



Children's Services

DEPARTMENTAL PLAN 2008-2011

Purpose of Plan

The purpose of this Departmental Plan is to ensure that all activities carried out by the service complement the aims and objectives of the authority and the community as a whole.

This plan supports the priorities identified in the Sustainable Communities Strategy and builds on the Annual Performance Assessment, the Children and Young People's Plan review, political and corporate priorities as well as numerous surveys and progress checks.

Our vision for children's services in Darlington is based on the concept of keeping the child at the centre of all we do by providing integrated services, built around the child, the family and the community.

Turning this vision into a reality means improving outcomes on a sustainable basis, creating a whole systems approach which goes beyond the services delivered by the local authority and, in particular, strengthening universal services.

Darlington's Vision

Our aspiration is for Darlington to be a Borough offering outstanding opportunities for all children and young people, where aspirations are nurtured and where they can achieve their ambition for learning and personal development.

We will deliver this vision through the planning and delivery of effective, high quality and integrated services.

As a department, there are 4 key principles that underpin how we work with children, young people and their families. These are:

- Giving every child and young person the best start in life
- Providing a champion for every child
- Ensuring that every child or young person attends education and positive activities, and
- Ensuring there is a job or place for every school and college leaver

Departmental Objectives

The objectives of the department are those, which are set through the Children Act 2004, namely the 5 outcomes previously described in Every Child Matters. They are to ensure that all children and young people are supported to:

1. **Be healthy** – Enjoying good physical health and mental health and living a healthy lifestyle
2. **Stay safe** – being protected from harm and neglect
3. **Enjoy and achieve** – getting the most out of life and developing the skills for adulthood
4. **Make a positive contribution** – being involved with the community and society and not engaging in anti social behaviour
5. **Achieve Economic Well-being** – not being prevented by economic disadvantage from achieving their full potential in life.

In addition, the department is committed to delivering leading edge services and will do this through:

6. **Planning Effectively**, co-ordinating and managing the delivery of services and resources, ensuring that they are of high quality, represent value for money and are responsive to the needs of children, young people and their families.

Key Achievements over the last 12 months:

Improvements in Children's Services

The reconfiguration of structures and services within the department has continued apace to continue the realignment of responsibilities and accountabilities in line with evolving service priorities.

Important milestones include:

- Appointment of assistant directors to each of the newly created service arms in the Children's Services Department
- A very recent and fundamental review of the 3rd tier management structure
- Establishing a joint funded senior commissioning post with the Primary Care Trust
- Further developing the children's services perspective with schools
- Strengthening the culture and ethos of management in Children's Services
- A focus on narrowing the performance gap between schools, between communities and between groups of pupils
- Developing Leadership College proposals with schools
- Adoption by the Children's Trust of a Workforce Development Strategy
- Multi agency CAF training developed and implemented across the local authority area
- Corporate engagement with all other council departments

OFSTED inspectors commented during the Annual Performance Assessment that Children's Services capacity to improve was good.

New teams joining Children's Services

In the last six months services relating to Children and Young People have been consolidated in the Children's Services Department. The following services have been integrated:

- The Youth Service – into the Partnerships service arm from 1st September 2007
- The Connexions Service – also into the Partnerships service arm from 1st April 2007
- The Youth Offending Service – into the Children and Families service arm from 1st September 2007

Managers and teams have embraced these new arrangements and feel that closer working is in the best interests of young people in Darlington.

Results

Darlington performs well across a range of indicators and included amongst achievements in the last year are: -

- Improved performance across Social Care Indicators: –
 - No of child protection cases review C20 within timescales (100%)
 - Health Assessments LAC C19 (96.5%),
 - Reviews carried out within timescales C68 (100%)

- Adoptions of LAC C23 (up from 5.5 to 18)
- Absence of LAC from school C24 (reduced from 14.1% to 8.5%)

- GCSEs: -
 - 5+ A*-C (60.0%) - Up 2.1% on 2006 and up 11.5% since 2004. All schools above 30%.
 - 5+ A*-C (Inc. English & Maths) (45.9%) - Up 1.2% on 2006 and up 8.8% since 2004.
 - 1+ A*-G (96.4%) - Up 0.8% on 2006. Lowest % yet leaving with no GCSE grade pass
 - 1+ Passes (97.3%) - Up 1.2% on 2006. Lowest % yet leaving with nothing at KS4

- Increased CVA scores
 - KS1-KS2 - 100 to 100.4
 - KS2-KS4 - 983.0 to 1000.6
 - KS3-KS4 - 992.7 to 1003.5

- Improved attendance

The absence figures show that Darlington has moved from being the 16th worst out of 150 authorities in the 2006 Autumn term to being the 49th best in the 2007 Spring term

 - Primary - 93.7% to 94.8%
 - Secondary - 90.1% to 91.5%
 - Reduction in full time equivalent days lost from 164,597 [2006] to 133,540 [2007]

A strategy to reduce the incidence of permanent and fixed term exclusion from school is being actively pursued.

