

# Children's Services Newsletter

November 2009

## Introduction from John Collings, Executive Director

Since our last newsletter it has been a busy time for many of our services in terms of external inspection. It has seemed at times that inspectors have been queuing up to visit Newcastle and scrutinise our work. I am glad and proud to be able to report some very positive and encouraging outcomes.



First of all our Youth Offending Services have had 3 inspections – a 'core case' inspection, an inspection of E2E and then an inspection by the Care Quality Commission which examined health outcomes for young offenders. Inspectors said that we are performing well. They identified many good features of our work, some of which they intend to use as examples of good practice nationally.

Our Integrated Youth Strategy was inspected by Ofsted in mid October as part of a national survey and was judged to be satisfactory overall with some good and very good features. We have also been part of the pilot inspections by Ofsted of Sure Start Children's Centres, and first out of the traps for Newcastle was Armstrong and Westgate Children's Centre which has been judged to be good with outstanding features.

On the social care side, Slatyford Lane Children's Home came out well after Ofsted visited in late October. It is now satisfactory overall and improving well and the Fostering and Adoption services have both been judged as good. Our social care staff are gearing up for even more inspections with the Initial Response Service expecting an unannounced visit at any time to look at 'initial contact and referral' into children's social care. This is likely to be followed swiftly by inspections of Safeguarding and our Looked After Children's Services. These are new inspections introduced nationally by Ofsted following Lord Laming's review after the tragic case of Baby P in Haringey last year.

On top of all this we have had six schools inspected since September under a new and tougher framework. Of those inspected, one was judged to be good, four satisfactory and unfortunately one was judged to require special measures in order to improve more quickly.

# Introduction

I would like to thank everyone from across Children's Services including our partner agencies who will have contributed in some way towards these encouraging inspection outcomes. And for the preparation work in advance of inspections yet to take place. Recent inspection judgements confirm our positive direction of travel and help us to target our attentions to those areas in need of greatest improvement. Successful Children's Services are about team work and partnership. Inspectors are acknowledging this and we know we will make even more progress as we work more closely with each other, build trust and positive relationships.

As we take forward our work on a new plan for Newcastle's Children and Young People, (see page 16) I am confident we can do just that.



# Be Healthy

## Update on Aiming High for Disabled Children

Very positive progress on the Aiming High agenda has been reported at the most recent Children's Trust Board:

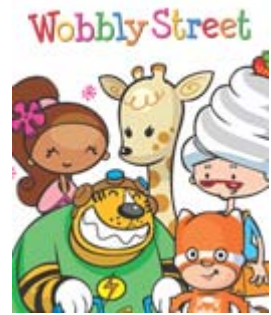
- 250 short breaks are currently commissioned, and this will increase to 500 in the next 18 months
- An annual parents and carers conference is established
- Newcastle's Children's Trust have signed up to the "Every Disabled Child Matters" charter
- Parents and carers and children and young people have agreed six priorities to improve practices in relation to transition of disabled children. Work in this area has been challenging but Children's and Adult Services are working together as well as with the third sector. The targets agreed for 2009-10 are:
  1. One child centred plan that follows the young person from 14 to 25
  2. Young people and their families are involved with the group who are planning post 16 education – the 14-19 partnership
  3. Increased use of individual budgets not just social care money. We will be in a position to offer five individual budgets which will also involve health funding
  4. Expand work opportunity provisions for young people with twenty young people supported by job coaching to move into work
  5. Good practice guide of how to involve young people and their families in their own transitional meeting. Support the development of a children and families quality mark for the services that they use
  6. Prepare and support families and young people for transition with good co-ordinated information. This should be supported by the establishment of the team around the child lead professionals that will work with young people and families to make sure that the actions in their transitional action plans are acted upon – we can learn from some of the other work that has happened with younger children.

Officers are currently working on a multi-agency protocol and a self assessment, both of which are due for completion by 1 December 2009.

# Be Healthy

## What (or where!) is Wobbly Street?

Wobbly Street is an arts based project which focuses on healthy eating and exercise. It was developed in the North West of Newcastle after concerns were raised about the increase in obesity in the area. It was agreed that an educational project needed to be developed which would use innovative, creative ways to engage young people, teachers and parents.



A local puppeteer (Wild Boar productions) and a media company (Foundry Media) worked with Newcastle City council's arts development team in conjunction with the Newcastle PCT to develop the project. This was delivered as a pilot with interactive workshops involving pupils. Five fun characters were developed, each with their own story.

Wobbly Street was given its theatrical debut at Northern Stage in Newcastle when the 50 minute interactive puppet show was premiered in front of a packed house of excited children from primary schools across Newcastle in May 2009.

Alongside the puppet show, healthy eating workshops with families have been organised and interesting sessions at schools also have taken place. A DVD and teaching pack has also been developed from the project which has been issued to every Primary, First and Middle School in the city. Training Sessions have been held for teaching staff and school nurses helping them to introduce the 'Wobbly Street' characters into the classroom. Each teaching pack includes lesson plans, activities and a recipe book. Evaluation sessions have showed that the children have enjoyed their sessions and their knowledge confidence and skills have increased.

