of their choosing and which better meets their needs: 2000 children and young people aged 3-19 were actively engaged in the procurement of services. This 'U Decide' pilot won the national "Creating the Future Award" in 2008 as an example of innovative engagement and the programme is now in place across the city using mainstream resources. Six 'U Decide' projects involve children and young people of all ages and are fully inclusive of vulnerable groups.
- Newcastle Leisure have developed the 'Fusion' offer of free sports activities for all young people as a direct result of participation and consultation with children and young people. Participation in leisure has increased

- Younger children participate in decisions that affect them. For example the Cruddas Park Family Centre worked with very young children on a project identifying what helps them stay happy and healthy, as part of the “11 million” project for the Children's Commissioner for England.
- There are 58 organisations (39 last year) in Newcastle with Investing in Children status.
- Through participatory budgeting, large numbers of children and young people have been involved in the commissioning process for the Children's Fund 2008-11, evaluating bids and contributing to the final decisions on funding. This is an example of very good practice.
- A significant number of secondary schools send representation to attend City Council meetings.
- The UKYP representatives regularly give presentations to the City Council on issues pertinent to them, have worked with other young people and taken a leading role in developing proposals for a Youth Council in the city.
- Volunteering opportunities have increased.
- Young carers have been actively involved in focus groups to influence service development such as 'Changing Trax'. A dedicated participation worker is responsible for engaging with young people with caring responsibilities ([JAR Recommendation – good progress](#))
- Young people in Newcastle (36%) are significantly more likely than those nationally (22%) to think that their views are listened to in decisions about their local area (Tellus 2).
- They are also more likely (53%) to feel that their views were listened to in the running of their school (Tellus)

(4.5) In relation to action taken to prevent offending and to reduce re-offending by children and young people, outcomes are good overall and improving.

- Newcastle YOT has improved overall performance in the last year and is now at Level 4 overall.
- YJB first time entrants target reduction of 5% was met for 2007/08 and an LPSA stretch target was exceeded - a 24% reduction which included a 7% stretch ([JAR Recommendation – good progress](#))
- Custody and community sentence cohorts are in line with or better than both national and YOT statistical neighbours.
- There has been a significant increase in young people being subject to enforcement action.
- In 2007/8 there was a 12% reduction in the number of young people who were in the youth justice system as a whole compared to 2006/7.
- Overall YOT Performance is good and improving (70.2% compared to 60.2% in 2005/06 against a national average of 68.3%).
- Re-offending rate has improved by 13% since 2005/06 compared to only a 9% national improvement over the same period. Performance is better than national.
- Newcastle's 'National Standards' performance is in the highest band of YOTs nationally and shows an increase of 7.9% compared to the previous year (85.7% compared to 77.8%).
- Performance against the national target timescales for acute and non-acute CAMHS cases has been met for the last two years.
- Regionally the YOT is seen as a 'good practice' model for addressing the mental health of young offenders and has two p/t Clinical Psychologists from CAMHS in the team.
- The Anti Social Behaviour Protocol is being implemented by all Secondary Schools, Trinity Special School and the PRU. Police figures indicate a 15% decrease in reported crime within participating schools. Fixed term exclusions have also reduced ([JAR and APA Recommendation – good progress](#)).
- Family Intervention project (FIP) has had good impact. For example, one young person who had committed 104 ASB incidents in 12 months had reduced this to 25 over 7 months. All FIP families have a CAF.

(4.6) In relation to children and young people who are looked after being helped to make a positive contribution, outcomes are good overall and improving.

- All LAC, primary carers (including foster carers and residential carers) as well as family members attend LAC reviews, Placement Agreement Meetings and Care Team meetings. Monthly visits by social workers ensure Looked After Children's views are heard. Take up of Viewpoint to inform LAC Reviews has increased from 85.2% to 89.1% in 2007/2008 (PAFC63) Information from Viewpoint is used to inform service improvement and Foster Carer reviews.
- High proportion of LAC in family placements (87%) which promotes placement stability and positive outcomes. Only 9% of LAC have 3 or more placements. This represents good

performance which has been sustained over the last 5 years.