Relationships with schools are good and improving and the authority has a better knowledge of areas for further improvement. These judgements are evidenced by the Audit Commission survey of schools' views.

Engagement with Schools and School Improvement

Our engagement with schools continues to improve. Key actions over the last year to further enhance standards of teaching and learning include:

- Consultation and publication of school condition document and associated challenge and support protocols
- The establishment of the Joint Consultative Group as a formal mechanism for dialogue and consultation with schools
- Appointment of lead officers for every school, complementing the work of school improvement partners
- Schools working in hard federation (Bishopton/Redmarshall, The Abbey Schools Federation, Education Village)
- Joint working between Hurworth and Haughton schools to raise standards
- Improving opportunities for 14-19 year olds through partnership working and enhanced staff capacity

- Darlington acknowledged as most improved local authority in the Northeast by DCSF in December 2007 in terms of red, amber, green (RAG) ratings.

The Audit Commission school survey in May 2007 shows that schools have welcomed these new approaches as scores in key areas have improved significantly.

Partnerships

Strong Partnership working has been further advanced through:

- Establishment of a post for joint commissioning and the development of a local authority area wide strategy for procuring children's services
- Comprehensive review of Children's Trust arrangements, with the development of a strategic and executive function, supported by an operational structure
- Establishment of the Safer Schools Partnership piloted at Eastbourne Church of England Academy and the PRU
- Children's Centres development on schedule – Dodmire opened and Haughton on schedule
- Locality working/cluster - roll out of closer integration of services through a "Team Around the Child" approach and the implementation of the Locality Strategy
- A review of the structure and membership of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and it's associated sub-group. With all Board members being actively involved in the process.

Key Challenges

The key challenge for the Children's Services department is to focus on narrowing the gap between the most affluent and most disadvantaged groups and communities and providing support for vulnerable children and their families. We want to narrow the gap in ways consistent with the Every Child Matters agenda, as follows: -

Be Healthy

Children in Darlington face some particular health challenges. There are issues with obesity, abuse of alcohol, abuse of other substances and smoking. Dental health is also shown to be below the national average. The rate of teenage conceptions, although falling, is still high and breastfeeding initiation and immunisation rates are low.

To address these issues we need to:

- Have all schools achieve the Healthy Schools standard
- Implement health and well-being recommendations developed by the Darlington Partnership
- Encourage more parents to make use of services provided at Children's Centres.

Stay Safe

The stability of placements of Looked after Children has improved consistently in recent years and work needs to continue to make sure this improvement is sustained. The Children and Young People Bill will be implemented, although in Darlington many of the required actions have been in place for some time. Implementation of Common Assessment Framework has begun and further development is ongoing. To address these issues we will: -

- Improve placement stability for LAC
- Ensure implementation of Children and Young People Bill
- Continue CAF implementation/Lead practitioner designation
- Keep young people safe from abuse
- To continue to ensure agencies co-operate and work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Darlington.

Enjoy and Achieve

Darlington has seen improvement recently in the attendance rates of children and young people at school. Further work in this area is ongoing not only with schools but with other agencies, parents and carers to sustain this upward trend. Academic attainment continues to be variable, between settings and between phases - with particular concerns about the gap between achievements of the more vulnerable groups and other children and young people. A transition strategy has been developed and will be implemented to address the issues associated with drops in performance at key transition points in children's lives by: -

- Improving attendance and reducing the numbers of young people excluded from school
- Implementing KS4 engagement strategy and encouraging collaboration of schools in behaviour at primary and secondary levels
- Enhancing processes for pupil progression and tracking

- Continuing to improve education attainment across all Key Stages and in particular KS2-4 CVA
- Enhancing support for school leadership
- Continuing to develop positive relationships with schools and Governing Bodies
- Ensuring sufficiency of school places and maximising parental choice

Make a Positive Contribution

Darlington continues to promote consultation, engagement and participation with all stakeholders and service users. The Youth Participation Strategy has been in place for over 18 months and a consultation and participation strategy has been produced for younger children. The Youth Offer has been developed in consultation with young people and will be launched in April 2008.