Wobbly Street now has an interactive website that children can access which has exciting and interesting things to download like free wallpaper for your desktop and ring tones for mobile phones. [www.wobblystreet.co.uk](http://www.wobblystreet.co.uk)

## What difference has this made?

**Farne Primary School:** At Farne Primary School we are really enjoying taking part in the Wobbly Street Project. Whilst creating the characters and scenery for Wobbly Street we have learnt a lot more about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. Physical fitness is now high on our agenda with new fitness initiatives being led by pupils and staff alike. These have included the School Council developing more active playtimes, staff attending Run Skip and Play Ball training to further develop playtime activities, "Wake Up! Shake Up!" (a daily short aerobic session) and staff fitness sessions. Another positive benefit of being part of the Wobbly Street project has been the relaunch of a playtime Key Stage 2 Healthy Tuck Shop. Business is booming!



However, one of the most significant impacts has been on the self esteem of the children who watched their ideas and work develop into a slick professional product. On seeing the Wobbly Street newsletter one child remarked "Wow! Look at Mrs Whippy I did that with my mam and she looks great!"

**Cheviot Primary School:** In September Year 6 went on a 14 mile organised bike ride along the banks of the River Tyne. Like 'Warren the Tiger' we found it was a fun way to get exercise in the beautiful countryside. "I was shattered and my legs ached for days but it was great" said one of the boys. For lunch they stopped at an adventure playground and this was a great team building exercise. Some of the children were clearly fitter than others but they were all encouraged and motivated to take part.



# Be Healthy

Basketball coaching from the Newcastle Eagles and Rugby Coaching from the Falcons has also been a great success this term. Our school clubs have also been broadened with something to interest everybody. The usual football, basketball, hockey and dodge ball clubs were added too with circus skills. The energy needed for juggling, jumping through hoops and tumble clowning was amazing. The Wobbly Street project has had so many spin offs and has inspired all sorts of activities. Parents have asked for a keep fit club, have enjoyed cookery courses and are looking forward to another visit from the Expo Chef to demonstrate cooking basic healthy options.

This project has been shortlisted for a Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) 'Small is Beautiful' Award because of its potential transferability to other local authorities.

## Superheroes and school kids sign up for Change4Life

Northumbrian Water's H2O gang, a group of superheroes, have joined the Change4Life initiative and will help promote it to hundreds of North East primary schools through the water company's sixth and latest comic adventure, titled 'Are you fit for life?'

In the latest adventure, the superheroes' arch enemy, Dr Dry, has an evil plan to take over the world by making children unhealthy and inactive with junk food, fizzy drinks and video games. Luckily, H2O gang leader Karl realises what is happening and saves the day, by signing the rest of the gang up to the Change4Life programme.



Thirty thousand copies of the comic will be distributed to primary schools, doctors' waiting rooms and children's hospital wards: [www.nwl.co.uk/NW\\_COMIC\\_6\\_final.pdf](http://www.nwl.co.uk/NW_COMIC_6_final.pdf)

## Men get a healthy Toon talk

A brand new initiative developed by Newcastle United Foundation is aiming to use football's huge popularity in this region to urge men to think more seriously about their health problems.

The Magpie's Premier League Health project is a three year initiative that specifically aims to help local dads lead more fit and healthy lifestyles. The Foundation has employed two new Community Health Trainers to work in the West End of Newcastle and Ashington, using football to engage local dads. These will provide one to one support to encourage and motivate dads who are ready to make lifestyle changes to improve their health, for example to stop smoking, lose weight or reduce their alcohol consumption.



Before embarking on any major activities, the health trainers decided to get a group of local dads together at St James' Park to find out exactly what barriers they face to improving their health and how best Newcastle United can help tackle them.

The overriding message from the dads was that football and the association with Newcastle United was a major draw and would encourage them to join a fitness programme. All cited lack of physical activity as being a key issue and also saw stopping smoking as a real goal.

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# Be Healthy

## Interim appointment of Director of Public Health

Danny Ruta has now left his post as Director of Public Health for Newcastle. Dr Fu-Meng Khaw, Director of Public Health for North Tyneside, is acting as Director of Public Health for Newcastle in the interim period, until a permanent appointment is made.

You can reach Meng by e-mail on [DPHNewcastle@northoftyne.nhs.uk](mailto:DPHNewcastle@northoftyne.nhs.uk), or you can contact by phone on 0191 211 6443.



## Ratings released by independent watchdog the Care Quality Commission (CQC) show the high quality of NHS services in the city

The annual health check is a system for assessing and rating the performance of NHS organisations in England published by the Care Quality Commission. The rating is in two parts, with each assessed on a four point scale from 'excellent' to 'weak', for both their quality of services (how well the NHS organisation is performing against standards and targets) and their use of resources (financial management and value for money).

Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust received double 'excellent' scores for both quality of services and use of resources. The mental health trust was rated 'excellent' for use of resources and 'good' or 'fair' for quality of services. Newcastle Primary Care Trust (PCT) scored a 'good' rating for the quality of services they commission for their local population and 'fair' for their use of resources.