- Effective pathway planning is well embedded as evidenced by very good performance in PAF A4 with a high proportion of Care Leavers in education, training and employment. Clear protocols are in place with Adult Services to manage transition of Care Leavers with additional needs. This raises self esteem and confidence of the children and young people involved.
- Successes of LAC are celebrated on an individual basis e.g. with rewards for educational achievement and this is valued highly by the children and young people.
- LAC are consulted regarding services through a range of activities, e.g. they have been involved in staff recruitment and other activities such as the development of a young person's guide for fostering. The contributions of LAC are leading to the continual improvement of services designed to meet their needs.
- An Independent Advocacy Service is provided to all LAC. Improved marketing of this service has resulted in 33% increase in uptake in one year. LAC, parents and carers value this service.
- Fostering Invest to Save Strategy has resulted in significant increase in foster carer recruitment with 70 new fostering families, 18 approved and 52 in assessment and training. This included 5 new BME fostering families ([JAR Recommendation – good progress](#)).
- The proportion of LAC who are subject to final warning or conviction remains low (PAF C18). This is due to high proportion of LAC in fostering and very good placement stability. A joint protocol is in place with YOT to ensure appropriate services are provided to LAC who offend.
- Low proportion of LAC who offend.
- Scrutiny of provision and outcomes for LAC by elected members as Corporate Parents is good. Partnership working is good (e.g.) the Multi-Agency Looked After Children Partnership (MALAP) has wide agency representation. ([JAR and APA Recommendation – good progress](#))

(4.7) In relation to children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities being helped to make a positive contribution, outcomes are good overall and improving.

- Opportunities for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to be involved in consultation have been expanded and are increasingly embedded in day to day practice.
- Six organisations focused on children and young people with LDD have achieved Investing in Children, including 4 out of 5 special schools and the PRU.
- All children and young people with LDD give their views and have these considered to inform key decisions about their future during the statutory assessment process.
- Annual reviews ensure that views are listened to and taken into account when making decisions about future targets and provision.
- Children and young people are involved in key decisions in schools that will have an impact upon their general well being and they are increasingly involved in the design of services. E.g. pupils at Sir Charles Parsons and Thomas Bewick Special schools have been heavily involved in the design process of their new schools through the Building Schools for the Future process.
- Special schools use symbols to aid communication and this ensures consistency across schools and settings.
- All special schools have a school council. There is excellent practice at Hadrian School where the School Council has a budget and puts forward proposals to Governors on how this is spent.
- Thorough Person Centred Planning Reviews in special schools are leading to children and young people having a stronger voice and making them central to the review process.
- Children and young people are well supported in planning for transition between phases. They receive good advice about education and training post-16, are properly prepared and given the support they need. Transitions are managed by a multi-agency approach, which includes healthcare, education, social care and housing.
- A range of short breaks are available for children and young people with disabilities including overnight stays in a new purpose built provision. Good day and extended care is provided in the home, school and community.

ECONOMIC WELL BEING

Performance is now good and there is clear evidence of strong impact on improving outcomes. Performance compares well to statistical neighbours and gaps are narrowing.

Our self assessment, analyses of need, consultations with children, young people, parents, carers and partners and our review of the Children and Young People Plan tells us we have the following:

Strengths

- Strong and effective partnership working.
- Robust NEET preventative strategy leading to a reduction in the percentage of NEETs.
- Good work-related learning and enterprise opportunities.
- Innovative approaches to planning for the new 14-19 entitlement, including Diplomas
- Breadth of curriculum pathways and vocational opportunities across the provider network
- Effective schools, colleges and other providers.
- Willingness to innovate
- A wide and flexible range of good quality childcare is in place
- Reduction in number of homeless young people

Areas for Development

- Develop a Family poverty strategy and action plan with partners
- Continue to reduce NEETs particularly from vulnerable groups and meet the September Guarantee
- Further develop the learner entitlement across the city, including Diplomas
- Further improve transition arrangements between settings and children's to adult services.

(5.2) In relation to helping young people aged 11-19 to prepare for working life, outcomes are good overall and improving.