We will continue to:

- Improve consultation and engagement with Darlington's children, young people, families and carers in the planning and delivery of services
- Ensure that young people and their families are offered a broad menu of accessible activities in their leisure time¹

Achieve Economic Well-Being

The 14-19 Strategy is now being rolled out and the range of opportunities for young people has increased significantly through initiatives such as Skills+ and the future gateway diploma entitlement. Children's Services in partnership with other agencies will:

- Continue to implement arrangements to assure the quality of education and workplace provision for young people
- Accelerate progress with all aspects of implementation of 14 -19 Strategy
- Engage with employers to develop links with schools

Management Capacity

Young people are a priority for the council, which continues to work productively with a range of partners for their benefit. The restructured Children's Services Department has a renewed cohesion and drive to improve outcomes for young people. The 2007 Annual Performance Assessment letter stated, "that unvalidated data suggests that the authority is moving in the right direction". Children's Services will continue to increase its capacity through:

- Children's Trust partnership arrangements and developing capacity including the implementation of the Commissioning Strategy
- A review of management arrangements in the light of integrated working
- Through improving the 'value for money' of commissioned and directly managed services
- Delivery of a sustainable Medium Term Financial Planning

¹ Complementary to Community Services Service Plan 2008-09

Change Drivers:

For each of the following eight types of change drivers, list the issues that are most likely to impact on the service. For each issue, what will need to be addressed by the service in order to achieve the change and/or improvement?

Ref	ISSUES MOST LIKELY TO IMPACT ON THE SERVICE	WHAT THE SERVICE NEEDS TO DO TO ACHIEVE CHANGE/IMPROVEMENT?
	Government Priorities: (Changes in legislation, guidance etc.)	
1	Improving opportunities for the 14-19 age group	Accelerate progress with all aspects of implementation of the 14-19 Strategy (Priority 8)
2	Arrangements for early intervention and preventative action including integration of services	Develop arrangements to further support early intervention and preventative work (Priority 9)
3	Care Matters – Children and Young People Bill - long term stability of LAC	Improve the stability of Children’s placements (Priority 2)
	Local Priorities: (Member commitments, best value reviews, demographics, etc.)	
4	Ensure all children receive high quality teaching and learning	Reduce the disparity in performance between schools (Priority 3)
5	Improve academic progress and improve transition across all key stages, settings and phases	Improving academic progress for all children and young people (Priority 4) Improve transition across all settings, phases and services especially for vulnerable groups (Priority 5)
6	High levels of absence and exclusion from school	Reduce absence and exclusion rates (Priority 6)
7	Improve the provision of information, advice and guidance	Implement new IAG standards (See Priority 8)
8	Improve health and well-being. Reduce ill health and cut the 13-year gap between wards. Promote preventative care and act on changing demographics. Arrangements to safeguard and promote welfare	Promote positive health and well-being (Priority 1)
9	Build community support for schools to address attainment and absence and provide the skills needed to tackle equality gap	Reduce the disparity in performance between schools (Priority 3) Improving academic progress for all children and young people (Priority 4)

Ref	ISSUES MOST LIKELY TO IMPACT ON THE SERVICE	WHAT THE SERVICE NEEDS TO DO TO ACHIEVE CHANGE/IMPROVEMENT?
	Consultation: (Results of surveys, complaints, focus groups, etc.)	
10	Engagement of children, young people, parents and carers	Increase engagement of children, young people and their families and carers in the delivery and design of services (Priority 7)
	Performance Management: (What does the PMF, benchmarking, inspections, etc. tell us about the service)	
11	Stability of LAC placements	Improve the stability of Children's placements (Priority 2)
12	Attendance Fixed term and permanent exclusions	Reduce absence and exclusion rates (Priority 6)
13	Academic performance across all Key Stages	Reduce the disparity in performance between schools (Priority 3) Improving academic progress for all children and young people (Priority 4)
	Resources (Budget pressures/headroom, employee resource, capital resource, etc.)	
14	Attract inward investment and enable existing businesses to grow in prosperity	Accelerate progress with all aspects of implementation of the 14-19 Strategy (Priority 8)
	Opportunities: (Procurement, external funding etc)	