## National study shows need for bereavement support

New research published by NCB on behalf of the Childhood Bereavement Network has found that children bereaved of a parent, sibling or close friend are more likely to have experienced a range of other difficult events in childhood. These include having had a stay in hospital, having a diagnosable mental health disorder, having a parent with a serious mental illness and having been excluded from school. Around 1 in 29 school age children in the study had been bereaved of a parent or sibling, and around 1 in 16 had been bereaved of a close friend, [www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk/news.htm](http://www.childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk/news.htm)

## Healthy Child Programmes (HCP) published

The HCP for pregnancy and the first five years of life focuses on a universal preventative service, providing families with a programme of screening, immunisation, health and development reviews, supplemented by advice around health, wellbeing and parenting. This replaces the Child Health Promotion Programme:

[http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod\\_consum\\_dh/groups/dh\\_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh\\_107626.pdf](http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_107626.pdf)

The HCP from 5 to 19 year olds sets out the recommended framework of universal and progressive services for children and young people to promote optimal health and wellbeing. It outlines suggested roles and responsibilities for commissioners, health, education, local authority and other partners to encourage the development of high-quality services.

[http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod\\_consum\\_dh/groups/dh\\_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh\\_107568.pdf](http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/documents/digitalasset/dh_107568.pdf)

## Stay Safe

### Children's Trust thresholds for intervention have been revised

A revised and more user friendly version of the (former) Newcastle Children & Young People's Strategic Partnership, Early Intervention and Prevention Model has now been published.

The thresholds model draws on a conceptual model known as 'The Windscreen' to illustrate the relationship between universal services, single agency intervention, Common Assessment Framework (CAF), Team Around the Child and specialist services.

The revised document "**Thresholds for Intervention, September 2009**" is available online at [www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk/node/11603](http://www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk/node/11603)

There is increased recognition of the importance of early intervention and prevention in work with children and young people to reduce the incidence of abuse and neglect, family breakdown, social exclusion and to avoid outcomes that would diminish rather than enhance their potential. The challenge for Newcastle is to move resources, over time from reactive and specialist services to support for prevention, early identification and intervention.

### Serious Case Review briefing sessions - December 2009

Briefing sessions which look at lessons from Serious Case Reviews and Management Reviews and focus upon work with vulnerable young people are taking place in December 2009. All practitioners are invited to attend.

To book on one of the sessions, please complete the Serious Case Review flyer available at: [www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk/node/11665](http://www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk/node/11665)

Date	Time	Venue
Monday 7 December	2pm — 4pm	Fossway Fire Station, Union Road, Byker
Thursday 10 December	2.30pm — 4.30pm	Colby Court Fire Station, Elswick Road, Rye Hill
Monday 14 December	2pm — 4pm	Fossway Fire Station, Union Road, Byker

### Working together to support families leaflet

Nearly 5,000 leaflets containing information about integrated working for practitioners, volunteers and managers have been circulated in the last few weeks. The leaflet has been distributed to all Children's Trust partners including schools, health services and the voluntary sector. Feedback has been very positive and a number of practitioners report using the leaflet when discussing the use of the Common Assessment Framework with parents, carers and young people.

In response to requests for an electronic version from some colleagues you can now download a copy from the CAF webpages. It can be easily printed onto A3 paper. A small number of the printed leaflets are still available. Please contact Paddy Docherty on 0191 277 4556 or by email [patrick.docherty@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:patrick.docherty@newcastle.gov.uk) if you would like to receive printed copies.

[http://www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk/mcs\\_cafdoc](http://www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk/mcs_cafdoc)

# Stay Safe

## Independent Chairperson for NSCB appointed

Subject to CRB clearances and references, Newcastle Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) has appointed Edwina Harrison as independent chairperson.

Edwina has a strong background in social care. She has worked as a social worker, team manager, Assistant Regional Director for National Children's Homes and as a YOT Manager. More recently she was a Regional Manager for the Youth Justice Board and then Chief Officer in Leeds City Council with responsibility for Children's Social Care. She has been working as a consultant since 2008.

## Anti-Bullying Week is 16 – 20 November

This year's anti-bullying week is all about cyber-bullying. Cyber bullying contains all of the elements of traditional bullying, but includes the use of technologies such as mobile phones and other computer based communications such as e-mail and Instant Messenger (MSN).



### What makes it different?

- It is 24/7: Most young people have access to the latest technologies and stay constantly connected
- Impact: This can be amplified and a much wider audience can be reached very quickly
- Anonymity: It is easy to hide your identity or to become "someone else" on line
- Evidence: It is often the case that the messages themselves can be saved and used as evidence in dealing with cyber bullying

The RESPONSE team carry out anti-bullying work in Newcastle all year round and are currently developing a Cyber Festival to be run in February 2010. They are talking to young people about their online behaviours, particularly Social Networking and Online gaming and are looking to hold focus groups with young people up to and during anti Bullying week.

For further information on cyber bullying or if you'd like to share your experiences about what you know and do to support your young people in this complex digital world contact us by email: [response@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:response@newcastle.gov.uk) or phone 0191 277 4500.

## Slatyford Lane Children's Home inspection findings

Slatyford Lane Children's Home was awarded a judgement of satisfactory by Ofsted after their recent inspection, and the Inspector commented on the "huge potential" for the home to achieve a judgement of good in the next inspection. The relationship of care between staff and young people was praised as impressive by Ofsted, as was the high level of participation by the young people in the inspection process. The Inspector said that management practices within the home could serve as a best practice model across the region if maintained.