- There is greater harmonisation and integration of education and training for 11-19 year olds ([JAR Recommendation – good progress](#)).
- 86% of schools are judged by Ofsted to be good or outstanding in 'how well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being'.
- In the annual Audit Commission School Survey for 2007 the 'effectiveness of the provision for 14-19 education in meeting local needs' was in the top quartile performance.
- The curriculum offer is very good and supports preparation for working life to good effect. There is a wide choice of pathways and flexibility which meet different needs. Over 125 courses are offered at KS4 and over 150 courses at KS5. Newcastle College is one of the largest FE colleges in the country with 5000 16-19 learners.
- Capacity for further curriculum improvement is good. For example, the Newcastle Consortium is one of only ten Local Authorities nationally to be successful with all 5 Diploma lines via the "Gateway 1" process for September 2008 delivery.
- Good collaborative working has developed 14-19 vocational and applied learning, e.g. Increased Flexibility Programme and Young Apprenticeships. The 'Know How' project involved 5 schools with 550 participants, 81% of whom progressed to positive destinations and 58% gained qualifications in 2007/8.
- An Enterprise Learning Strategy for 5-19 year olds provides opportunities for all children and young people to play a positive part in ensuring their own economic wellbeing.
- Links with employers are very good. Newcastle EBP has delivered a range of programmes to introduce students to the world of work and to develop specific employability skills. Over 20,000 pupils benefited in 2007/08 drawing on the expertise of 40 organisations.
- 1818 Y10 students and 610 Y11 students took part work experience in 2006/7 in 15 occupational areas of at least one week. This represents 88.3% of the cohort. Employer engagement with work placements is very good.
- The Connexions Service provides universal access to good quality Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance for young people aged 13-19 (and up to 25 where there is additional need). Partners work well together to provide advice and guidance and Newcastle College and the Connexions Service both have IAG Matrix Accreditation.

- A NEET preventative strategy targets the deployment of Connexions PAs with partner agencies on vulnerable children and young people and is having clear impact. NEET performance in 2006-07 was 9.4%, a 2.2 % reduction from 2004-05 compared to a 0.2% reduction for Statistical Neighbours and a 0.3% reduction nationally. Gaps are therefore narrowing.
- The LA agreed a stretched LPSA NEET reduction target for November 2007 for year 11 leavers living in the 30% most deprived wards in the City (Super output areas). The 'stretched' target of under 13.3% was surpassed with a figure of 12%.
- The percentage of 17 year olds in education and training in 2006 was 79% compared to 77% nationally and 76% across the region. For 16 year olds the figure was 91% compared to 87% nationally and 88% regionally.
- In 2007, 1989 young people gained places in Higher Education, a 15.5% increase on 2006 and a 45% increase on 2005.
- Newcastle is at the national average and above the median for statistical neighbours for the Tellus survey question on the percentage of young people who aspire to go to university.
- TellUs2 survey shows 50% of young people thought the information and help they get to plan their future was 'good enough' compared to 36% nationally (good enough is the top option available). The figure for Newcastle is the best performance amongst statistical neighbours
- Number of homeless 16-17 year olds reduced by 312% from 209 in 2003/04 to 67 in 2006/07

(5.3) In relation to ensuring that 14–19 education and training is planned and delivered in a coordinated way, and that education and training for 16–19 year olds is of good quality, outcomes are good overall and improving.