Ref	ISSUES MOST LIKELY TO IMPACT ON THE SERVICE	WHAT THE SERVICE NEEDS TO DO TO ACHIEVE CHANGE/IMPROVEMENT?
Risks (What could stop the service from delivering its objectives?)		
1	Recruitment and retention of key staff	See risk analysis section (page 30)
2	Recruitment and retention of foster carers	
3	Schools in categories and schools causing concern	
4	Mismatch of demand and supply of child care places in Early Years	
5	Library performance impact on the CPA culture block performance	
6	Schools not engaging in behaviour and attendance management	
7	Capacity to deliver sustainable savings	
8	Children's Trust – Commissioning Strategy	
9	Major Capital Schemes – Primary BSF/Hummersknott/Carmel/Eastbourne Academy	
10	Sufficiency of school places	
Events (Special circumstances over the last 12 months to explain performance, will this continue?)		
	Joint Area Review Report published 22 July 2008	a. Action Plan following JAR report

Priority for Improvement	
1. Promoting positive health and well-being	
Link to Change Driver 8	Link to Risk (if applicable)
Link to Service Plan objective	Link to Departmental objective 1, 2
Link to Corporate objective Excellent Services	Link to Community Strategy Themes Healthy Darlington

Actions needed to deliver improvement	NIs / LPIs	Targets	Lead officer	Date for completion
Deliver the Healthy Schools Action Plan, with particular emphasis on the teaching and delivery of PSHE in all health areas, including alcohol misuse and mental health issues	52,55, 56,57		Christine Jones	Dec 2009
Ensure children and young people are safe from abuse and neglect: Monitor referral and child protection processes	59,60,64 65,66,67 68,71		Elaine Clarke	Mar 2009
Continue to deliver and promote the substance misuse service	115		Lucy Wheatley	Mar 2009
Further develop services to promote mental health and wellbeing	50,51,58		Lucy Wheatley	Mar 2009
Deliver the Teenage Pregnancy & Sexual Health Action plan	112,113		Lucy Wheatley	Mar 2009

Actions needed to deliver improvement	NIs / LPIs	Targets	Lead officer	Date for completion
Develop a proposal for a 24 hour community nursing service			Lucy Wheatley	Mar 2009
Evaluate provision around Health Visitors and School Nurses			Lucy Wheatley	Mar 2009
Capture range of data/information sources to inform planning in partnership development			Anita Hamer	Mar 2009
Ensure that disabled children and young people can access specialist services promptly	54		Kevin Kelly	Mar 2009
Service improvement description				
To improve health and wellbeing of all children and young people in Darlington				
Expected outcome				
Improved performance across all linked performance indicators				
Expected efficiency gains (both cashable & non-cashable)				
None				
Resource required to implement changes				
Yes – see Children’s Services PCT Operational Plan				
Implications for Corporate Services (please highlight changes to staffing, ICT requirements, HR implications, legal implications, etc.)				
Additional information				

Priority for Improvement					
2. Improving the stability of children's placements					
Link to Change Driver 3, 11	Link to Risk (if applicable)				
Link to Service Plan Objective	Link to Departmental objective 2				
Link to Corporate Objective Providing Excellent Services	Link to Community Strategy Themes Safer Darlington				
Actions needed to deliver improvement		PIs	Targets	Lead officer	Date for completion
Undertake analysis of placements that have unplanned ending		61,62,63,66		Mary Sweeney	Mar 2009
Develop recruitment /marketing strategy for foster carer recruitment				Mary Sweeney	Mar 2009
Support families and cares in providing a stable safe secure environment				Mary Sweeney	Mar 2009
Service improvement description					
To improve the stability of children's placements					
Expected outcome					
Continuing demonstrable increase in placement stability					
Expected efficiency gains (both cashable & non-cashable)					
None					
Resource required to implement change					
Within existing resources					
Implications for Corporate Services (please highlight changes to staffing, ICT requirements, HR implications, legal implications, etc.)					
Additional information					
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Priority for Improvement	
3. Ensure all children receive high quality teaching and learning	
Link to Change Driver 4,13	Link to Risk (if applicable)
Link to Service Plan objective	Link to Departmental objective 3
Link to Corporate objective Providing Excellent Services	Link to Community Strategy Themes Aspiring Darlington