## Safe At Home DVD

RoSPA have produced a short, fun film with a serious message. This film will be used by those working with families as a starting point for discussion around the issues of safety in the home for under 5s. This is now being circulated to children's centres across the country.



## Stay Safe

The 8-minute film features 2-year-old Sam, who is wise beyond his years and alert to household dangers. With busy lives and a new baby on the way, mum and dad seem less aware of these dangers. The film focuses on Sam's race against time to get his parents to take action – but will his efforts succeed?

[www.safeathome.rospea.com/families/dvd.htm](http://www.safeathome.rospea.com/families/dvd.htm)

### Be Bright, Be Seen – new national road safety campaign for 6 – 11 year olds

Look out for the latest Department of Transport's THINK! road safety campaign in cinemas, television and online. Preview at: <http://direct.gov.uk/talesoftheroad>

The 'Girl who didn't Dress Bright in the Dark' and 'The Boy Who Didn't Find a Safe Place to Cross' adverts are part of the 'Tales of the Road' campaign, aimed at 6-11s. The campaign aims to illustrate the stages of the Green Cross Code: find a safe place to cross; stop, look and listen, be visible to cars, and cycle safety.

## Enjoy and Achieve

### What are extended services?

DCSF provide funding to support schools by providing access to a core set of extended services, in raising standards of pupil motivation, aspiration, achievement and behaviour and contributing to a wide range of other activities including childcare, community cohesion, neighbourhood renewal, adult learning, combating child poverty, health inequalities and crime reduction. All schools are required to be delivering the full core offer (FCO) of extended services by August 2010

The full core offer comprises:

- A varied menu of activities (including study support and play) and childcare. A varied menu of activities might include academically-focused activities, homework clubs, arts and creative activities, sports activities and other recreational activities including play.
- Parenting support. This includes information sessions for parents, parenting programmes run with the support of other children's services and family and learning sessions to allow children to learn with their parents
- Swift and easy access to targeted and specialist services. (Integration agenda)
- Providing wider community access-to ICT, sports and arts facilities including adult learning.

There are currently 81 Newcastle schools providing access to the Full Core Offer (FCO) and 15 schools that are providing some elements. A detailed self assessment verification exercise to assess schools' compliance with the requirement to be delivering the elements of the Full Core Offer by August 2010 is underway. Following completion of the verification exercise, it is anticipated that more schools will assess themselves as meeting the offer.

Early appraisal of the 'gaps' in delivering the FCO and how schools will be supported:

- **Childcare:** Any schools without appropriate childcare/safe place to be linked with the Childcare Sufficiency team who will work with them and local providers to ensure that this element is met.

# Enjoy and Achieve

- **Varied menu of activities:** School Improvement Service and LA study support advisors to offer targeted support with individual schools where this is an issue
- **Swift and easy access:** Schools to continue to be offered support in the roll out and implementation of the Common Assessment Framework and it is anticipated that this will be addressed more comprehensively as part of school engagement in the development of integrated teams at local level
- **Parenting support:** Schools invited to work with Lead practitioner-Parenting and Family Support to further enhance their work with parents and carers
- **Community access:** Gaps in this aspect of the FCO are more apparent with PFI schools or schools /governing bodies that are unwilling for a variety of reasons to support the use of facilities for community use. Feedback has been provided to TDA on how, for some schools compliance with this element is problematic.

It is intended to work with TDA to run workshops for schools/clusters of schools during Jan-Feb 2010 to address sustainability issues. Consideration is being given to the tasks associated with Extended Services in the development of the new children's services structure and integrated teams.

## What is the extended services disadvantage subsidy?

This funding is for schools to support children and young people who are disadvantaged by economic circumstances, and children in care. The objectives of this project are to improve attainment for all, narrow the attainment gap and support the wellbeing of the targeted group.

The subsidy project, if delivered effectively, will help children who could not otherwise afford to do so, take part in out of school activities. It can help schools pay for innovative ways to attract the attention of children and young people who have been difficult to engage in the past, even when extended services activities have been free of charge, and give them a say in what activities and how.

The measurable outputs anticipated from this project are:

- Children and young people disadvantaged by economic circumstances, and children in care (the "target group") are financially supported to take part in extended services activities
- The target group – and their parents and carers – are fully involved in making the best use of the funding available
- The activities on offer are attractive and relevant to that target group and to drive increased and sustained participation of the target group
- Additional funding results in additional access to activities for the target children and young people
- Schools commission a range of activities, new or updated, externally as part of developing new services to enrich the extended services offering
- Activities are open to all children, not just the target group, but children not in the target group will be charged.

Newcastle has received an allocation of just over £191,000 for schools within two selected clusters (Heaton Manor and the Gosforth Pyramid). Each cluster will use its own criteria for selection and this may be based on entitlement to free school meals, that the child is looked after, or there is school based/ result of CAF knowledge of hardship.