- Since 2005, the performance of young people achieving level 2 qualifications by 19, has improved by 5.2%. The 2007 performance (67.1%) is 2.5% above statistical neighbours.
- For young people achieving level 3 qualifications by 19, the level 3 figure has improved by 3.7% since 2005. 2007 performance (42.1%) is 5.8% above statistical neighbour average.
- Between the ages of 14 and 16 all pupils, especially vulnerable children and young people, make better than expected progress. Between KS 3 and 4 Contextual Value Added for all pupils was 1011.45, significantly over 1000 (expected score) for gender, ethnicity and special needs pupils. The same pattern emerges when analysing these groups by IMD.
- In 2007, Newcastle performed above the national average and statistical neighbours for the percentage of pupils gaining 5+ A*-C grades at GCSE (61%). The percentage of pupils gaining 5+ A*-C including English and maths increased to 38.8% up 4% since 2006. The rate of increase is above statistical neighbours and national so attainment gaps are narrowing.
- Figures for average points score at A level are below statistical neighbours and national averages, a reflection of the Newcastle approach to widen participation in A Level provision.
- Average points score per entry in Newcastle schools and Newcastle College was in the top quartile for progress from 2006/2007 and better than statistical Neighbours.
- Between 2004-7 accepted applicants to HE rose by 19.1% from schools.
- At Newcastle College, success rates by qualification type show that Newcastle exceeded the national rate in the success of GNVQ Level 3, GNVQ Level 2, NVQ Level 2, NVQ Level 1, and other long level 2 and long level 1 programmes.
- Work Based learning performance in 2007 improved significantly. The Apprenticeship target (agreed through the 14-19 partnership) was for 55% of Apprenticeship leavers to have completed the framework, performance was 64.8% up 31% since 2005 The Advanced Apprenticeship target was for 55% and performance was 63.7%
- 65% of secondary schools have been graded as good or outstanding by ofsted (2006-08) for overall effectiveness and the remainder are satisfactory. Teaching and Learning and Leadership and Management also judged to be good or better in 65%
- Newcastle College is graded as Outstanding in almost all areas.
- Leadership and management and self evaluation/quality assurance in Newcastle schools and College are strengths.
- There has been a significant fall in the % of Year 11 students achieving no qualifications to 4.9% in 2007 against a target of 6.2%. This remains an area for further improvement.
- Targeting of Literacy and Numeracy support in schools in deprived wards has resulted in improved performance. 22.6% of pupils in 30% most deprived SOAs gained 5+ A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths, or a Level 2 qualification in Literacy and Numeracy, exceeding the stretched LPSA target agreed with DCSF and GO-NE ([APA Recommendation – good progress](#))

- Strategic planning for 14-19 learning is carried out through the 14-19 City Board, under the umbrella of the CYPSP. There is robust monitoring of performance. Children and young people are actively engaged through school and college councils, the youth service and specific consultation events about the development and quality of education and training services.
- Partnership working is well developed, e.g. the Newcastle City Diploma Consortium is led by the Diploma Strategy Group, chaired by a Head teacher, with membership comprising of 2 further Head teachers, 2 VPs from Newcastle College, WBL co-ordinator, LA, LSC, EBP and Connexions. Consequently progress towards diploma delivery is very good.

(5.6) In relation to helping children and young people who are looked after who are helped to achieve economic well-being, outcomes are good and improving.

- Performance in relation to PAF A4 (Care Leavers accessing employment, education and training) remains in the 'Very Good' performance band.
- All LAC at 15 years+ are fully involved in developing their pathway plan which indicates clear transition pathways.
- Care Leavers are supported by additional educational support allowances to encourage attendance in further and higher education. Nine young people are currently at University, Support to LAC in accessing EMA is provided by the Leaving Care Team.
- The ASPIRE CAMH service provides effective support to Care Leavers up to 18 years. Transition plans identify ongoing support post 18 years with Adult Services
- High proportion of LAC between 16 and 18 years are in fostering placements.
- Dedicated Welfare Rights Worker provides weekly drop in advice sessions at the Leaving Care Service. A Connexions Worker provides bi weekly advice sessions at Leaving Care Service.
- All care leavers are offered specialist assessment of needs from a Drugs and Alcohol Worker from the ASPIRE service at key transition points e.g. at 16 years on transfer to Leaving Care Service and before 18th birthday to identify any specific support needs.
- A successful project to improve motivation and progression of looked after children has been developed, providing work placements with employers and training providers for Y10 /11.

(5.7) In relation to helping children and young people with LDD to achieve economic well-being, outcomes are adequate with elements of good practice.