Actions needed to deliver improvement	NIs / LPIs	Targets	Lead officer	Date for completion
Establish Darlington school leadership college	73-78,83, 84,89		Berni Bowes	June 2008
Governing bodies to carry out self review programme, so identifying CPD	93-98		Sarah Thompson	Review Sept 2008
Further develop SIP and Lead Officer intervention to ensure Darlington Schools Ofsted reports are largely good and outstanding			Andrew Dunn	Review Sept 2008
Develop the Foundation Stage strategy			Christine Archer/ Lynne Henderson	Sept 2008
Link the best performing schools with those in need of improvement to ensure that skills are transferred			Andrew Dunn	Sept 2008

<p>Service improvement description Establish and develop support mechanisms for schools</p>
<p>Expected outcome Improved attainment and achievement for all young people with evidence of disparities being reduced</p>
<p>Expected efficiency gains (both cashable & non-cashable) Cashable savings secured through Children's Services restructuring</p>
<p>Resource required to implement change</p>
<p>Implications for Corporate Services (please highlight changes to staffing, ICT requirements, HR implications, legal implications, etc.) Lead officer arrangements to be included within Children's Services review of staff structures</p>
<p>Additional information</p>

Priority for Improvement				
4. Improving academic progress for all children and young people				
Link to Change Driver 5, 9,13	Link to Risk (if applicable)			
Link to Service Plan objective	Link to Departmental objective 3			
Link to Corporate objective Providing excellent services	Link to Community Strategy Themes Aspiring Darlington			
Actions needed to deliver improvement	NIs / LPIs	Targets	Lead officer	Date for completion
Identify Darlington's vulnerable groups through pupil tracking and action plan for improvements	72-78 83,84,89		Chris Bracken	April 2008
Review and develop teaching and learning in all Darlington Schools	92-98		Andrew Dunn	Sept 2008
All schools to have APT (Assessing Pupil Tracking) or ISP (Intensive support Programme) as a minimum for pupil tracking	102 104-108		Andrew Dunn	Sept 2008
Phoenix and ERIC (Electronic Recording Information Collation) implemented, all staff trained			John Steel	April 2008
Ensure quality of information to schools for LAC	99-101		Mary Sweeney	Mar 2009
Ensure co-ordination of services to support education of LAC			Mary Sweeney	Mar 2009

<p>Service improvement description Improved pupil progress for all children and young people across all key stages</p>
<p>Expected outcome Improved educational attainment and achievement in across all key stages</p>
<p>Expected efficiency gains (both cashable & non-cashable) None</p>
<p>Resource required to implement change Within existing resources</p>
<p>Implications for Corporate Services (please highlight changes to staffing, ICT requirements, HR implications, legal implications etc.) None</p>
<p>Additional information None</p>

Priority for Improvement				
5. Improve transition across all settings phases and services especially for vulnerable groups				
Link to Change Driver 5	Link to Risk (if applicable)			
Link to Service Plan objective	Link to Departmental objective 3			
Link to Corporate objective Ensuring access for all	Link to Community Strategy Themes Aspiring Darlington			
Actions needed to deliver improvement	NIs / LPis	Targets	Lead officer	Date for completion
Implement the findings of the Director's Transition Commission. Data arrangements in place for schools by Sept 2008 to include establishing a transition model: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establish a transition model for all schools, informed by existing good practice in Darlington (SCS) ▪ Ensure that children in year 6 spend at least a week in secondary school during the second half of the summer term (SCS) ▪ Work with Community Services and Health to improve the transition to Adult Services for young people with LDD ▪ Ensuring smooth transitions through use of CAF (see 9) 	72 92-98		Andrew Dunn/ Cate Crallan	Sept 2008
			George McQueen	Mar 2009
			Andrew Dunn	Mar 2009
			Kevin Kelly	Mar 2009
			Gill Walker	Mar 2009

<p>Service improvement description Improved transition reflected through academic attainment, attendance and behaviour</p>
<p>Expected outcome Improved attainment and achievement across all settings for all children and young people</p>
<p>Expected efficiency gains (both cashable & non-cashable)</p>
<p>Resource required to implement change</p>
<p>Implications for Corporate Services (please highlight changes to staffing, ICT requirements, HR implications, legal implications, etc.)</p>
<p>Additional information</p>