# Enjoy and Achieve

There is an expectation that the funding will be used to:

- pay for activities from Summer 2009 through to 31 August 2010
- cover the direct costs of activities at a level of the order of £300 per individual

From April 2010 this will be rolled out citywide and a substantial resource (approx £1.4 million) will be available to help those children and young people most in need. This will be passported directly to schools.

## New primary school competition launched for Heart of Walker

Newcastle's Primary Strategy for Change includes, as one of its top priorities, the replacement of Wharrier Street and St Anthony's Primary schools by a new "Heart of Walker" primary school. It is proposed that the two existing schools will close on 31 August 2012 and the new school would open on 1 September 2012. The local authority has just published the public notice to invite proposals from interested parties to develop the new school.



Surplus places in the primary sector in the Walker area are high - a number of schools have more than 30% surplus places and numbers are not projected to increase in the foreseeable future. Even with additional pupils from proposed new housing developments, it will not be possible to sustain the number of primary schools in the area. It is proposed to reduce the number of primary schools in the area from four to two, in two phases, starting with Wharrier Street and St Anthony's. This proposal is also a key element of the Walker Riverside Regeneration Strategy and, in particular, the proposals for the redevelopment of the Heart of Walker.

A site adjacent to the Lightfoot Sports Centre playing pitches has been identified for the new school. The site is within an area allocated for a mix of uses, including an anchor supermarket, new shops, sport, leisure, community buildings, small scale office and housing developments.

Details of the public consultation process and the responses received are included in the report to Newcastle City Council Executive on 15 July 2009, a copy of which is available from: <http://democracy.newcastle.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Cid=135&Mid=1477&Ver=4>

## Update from Newcastle Libraries Service

Since the opening of the new City Library 26 schools have visited the library and 7 major events have taken place for children and young people.

As part of the City Library opening programme a range of activities were delivered. The events linked to the Summer Reading Challenge with the travel theme Flights of Fancy.

An 11.4 metre rocket was placed in the City Library on the ground floor which reached to level 4 while in the Bewick Hall an aeroplane was installed complete with departure lounge, security systems and sky.

In the activity room on level 3 children were able to travel to the seaside where they found sand, sun, deck chairs, rock pools and lots of buckets and spades.



# Enjoy and Achieve

Throughout the week many activities took place for children and what did they think?

## What is the best thing about Flights of Fancy?

- 'Finding out how exciting it can be in the library'
- 'Making sandcastles with really wet sand and looking in rock pools'
- 'Getting my passport and going through security'
- 'Making paper aeroplanes and paper sunglasses'



## What new thing did you learn today?

- 'I didn't know pilots were so funny'
- 'My dad can't sing'
- 'What port and starboard means'

## Comments from parents

'What an absolutely fantastic idea. All of the crew were brilliant and as for the captain....what can I say? I think my friend and I enjoyed it as much as our children'.

'Fascinating and thoroughly enjoyable. The children really enjoyed making their maps and storybooks. I'm sure we'll be making lots at home! I think it's great that children can see what you can achieve through drawing. Well organised and lots of fun.'

This year the Summer Reading Challenge saw a 39% increase with 5017 children joining the scheme. Other library news is that young people who were involved in the design of the new city library were able to meet the Queen when she officially opened the library on 6 November. And every 4 and 5 year old child in Newcastle is in the process of being given a free book to help them discover the magic of reading as part of the annual Booktime initiative.

The 3,000 book giveaway is part of a nationwide distribution by charity Booktrust, with every 4 and 5-year-old in England receiving a goodie bag containing "Mr Big" by Ed Vere and "The Booktime Book of Fantastic First Poems."

## UK Teaching Awards update

June Foster narrowly missed out in the national final of the UK Teaching Awards but was still honoured with a trip to Downing Street to meet the PM.

Gordon Brown is quoted saying "You never forget your teacher. You never forget the influence they had on you and you have the ability to change lives so what you do for our country and what you do for children and young people is so absolutely crucial. These Teaching Awards are a signal of the importance we attach to teaching and education."



Nominate Newcastle teachers, teaching assistants, governors and schools now for the 2010 awards at [www.teachingawards.com/nominations/](http://www.teachingawards.com/nominations/)

## Enjoy and Achieve

### What is Parent Channel TV?

This is an online video website designed to support parents and carers of children aged 5 to 19 years on a range of topics they face everyday. The website is being created for and funded by the DCSF alongside Parenting UK. It will offer parents and carers engaging video contact with signposting to appropriate support.

### Will Newcastle schools be involved in this new online resource?

Yes, Moorside Community Primary School is taking part in this exciting project in a film featuring experts and young people from the school.

### Tell me more about these films

The films are being produced by Tomorrows Child production company and there will be 200 films in total, each lasting around three minutes. They will cover a variety of topics such as "Parenting and Learning", "Parenting and Behaviour" and "Parenting and Wellbeing".

Parent Channel TV will be highly publicised in the coming months through an online, TV and radio promotional campaign after its launch in January 2010.

### New government guidance on health and safety on school trips

The Health and safety of learners outside the classroom (HASLOC) guidance provides straightforward advice and useful information for teachers and visits organisers planning off-site activities. It builds on the Quality Badge Scheme for providers, launched earlier this year, which cuts the paperwork that schools and others will need before organising visits to badged organisations and venues.