- All 4 Newcastle special schools providing for 14-19 year olds and the PRU have been inspected since September 2005. 1 is outstanding, 3 are good and 1 is satisfactory.
- There has been considerable development work and investment in LDD provision post 16 including vocational options ([JAR Recommendation – good progress](#)). LSC has funded: increased learners at Northern Counties College from 35 to 50; increased capacity at Newcastle College to work with learners with autism, dyslexia, hearing impairment and sight impairment. The funds have been used to provide ICT equipment and create real working environments to meet the Learning for Living and Work strategy.
- Northern Counties College has an ESF funded employability project which concentrates on giving their LDD students real vocational experience with employers.
- 14-19 Partnership has supported special schools to access external funding for work related learning opportunities for KS4 and post-16 pupils. In 2007-08, 110 pupils accessed vocational and employability programmes with a range of external providers. Outcomes are good.
- All Special schools have strong links with a range of post-16 providers in FE and work based sectors. Trinity School manages provision of Entry to Employment programmes in the city.
- In 2007 the proportion of PRU leavers progressing to EET rose to 84% from 57% in 2006.
- 4 of the 5 special schools and the PRU have Investing in Children accreditation.
- The percentage of 16-19 year old young people with LDD who are NEET is reducing significantly and faster than national figures. It is now in line with statistical neighbours.
- Children and Young People with LDD are actively engaged in reviewing and developing services designed to meet their needs.
- A review takes place for 100% of Year 9 with pupils with special educational needs or disabilities and a transition plan is produced. Transitions are effectively managed by a multi-agency approach with good monitoring and support. Progression to future learning is good.
- Connexions deploy staff to sector and specialist colleges to ensure ongoing support and planned progression. In the last 12 months, Connexions have carried out 1658 1:1 interventions with young people age 13 to 19 with a statement of SEN.

- Children's Services has been involved with the Dynamite project, a programme targeted at delivering self directed support through individual budgets. 7 young people and their families have been supported in transition aged 15-17. This is an example of innovative practice.
- Child care is provided to Post 16 mothers and expectant mothers so that they can attend school. 77% of pupils at Ashlyns (9 girls entitled) exceeded 75% attendance due to EMA allowance. 66% received their January bonus.
- Direct payments are available and promoted to families and disabled 16 and 17 year olds with 47 young people accessing services via direct payments.
- Transition protocols are in place between Children's and Adult Services.
- The LA has promoted good practice in the area of LDD participation in reviews. Written guidance has been produced and disseminated both locally and in the region.

PART D – MANAGEMENT OF SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The performance of the Council's services is good overall. There is clear evidence that developments in this area have led to improved outcomes for children and young people across the five ECM outcomes.

Our self assessment, analyses of need, consultations with children and young people and partners and our review of the Children and Young People Plan tells us we have the following:

Strengths

- Our outcomes for children and young people have improved and we are narrowing the gaps
- Strategic alignment between the Local Area Agreement and Sustainable Community Strategy, Newcastle Plan for Children and Young People, Health Improvement Strategy, and Safe Newcastle Strategy
- Effective partnership working with agreed Children's Trust governance arrangements
- Clear priorities agreed across partners underpinned by rigorous and accurate analyses of need
- Investment by the City Council to support transformation in Children's Services, e.g. fostering invest to save, workforce strategy, schools capital programmes
- Strong leadership and management with capacity and appetite for further improvement
- Outcome-based performance management systems
- Tackling under-performance, including making difficult decisions, e.g. closure of Montagu school
- We are "up for" the big challenges – e.g. Reducing child poverty and its impact in the SCS/LAA and we are taking a leading role regionally on this issue; Children's Trust is committed to implementing CAF across agencies by April 2009
- Innovative and widespread participation and engagement of children and young people
- Early years, School and social care inspection outcomes are positive
- Good progress in implementing our ambitious Building Schools for the Future programme
- Tellus and Audit Commission surveys have good response rates and responses are positive about services in Newcastle (over 1600 young people responded to Tellus 2008 survey, an increase of more than 70% compared with 2007)

Areas for further development:

- Mainstream our innovative work in involving children and young people in decision-making
- Extend our Commissioning Framework to a wider range of activity and increase levels of joint commissioning with partners, especially at locality level.
- Continue to tackle under-performance, reshape services and improve value for money where performance data tells us there is potential for improvement.
- Work closely with health to align the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), the development of our second Children and Young People's Plan and other analyses of need
- Continue to narrow the gap between the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups of children and young people and the rest through better targeting of resources.
- Continue to develop capacity in our workforce, which will extend integrated working, practices and systems

(6.1) In relation to Ambition, our performance is good:

- Partners have a clear focus and shared understanding of our challenges with a strong commitment to improving outcomes. Priorities for improvement and ambitious targets are strategically aligned across the Local Area Agreement and Sustainable Community Strategy, Newcastle Plan for Children and Young People, Health Improvement Strategy, and Safe Newcastle Strategy.
- We are identifying and enthusiastically addressing the big challenges, e.g. the SCS recognises that both the causes and impact of child and family poverty need a range of partners to work together if we are to have the desired impact on outcomes for children and young people. The SCS clearly defines the link between social and educational regeneration in the City.
- In addition to the statutory national indicators, the LAA includes 8 indicators among the 35, and one local Indicator, directly linked to improved outcomes for children and young people
- Partners are actively working together to improve outcomes. We have demonstrated improvement in all of the key priorities and many other outcomes for children and young people, e.g. NEETs, attainment especially at KS4, reduction in LAC and child protection, reduction in teenage conceptions and reduction in child obesity.
- Priorities are based on comprehensive analyses of need that includes consultation with children, young people, parents and carers and identifies gaps in service provision
- We have responded to areas of under-performance, previous inspection and APA recommendations with positive impact, e.g. reshaping of social care and improved consistency regarding thresholds has improved the timeliness of assessments and started to reduce referral rates
- Newcastle has been innovative in engagement and participation activities that support strategy development and resource deployment. In particular, the engagement of children and young people in participatory budgeting through the U Decide project is rapidly growing in maturity and usage. Children and Young People played a critical role in the Children's Fund Commissioning process (March -> June 2008). U Decide has received national acclaim, winning the Innovative Engagement category of the Academy for Sustainable Communities Creating the Future Awards 2008.
- Innovative, evidence-based joint working is delivering improvements in areas where gaps in service provision have been identified, e.g. Lean East programme to tackle child obesity in 10 East Newcastle primary schools, recent Children's Fund commissioning addressing local gaps in preventative and targeted services
- The Council and our partners are strongly committed to social inclusion, equalities and diversity, and community cohesion. These issues underpin both the SCS and NPCYP. The Council is currently working towards level five of the Equality Standard for Local Government. We have agreed Race, Gender and Disability Equality Schemes and action plans for Sexual Orientation and Religious Belief with a Single Equality Scheme to be developed in 2009.
- Equality impact and needs assessments are undertaken on all new strategies and developments, e.g. closure of Montagu school, Primary Strategy for Change, to identify any potential adverse impact on local communities. Actions arising from these are incorporated and monitored through our service/outcome improvement plans as part of our planning and performance management framework.
- A Newcastle School Community Cohesion and Equalities Scheme has been developed and launched in November 2007. It ensures leadership teams develop a proactive stance to equality issues. Feedback is positive. There has been significant national interest in this development from governing bodies and other local authorities.

(6.2) In relation to Prioritisation, our performance is good:

- The Newcastle Plan for Children and Young People clearly identifies our priorities for improvement based on comprehensive analyses of need. Improving Outcome plans are produced annually for our agreed priorities and identify the resources required for implementation. Strong partnership working at strategic and operational levels ensure that resources are targeted carefully to meet the city's priorities.
- The City Council has a robust Medium Term Financial Planning (MTFP) process, which tests the Value for Money of services, and provides a comprehensive framework for testing the implications of budget proposals. Within this process, the needs of children and young people have been prioritised - budget reductions were lower and investment higher for Children's Services in 2008-09 than in other areas of the City Council budget.