Priority for Improvement				
6. Reduce absence and exclusion rates				
Link to Change Driver 6,12	Link to Risk (if applicable) 6			
Link to Service Plan objective	Link to Departmental objective 3			
Link to Corporate objective Ensuring access for all	Link to Community Strategy Themes Aspiring Darlington			
Actions needed to deliver improvement				
Actions needed to deliver improvement	NIs / LPis	Targets	Lead officer	Date for completion
Implement the 2 nd phase of the Behaviour Strategy – provision and support services reviewed	69, 86, 87, 89, 111, 114		Andrew Dunn/ Berni Bowes	April 2008
Develop Fair Access protocol for persistent absentees			George McQueen	Mar 2009
Ensure full compliance with 6 day rule			Andrew Dunn	Mar 2009
Progress KS4 Engagement programme			Andrew Dunn	Mar 2009
Work with parents and settings to improve the support for school attendance			Gill Walker	Mar 2009
Further embed SEAL project in Primary schools and extend further to secondary schools			Andrew Dunn	Mar 2009
Improve the rate of reintegration and support provided for permanently excluded pupils			Andrew Dunn	Mar 2009
Establish Behaviour and Attendance network for primary schools and continue to support secondary school network			Andrew Dunn	Mar 2009

Service improvement description Implementation of behaviour and attendance strategies
Expected outcome Reduction in the numbers of exclusions and improvement in attendance and reduction in number of referral around behaviour
Expected efficiency gains (both cashable & non-cashable) None
Resource required to implement change Within existing
Implications for Corporate Services (please highlight changes to staffing, ICT requirements, HR implications, legal implications, etc.) None
Additional information

Priority for Improvement				
7. Increase the engagement of children, young people and their families and carers in the design and delivery of services				
Link to Change Driver 10	Link to Risk (if applicable)			
Link to Service Plan objective	Link to Departmental objective 4			
Link to Corporate objective Putting customer first	Link to Community Strategy Themes Aspiring Darlington			
Actions needed to deliver improvement	NIs / LPs	Targets	Lead officer	Date for completion
Implement young people's consultation and engagement strategy	110		Gill Walker	Mar 2009
Deliver a Darlington-wide Parenting Strategy and disseminate good practice regarding communication with parents (SCS)			Gill Walker	Mar 2009
Ensure that schools communicate with parents in such a way that parents understand and appreciate what is expected of them and ensure all schools have effective practices in place to engage with their communities (SCS)			Andrew Dunn	Mar 2009

Service improvement description Ensure engagement of children their families and careers in service design and delivery
Expected outcome Increased involvement and input from all service users in service design and delivery
Expected efficiency gains (both cashable & non-cashable) None
Resource required to implement change Within existing resources
Implications for Corporate Services (please highlight changes to staffing, ICT requirements, HR implications, legal implications, etc.) N/A
Additional information

Priority for Improvement				
8. Improve opportunities and outcomes for the 14-19 age group				
Link to Change Driver 1,7,14	Link to Risk (if applicable)			
Link to Service Plan objective	Link to Departmental objective 3,5			
Link to Corporate objective Ensuring access for all	Link to Community Strategy Themes Aspiring and Prosperous Darlington			
Actions needed to deliver improvement				
Actions needed to deliver improvement	NIs / LPIs	Targets	Lead officer	Date for completion
Implement the revised 14-19 Strategy agreed by 14-19 Trust including: – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reviewing work based learning ▪ Further develop links between schools and employers to ensure that young people have the best possible preparation for their careers (SCS) ▪ Review and radically overhaul work related learning arrangements in secondary schools including more systematic contribution from the public sector ▪ New IAG standards implemented 	75, 78-82, 84, 85, 90, 91, 97, 98,101,102, 105,106,108, 111, 117		Andrew Dunn	April 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ NEET strategy Developed by March 2008. Action Plan covering 2008-2010 Implemented 			Lynne Kilpatrick	Sept 2008
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New PRU to open March 2008 and to implement improvement plan 			Lynne Kilpatrick	2010
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Review KS4 Engagement Strategy funding 			Andrew Dunn	Mar 2009
			Andrew Dunn	Mar 2009

Service improvement description Continued development of provision for 14-19 age group in line with government priority in this area
Expected outcome Greater educational opportunities across Darlington through collaboration of 14-19 trust members
Expected efficiency gains (both cashable & non-cashable) None
Resource required to implement change Within existing resources
Implications for Corporate Services (please highlight changes to staffing, ICT requirements, HR implications, legal implications, etc.) New posts created from Children's Services staff restructuring
Additional information