The consultation on the new guidance started on 6 November and will run for 12 weeks.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/>

More information on the Quality Badge Scheme is available here:

[http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn\\_id=2009\\_0033](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2009_0033)

## Make a Positive Contribution

### Local democracy week round-up

Local Democracy week is an annual national event organised by the Local Government Association. The event aims to get young people involved in politics in their communities, increase the awareness of young people about the political system and democracy, and highlight the positive contributions young people make to their communities.

This year, Children's Services Participation Unit supported and promoted Local Democracy Week and just under 200 young people took part in a lively Question Time style event at the Great North Museum: Hancock. At the event they quizzed some of the city's key decision makers on issues including "Transport", "The Image of Young People" and "Life for Young People in Newcastle".

# Make a Positive Contribution

The panel was chaired by Simran Chopra, from the Young Advisory Group and panel members included Tobyn Hughes, Director of Strategy - Nexus; Robin Knight, Stagecoach North East Commercial Director; Inspector Keith Hall, Northumbria Police and Fiona Blacke, Chief Executive of the National Youth Agency. Newcastle Lib Dem and Labour Councillors including Council Leader John Shipley also joined the panel along with young people from the UK Youth Parliament.

Other events taking place across the city throughout Local Democracy week included the city's Youth Bus visiting secondary schools and local youth projects and also parking up at the Monument all day Saturday to promote opportunities for young people in the city.

## **Expressions of interest sought from suitable organisations to establish, support and run a Youth Council**

### **Can you inspire young people? Could you support, empower and encourage whilst being able to stay in the background?**

James, Robin, Chloe, Charlotte and Alex are five enthusiastic young people on our young people's steering group who are working with Newcastle City Council to create a Youth Council for the City. They're clear on one thing.

"We don't want any old "off the shelf" Youth Council, we want: An inclusive and fun organisation that is led by young people, established to challenge, influence and work with decision makers in Newcastle to improve the lives of young people, and make the City a more young person friendly place."

Newcastle City Council is seeking expressions of interest from suitable organisations to establish, support and run a Youth Council to be launched in early 2010. Can your organisation work with young people and Newcastle City Council to create something unique? This contract will be awarded through a competitive process involving young people at every stage. Your expression of interest should be targeted at the 13-19 age range.

For a discussion about this opportunity you can contact James Anderson, CYPES Coordinator at Newcastle City Council on 0191 260 6516 or email: [james.anderson@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:james.anderson@newcastle.gov.uk)

For more information visit: [www.nepoportal.org](http://www.nepoportal.org)

## **What is the Choices Programme?**

The choices programme is an annual programme of arts activity for young people (10 to 18 years old) in the youth justice system. It is part of the community sentence Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP) – an alternative to youth custody that works to raise aspirations and opportunities, develop new skills and so reduce offending.

Choices also seeks to challenge negative attitudes towards young offenders and to present these young people in a positive light.

Running for over five years now, in 2008-09 Choices worked with the arts partnership organisation Helix Arts and Nexus to encourage young people aged between 12 and 18 to think about their own lives through creative activity.

## Make a Positive Contribution

The art work was then displayed at Chillingham Road Metro Station. Many of the young people on the programme have had direct experience of the impact of Knife Crime and this was part of their response and incorporated into their pieces. This element of the project has been shortlisted for a Local Government Information Unit (LGIU) 'Small is Beautiful' Award because of its potential transferability to other local authorities as part of the government's Tackling Knives Action Programme.



More recently Choices worked with filmmaker Kate Sweeney to create a film called *Who am I?* filming at venues cross Newcastle, Gateshead and North Tyneside. This nine-month residency ended with a three-day exhibition of audio visual work created by the young people and included screenings of the film. This work was on display at The Artworks Gallery in Byker until mid September 2008 and the film screened at the Cooperative Young Filmmakers Festival in Bradford on 9 October.

At the end of 2008 and into 2009, the group worked with three artists in residence (circus and physical theatre and animation/music practitioners), which proved to be an exciting combination. This work has been drawn together into a DVD animation and accompanying booklet and an exhibition of work was held at the ISSP during June 2009.

The Choices project also developed a partnership with Dance City to deliver a number of dance workshop programmes aimed at developing more formal approaches to identifying progression routes and encouraging young people on ISSP to access ETE (education, training and employment) opportunities. Three of the young people on the programme are currently completing their Bronze Arts Award, NVQ Level 1.

## Achieve Economic Wellbeing

### Individual Budgets pilot with children aged 14-16 with disabilities

DCSF have chosen Newcastle to pilot individual budgets with children aged 14-16 with disabilities which gives greater flexibility in delivering services to families with disabled children. A small pilot has been undertaken with positive feedback.

An individual budget lets families know how much money they will receive to buy support for their child. Families can write the plans within that budget and choose options which work for their child. As long as plans support children to develop and progress they can be as creative as the family's imagination. Finished plans will be discussed with the children with disabilities team before they are approved.

Individual budgets are an important way for young people and children to become involved in youth activities in their local community with support. It is hoped that individual budgets will provide a greater choice in how families use their short breaks. Families have self reported that they feel more in control of their support.