- Within the MTFP process, Value for Money assessments in all eight areas of activity within Children's Services demonstrated a positive direction of travel. The latest data review shows that where performance is not already top quartile these improvements are being delivered. Where overall service costs are relatively high, further analysis demonstrates that our unit costs are low compared with similar authorities
- Needs assessment within our planning process has led to increased investment in a number of preventative service developments that is now resulting in improved outcomes
 - Additional investment in the Youth Offending service, both by the City Council and key partners has increased capacity, enabling the service to make a step-change in its performance. The YOT has secured significant improvements in both first time entrants to the criminal justice system and in reducing rates of re-offending.
 - Changing Trax, a joint Adult and Children's Services Project, is providing intensive therapeutic work with families in crisis where there is parental substance misuse and the children are at risk of being registered or taken into care. All families accessing Changing Trax have remained intact.
 - The City Council has funded a fostering "Invest to Save" project. This has included a very successful "Foster a Future" marketing campaign to increase in-house fostering provision, as well as improved payments, training and support for foster carers. The project is reducing budget pressures freeing up resources for targeted improvements as well as creating a greater range of family placements for looked after children.
 - Additional investment has been identified to accelerate the process of adopting CAF and Lead Professional arrangements by April 2009
 - Increased investment in social care has facilitated the reshaping of services which is improving the timeliness of initial and core assessments (see Stay Safe); and increased recruitment of social care professionals reducing the need to deploy agency staff
- The 2008/09 budget process identified efficiency savings within Children's Services of £1.9m. The scope for further efficiency is identified through active review of Section 52 involving the Schools Forum and opportunities to secure improved procurement
- In addition, we are actively engaged in the City Council's ambitious Transformation programme, which plans to capture minimum savings in excess of £100m over 10 years, via business redesign, recognising the need to secure investment in front-line services
- An interactive model for formula funding has been developed linking age-related population data with deprivation information. This is enabling decisions to target funding in areas or wards taking into account population, age range and level of deprivation.
- Services are provided in a range of venues and places across the city to ensure that they are accessible to children, young people and families. The location and distribution of services will differ in response to identified needs, e.g. Children's Centre, extended services and school developments ensure that they are at the heart of neighbourhoods and communities; a range of services and support for young people is delivered from Connexions and other city centre venues as requested by young people.
- There has been a 16% reduction in sickness absence in Children's Services in 2007/08 due to improved performance monitoring and targeted interventions by managers supported by HR.
- Budget Monitoring is robust and facilitated by a new Council-wide budget monitoring system. Two significant budget pressures emerged in 2007-08, in Children's social care staffing and Foster Care placements. Both of these issues have been resourced by the Council in 2007-08 to minimise the impact on performance and outcomes; and addressed so that they do not require resources to be redirected in 2008-09 and subsequent financial years

(6.3) In relation to Capacity to improve, our performance is good:

- Our track record on improving outcomes is good and we are narrowing the gaps
- Newcastle's [Children's Trust Arrangements](#) are led by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) which is a delivery partnership of the LSP. All local partners as defined in the Children Act 2004 engage and work well together in a co-ordinated way. The CYPSP is supported by outcome, locality and commissioning groups. Governance arrangements are good and the voluntary and community sectors are fully engaged.
- [A Fit for Purpose Partnership Handbook](#) supports very good partnership work and assists new partnerships in the early stages of development.

- The development of the Newcastle Community Strategy reflects a close working relationship between the LSP, Council, and the Children and Young People's Partnership.
- Leadership and Management of Children's Services is good. The Executive Director and Executive/ Lead Member for Children's Services provide strong leadership and discharge their responsibilities effectively.
- The Executive Member for Children's Services plays an active role within the CYPSP Executive, and provides regular briefings to the Children's Service Scrutiny process which is rigorous. He also provides strong leadership for corporate parenting. The Leader and Executive of the Council are committed to securing improvements in Children's Services and to celebrating successes of children and young people.
- Senior leadership and management capacity in Children's Services has been enhanced with the appointment of two Directors to further drive forward performance, commissioning and outcome improvement
- Strengthened leadership and reshaping of social care service has led to improvement in performance, e.g. in initial and core assessments, foster care recruitment, reduction in agency staff reliance and improved morale of workforce.
- Strengthened leadership for Children and Young People in the Community has led to improved co-ordination and progress in Early Years Childcare and Play Service and an ambitious plan for delivering an Integrated Youth Service and the development of Targeted Youth Support.
- Reshaping of the Inclusion Service is bringing stronger leadership to the alternative provision agenda, welfare support for families and school attendance, a key priority for improvement.
- Locality Manager leadership has delivered the £2.2m outcomes-based commissioning of Children's Fund, improving the match between needs and preventative services. Locality partnerships ensured that the commissioning process responded to local priorities and needs.
- A fully costed Integrated Working Training and Development Plan is being implemented including the Common Assessment Framework, role of the Lead Professional, better information sharing between professionals and ContactPoint
- Partnership arrangements are good and sufficiently secure for us to make a major commitment to fully implement CAF by April 2009. Partners were actively engaged in the discussion about prioritising this development and playing a full part in the implementation.
- Services are being developed in a flexible way to meet local needs, Local services, often provided by the voluntary and community sectors, have been commissioned where there are gaps. e.g. the Youth Intervention Programme delivered through the Scotswood Area Strategy.
- Existing and new information systems are being developed and improved to support our work, including: the social care ICS (Integrated Children's System) is fully implemented and is supporting improvement in outcomes, e.g. 79% of Initial Assessments within 7 days.; web-based information is well developed and targeted at different stakeholders, e.g. [practitioners website](#), [Family Services Directory \(FSD\)](#).
- Children, young people, their parents and carers are actively involved in reviewing and reshaping Children's Services. Practice is inclusive and innovative, e.g. 'U Decide' participatory budgeting, Investing in Children. Looked after children and young people with LDD and BME are at the heart of our participation and engagement strategies.
- We are focused on overcoming key barriers to further improvement, which are:
 - The different cultural and professional experiences of those who deliver services to children and Young People which could lead to processes and services that are separate and practice which is risk averse rather than creative. We are overcoming this through our [Transforming Outcomes Programme](#), the mechanism through which Children's Trust arrangements - Integrated governance, strategies, processes and service delivery arrangements - are being implemented in Newcastle
 - The challenge in terms of the capacity that the transformation for Children's Services in the next 10 years requires. We are overcoming this through our leadership and workforce development activities to ensure that Children's Services has managers and a workforce who are creative, flexible, who can move quickly to address challenges and work in partnership and an integrated way. We are also raising the profile of Newcastle and working in partnership with other LAs through ADCS, other networks, the Regional Improvement Partnership and GONE in order to share good practice and spread innovative working.