Priority for Improvement				
9. Develop arrangements to further support early Intervention and preventative working				
Link to Change Driver 2	Link to Risk (if applicable)			
Link to Service Plan objective	Link to Departmental objective 1,2			
Link to Corporate objective Ensuring access for all	Link to Community Strategy Themes Aspiring Darlington			
Actions needed to deliver improvement				
Actions needed to deliver improvement	NIs / LPs	Targets	Lead officer	Date for completion
Work with partner organisations to develop and implement integrated working across localities/clusters and thereby implement agreed locality working strategy	70, 88		Gill Walker	Mar 2009
Development and implementation of targeted services informed by CAF roll out to enable gap to be narrowed for vulnerable and hard to reach children and young people			Anita Hamer	Mar 2009
Implement comprehensive parenting strategy for 0-19 years	109		Gill Walker	Mar 2009
Develop comprehensive offer of childcare, recreation and enrichment opportunities for 0-19 years to ensure services are available where and when families need them	116, 118		Gill Walker	Mar 2009
Develop services for children with disabilities/additional needs through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of services • Transitions planning • Development of EET • Inclusive practice 	54		Jan Lefevre/ Cate Crallan	Review Sept 2008

Service improvement description Delivery of more integrated services to support early intervention and preventative work
Expected outcome Reduction in requests for targeted and specialist services
Expected efficiency gains (both cashable & non-cashable) None
Resource required to implement change Within existing
Implications for Corporate Services (please highlight changes to staffing, ICT requirements, HR implications, legal implications, etc.) N/A
Additional information None

Risk Analysis 2008/09 – Children’s Services Department

Risks Identified

The following areas of potential risk, which could adversely impact on the ability of the Department to meet its objectives, have been identified:

1. Recruitment and retention of key staff
2. Recruitment and retention of foster carers
3. Schools in categories and schools causing concern
4. Mismatch of demand and supply of child care places in Early Years
5. Library performance impact on the CPA culture block performance
6. Schools not engaging in behaviour and attendance management
7. Capacity to deliver sustainable MTFP
8. Children’s Trust – Commissioning Strategy
9. Major capital schemes – BSF/Hummersknott/Carmel/Eastbourne Academy
10. Sufficiency of school places

Risk Scenario 1- Recruitment and retention of key staff particularly within school sector

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequence	Controls
The capacity of the Department to deliver improved outcomes for children and young people	<p>Failure to recruit into Head teacher and other senior posts</p> <p>Key staff leave and not replaced</p> <p>Failure to recruit to key posts</p> <p>Sickness absence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential instability in schools and reduced performance • Increased staffing pressures and poor staff morale • Failure to meet targets and deliver on strategies • Reduced level of service/ support to schools, children and young people and their families 	<p>Agency involvement in 'marketing' key posts</p> <p>New Departmental Structure at 2nd and 3rd Tier agreed</p> <p>Staff involvement in the development of revised structures through focus groups</p> <p>Regular communication with staff through newsletters and Director briefings</p> <p>Leadership Development College proposals initiated to develop Head Teacher progression pathways</p>

Risk Scenario 2 Recruitment and retention of foster carers *

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequence	Controls
Difficulty in recruiting and retaining foster carers	<p>Competition for foster carers for older children/complex needs by other LA's and independent fostering agencies</p>	<p>Unable to provide in-house placements for LAC</p> <p>Need to purchase placements at higher cost/outside Darlington</p> <p>Impact on performance and budget.</p> <p>Poorer outcomes for vulnerable children</p>	<p>Increased allowances for foster carers in line with nationally recommended rates</p> <p>Darlington Borough Council foster carers retention promoted</p> <p>Positive fostering inspection</p>

*** This risk has been reduced in likelihood following implementation of a successful recruitment initiative and improved retention of foster carers.**

Risk Scenario 3 Schools in categories and schools causing concern

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequence	Controls
Schools in 'Ofsted Categories' and other schools causing concern fail to improve significantly	<p>Failure of schools to make reasonable progress</p> <p>Key Stage results fail to improve/deteriorate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reputation of schools/LA • School Rolls fall • Ofsted Score affected • Adverse impact on APA, future JAR and CPA ratings • Increased appeals • Reduced community confidence 	<p>Post action Plan for the Pupil Referral Unit making satisfactory progress</p> <p>Post Action plan for North road currently being developed</p> <p>HMI monitoring report shows the PRU is making satisfactory progress</p> <p>New policy and procedures for identifying schools causing concern has been developed and differentiated levels of support offered</p> <p>Link officer designed to all schools to co-ordinate support and monitor/evaluate progress</p>