# Achieve Economic Wellbeing

The pilot will also explore with two test cases whether the CAF can be used effectively as a dynamic tool capable of combining assessment and support planning and complementing resource allocation. Bespoke services are hoping to improve the quality of services which young people receive.

Individual budgets are a highly participative form of commissioning. Families are fully involved in designing the support for the young person and prioritising the greatest needs. Support is tailor made and child centred. The support plan is designed by the families with professional facilitation if needed. The individual Budget Pilot also brings parents together in a support group to learn from each other about effective resources.

The individual budget Pilot began on July 1 2009. 23 families are committed to join the pilot. April 2010 plans go live with 30 families. For more information, contact Project Manager Martin Donkin on 0191 277 4700 or email [martin.donkin@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:martin.donkin@newcastle.gov.uk)

## Feedback from National Sure Start Children's Centres Week

Sure Start Children's Centres Week was a major national celebration starting on 14 September 2009. It celebrated the success of the centres and the services they offer to their local communities.



The week was marked with the hanging of 'Sure-Start' bunting, promotional t-shirts for staff to wear, and handing out balloons to families. Also more practically - the distribution of latest timetables, registering new families, and supporting and signposting families to activities that best suit their families' needs.

Parents involved in 'Green Starters' at Kenton and 'Ready Steady Grow' at Fawdon planted a seasonal-tree to mark the occasion. Sure Start North Children's Centre also timed the launch of their new 'Prables' activity with national SSCC week. This is a group for expectant and new mums who would like to improve their fitness before and after birth with gentle walks through the local area, led a qualified fitness instructor. The Northern Villages team co-ordinated a special family outing to Bill Quay Farm on Wednesday 16 September to celebrate the week.

## Increasing free school meals take-up

Currently around 8,000 Newcastle families claim free school meals (FSM) entitlement. We believe there are around 1,000 parents in the city who are eligible but haven't applied. We know this from data-matching between those in receipt of FSM and parents currently in receipt of housing or council tax benefits.

There are a number of reasons why parents might choose not to apply, such as their child prefers a packed lunch or is a fussy eater. They may be concerned that people would know that their child was having FSM. Or they simply may not know that they are entitled to claim – or find the application process too complicated.

An initiative is currently underway which is reviewing all the processes related to applying for free school meals to make it easier to apply in the first place, and to raise awareness and promote the benefits to parents. Colleagues in Children's Services are working with Welfare Rights and the Revenues and Benefits Service on streamlining the process and will be engaging with the Food in Schools group to look at promotional messages and activities.

# Achieve Economic Wellbeing

## New careers education strategy fit for the 21st Century

The government's new strategy in careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) has been published at:

[http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/default.aspx?](http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00977-2009&)

[PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00977-2009&](http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00977-2009&)

It sets out plans for:

- the Government's ambition that every young person will get careers education up to the age of 18 in line with raising the participation age
- piloting approaches to teaching about careers in primary school
- the ambition that every young person to have access to a mentor
- bringing IAG into the 21st Century with better online access to careers advice through Facebook, You Tube, blogs and forums and a new dedicated online mentoring scheme
- more help for disadvantaged and disabled young people in accessing work experience
- provide support and resource for schools and parents to engage with young people from an early age to talk about career opportunities
- a £10M fund to support innovative ways of delivering careers education

# Strategic Management and Transformation

## Development of the Newcastle Plan for Children and Young People 2010 –13

The timescale for developing the new 2010-2013 plan is as follows:

- Engagement activities (Sept-Nov 2009)
- Analysis of need (Sept-Nov 2009)
- Prioritisation and drafting (Nov-Jan 2009)
- Children's Trust Board (CTB) agree draft (Jan-Feb 2010)
- Formal Consultation period (Feb-March 2010)
- "Challenge process" (Feb-March 2010)
- Final version produced (April 2010)
- Sign-off by CTB and partner executive bodies (May 2010)
- Publish plan (June 2010)

Work is progressing to pull together analysis of a range of data about children, young people and families in Newcastle including needs and outcomes, linked with JSNA latest developments, and will include some spatial analysis of issues. Existing data and information sharing arrangements are being used.

Children and young people are being engaged through a range of processes, using existing mechanisms wherever possible, including through Youth Council advisory group, Children's Fund projects, partner organisations, Investing in Children members, CLDD steering group and BME group(s). It is agreed that CYP will have one priority under each outcome.

Parents and carers are being invited to participate in the development of the plan by responding to a postcard and online campaign, which also features in the November edition of Citylife delivered to every home in Newcastle - "Tell us one thing that you would change for children, young people or families in Newcastle?"

# Strategic Management and Transformation

Practitioner engagement is taking place through Children's services briefings (November) and various partnership and outcome group events, including Voluntary and Community Sector Forum.