(6.4) In relation to Performance Management, our performance is good:

- The Council's Performance Management framework provides a robust vehicle for challenging and reviewing the rate of improvement across key outcomes, as defined through the Children and Young People's Plan and LAA. There is a process for setting challenging targets, and addressing the barriers to step changes in improvement.
- Children's Services planning and performance management is founded on rigorous self-evaluation and outcomes-based accountability informed by analysis of, and knowledge about, performance. Newcastle's CYPP is supported by multi-agency "Improving Outcome Plans" for each of our identified priorities ([APA Recommendation – good progress](#))
- Annual staff appraisals link to service and outcome improvement plans
- We have formally established "Outcome Groups" facilitated by outcome leads to co-ordinate performance monitoring and self-evaluation that link into the governance structure of the CYPSP
- Within the performance management framework for children's services there are a range of mechanisms in place for monitoring and review. These include:
 - Quarterly monitoring of performance indicators in Children and Young People's scorecard through NCYPSP Executive and Newcastle City Council (including officer groups, scrutiny and executive)
 - Monitoring and twice yearly reporting to CYPSP Executive of progress in delivering improved outcomes through the Newcastle Plan for Children and Young People
 - Review of progress and traffic light reports of projects within the transformation programme through the programme and project management framework
 - Reporting to children and young people on progress against their priorities
 - Formal annual review of Newcastle Plan for Children and Young People (including consultation) and self assessment as part of APA process
 - Scrutiny of particular areas and performance issues by CYPSP, CYP Scrutiny Panel and individual agencies
 - Creation of post-inspection action plans with regular monitoring in response to external inspections and audit processes
- Locality partnerships are identifying local priorities and needs that contribute to the planning, performance management and commissioning processes
- We are systematically addressing "hard to shift" performance outcomes and indicators and using Mark Friedman's "turn the curve" methodology to identify solutions, including the commissioning, decommissioning and reorganisation of services where appropriate, e.g. NEETs reduction strategy led to significant and successful refocusing of work of Connexions

APPENDIX 1

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT 2008: SELF-EVALUATION GRADES

Please provide the following grades using the LSIF four point scale and descriptors as a guide.

Name of Local Authority	Newcastle City Council
Name of APA Link Officer :	John Collings
Contact details for APA Link officer	Telephone: 0191 211 5301 Email: john.collings@newcastle.gov.uk
Date Form submitted:	26 June 2008
Signed/agreed on behalf of the children's services authority	
Name:	John Collings
Position:	Director – Delivering Outcomes
Signature:	

Areas for judgement	Being healthy	Staying safe	Enjoying and achieving	Making a positive contribution	Achieving economic well-being
The contribution of the council's services in maintaining and improving this outcome for children and young people.	3	3	2	3	3

The council's children's services	Grade
The contribution of the council's children's services in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	3

Capacity to improve	Grade
The council's capacity to improve its services for children and young people	3

This form is to be returned together with the self-assessment or CYPP review by 26 June 2008