The new NPCYP plan will:

- be owned and monitored by the Newcastle Children's Trust Board (CTB), as set out in new legislation (ASCL Bill currently before parliament)
- be fully aligned and embedded within the Sustainable Community Strategy
- be based on a thorough assessment of need
- involve all partners, have sufficient opportunity to contribute and take responsibility for delivery where appropriate
- effectively reflect children and young people's priorities and issues and give children and young people the opportunity to prioritise issues for the plan and to help develop actions
- give parents and carers the opportunity to contribute to developments
- utilise Outcomes-Based Accountability (OBA) and Turning the Curve to engage a wide range of partners
- meet new statutory requirements regarding CYPPs (ASCL Bill), although it is recognised that there may be some conflicts regarding timing
- have an increased focus on Strategic Commissioning and partners will contribute to these developments to identify, align and, where agreed, pool budgets

## Assess and Decide project update

Since our last update the Assess and Decide project team has been continuing to determine the work that the project needs to do to make sure that we have a robust approach to early intervention and targeted work that will improve the best outcomes for children, young people and their families.

### Project management

Part of this has involved revising the membership of the project board. The board will now contain senior managers from Children's Services, as well as representatives from external stakeholders including schools forums, health partners and the voluntary community sector. The Trade Unions have been involved throughout the project to date, and will continue to be part of the project management arrangements. We will be circulating updated information on the revised project board membership shortly.

We have also reviewed the structure of the project and it will now be managed through the development of three interlinked workstreams.

### Workstream 1 – Operating Model

This workstream will look to develop a new operating model for the targeted services delivery and the Assess and Decide function. This will make it easier for children, young people and families to access our services when they have additional support needs and provide a more cohesive process for assessment and managing casework. The main service area to benefit from the new model will be the Integrated Targeted Services area. The workstream lead is Karen Simmons.

# Strategic Management and Transformation

## **Workstream 2 – IT and Systems**

This workstream will look at the IT and systems infrastructure we need to enable us to better manage case work and strengthen the performance and management information we have. The workstream lead for this is still to be confirmed.

## **Workstream 3 – Benefits Realisation**

This workstream will examine where we can make efficiency savings across the Assess and Decide function. We will be making these efficiencies by streamlining and simplifying the processes we use. This workstream will also look at the additional areas where we can make service improvements as identified through staff workshops earlier in the year. The workstream lead is Karen Elliott.

## **Recruitment of an external challenge consultant**

We are pleased to announce that we have secured the services of Overbeck Practice Research to provide external challenge and expertise. They will be working with us to look at how we currently use the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), how an assess and decide function can support that framework, and how we can make our services more accessible and responsive to our customers.

They have a great deal of experience, having worked with 18 local authorities in the UK, as well as the Norwegian and Western Australian governments. We will be using their knowledge of best practice and transformation in other authorities to help us to develop processes that have safeguarding of children and young people at the heart of everything we do. We will be able to tell you more about this in the next update.

## **Project communication**

The project manager, Jamie Spence, is happy to meet with City Council or partner agency colleagues and teams if they would like to discuss this project or to facilitate input into the work of the project. Please contact Jamie on (0191) 277 4499 or 07917 212 412 or via the project email address: [AandD@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:AandD@newcastle.gov.uk) with any comments or queries.

Further regular updates will be provided in Children's Services and Council newsletters and bulletins, along with direct email updates to City Council and external stakeholders.

## **Locality working developments**

The Children's Trust Board (CTB) has agreed to take forward the recommendations of the Review of Locality Working which was published earlier this year. The review was carried out by OPM and has already been used to influence how we develop Integrated and Targeted Services as part of the ongoing transformation work in Children's Services.

Newcastle CTB is now focussing on how partners can work together to implement the report's recommendations and make local area working a reality.

# Strategic Management and Transformation

## Volunteers wanted to join youth offender panels

Newcastle YOT is currently recruiting for volunteers to sit on the youth offender panels. A Youth Offender Panel consists of two volunteers recruited directly from the local community, alongside one member of the youth offending team (YOT). The panel will meet with the young person, and their parents or guardians, to talk about the reasons for the offending behaviour and to agree a tailor made contract aimed at putting things right.



Youth offender panels give the community a say in creating effective programmes that ensure young people who offend repair the harm done and are given positive help to prevent further offending. For more information visit the Youth Justice Board website at

[www.yjb.gov.uk/en-gb/yjs/GetInvolved/Volunteering/](http://www.yjb.gov.uk/en-gb/yjs/GetInvolved/Volunteering/)

To apply to become a panel member email Mark Johnson at [mark.w.johnson@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:mark.w.johnson@newcastle.gov.uk) or Kerry Turner at [kerry.turner@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:kerry.turner@newcastle.gov.uk) or phone 0191 277 7377 for an application pack.

## Audit Commission School Survey

We have now received a summary of the results of the national Audit Commission Schools Survey for 2009:

[www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk/node/11614](http://www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk/node/11614)



The primary purpose of the school survey is to act as a source of evidence about schools' perceptions of the support provided by their council and the services provided locally for children and young people. The results help us to target areas for improvement as well as assess our performance compared to other local authorities.

This newsletter is produced to keep you informed of developments across Newcastle Children's Trust to improve outcomes for children and young people. This includes local and national news, initiatives and achievements.

This is only a snapshot of what's happening across the city. For up to the minute news and events for children's services practitioners, log on to: [www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk](http://www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk)

If you have any comments or contributions please contact us:

- Online via the website: [www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk](http://www.newcastlechildrenservices.org.uk)
- By email at [childrens.services@newcastle.gov.uk](mailto:childrens.services@newcastle.gov.uk)