Risk Scenario 4 Mismatch of demand and supply of childcare places in Early Years

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequence	Controls
Failure of maintained and private, voluntary and independent sectors to work in partnership to create childcare places	<p>Opening children's centres and neighbourhood nurseries</p> <p>Increased demand from government to create more childcare places</p> <p>Single point of entry for children going into reception classes</p> <p>Parental choice of child care/nursery options</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Falling rolls in maintained settings • Sustainability of all early years settings (PVI & Maintained) • Retention/recruitment issues • Failure to deliver joined-up Foundation Stage curriculum • Uneven distribution of provision • Over/under-capacity in particular provision types 	<p>Audit of child care places including ghost places – has Sufficiency Audit been completed</p> <p>Analysis to identify gaps at local level commenced.</p> <p>Audit of demand for places has been commissioned</p> <p>Continued monitoring of child care places across the sectors</p> <p>General awareness raised of the opportunities presented by falling roll numbers for schools to gain greater involvement in extended services</p>

Risk Scenario 5 Library performance impact on the CPA culture block performance

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequence	Controls
With only static libraries there is an automatic and adverse 'knock-on' effect on key Public Library Service Standards (PLSSs)	Number of Performance Indicators falling below the CPA culture block threshold	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adverse impact on the CPA Culture block. If scores less than 2 then the LA will lose its 'Excellent' status 	In year (2007/08) costed remedial action plan agreed and being implemented to raise performance of PLSS 4 and 5

Risk Scenario 6 Schools not engaging in behaviour and attendance management

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequence	Controls
Schools not engaging in behaviour and attendance management	<p>Schools fail to make progress</p> <p>Failure to close gap between highest and lowest achieving schools</p>	<p>KS results deteriorate/fail to improve.</p> <p>Increased appeals.</p> <p>Reduced community confidence</p>	<p>Clarification of roles and responsibilities</p> <p>Staff structure agreed</p> <p>Behaviour and Attendance Strategies re-drafted</p>

Risk Scenario 7 Capacity to deliver sustainable savings

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequence	Controls
Capacity to deliver sustainable savings	<p>Budget problems</p> <p>Lack of planning and structuring of staffing</p>	<p>Unplanned and disorganised delivery of services</p> <p>Increased risk of scenarios 1,3</p>	<p>Staffing roles/responsibilities and structures clarified at 2nd and 3rd tiers</p> <p>MFTP has been updated to reflect new staff structure and 3 year budget settlement following CSR2007</p>

Risk Scenario 8 Children's Trust

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequence	Controls
Unclear governance arrangements	Criticism of Partnership	Reputation of Council and departments adversely affected	Director of Children's Services appointed as Chair Lead Officer appointed Partnership structure to be agreed engaging all partners Objectives of Partnership to be agreed Membership reviewed. Revised Governance arrangements agreed
Unclear commissioning arrangements	Pooling of budgets and commissioning of services	Services don't maximise community benefit	Draft Commissioning framework agreed by Trust Development Day focusing on further development of strategy 15.1.08

Risk Scenario 9 Major capital schemes including Primary BSF/ Hummersknott/ Carmel/ Eastbourne Academy

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequence	Controls
Capacity to manage projects and funding streams	Project Plans not managed Overspend on projects	Failure to deliver projects on time and within budget	Tight project management and monitoring of projects New Project Management posts in place

Risk Scenario 10 Sufficiency of school places

Vulnerability	Trigger	Consequence	Controls
Lack of sufficiency of school places for reception/Year 1 children	Insufficient school places to satisfy demand and our statutory obligation to provide school places	Children at the start of the academic year have no school place	<p>Temporary provision to increase capacity at four primary schools</p> <p>Situation being monitored to ensure that temporary accommodation can stay in place for another year</p> <p>Various strategies being used to improve quality of data to identify children before they enter the school system</p> <p>Work being done with choice adviser to encourage parents to apply for a school place in Sept 2008</p> <p>Provision of school places highlighted as top priority for capital investment for 2008-09 and future years as necessary</p>

Prioritising the Risks

Risk Number	Description	Risk Score
1	Recruitment and retention of key staff	C2
2	Recruitment and retention of foster carers	E3
3	Schools in categories and schools causing concern	D2
4	Mismatch of demand and supply of child care places in Early Years	C2
5	Library performance impact on the CPA culture block performance	C2 → B2
6	Schools not engaging in behaviour and attendance management	D2
7	Capacity to deliver sustainable savings	C2
8	Children's Trust – commissioning strategy	D2
9	Major Capital Schemes – BSF/Hummersknott/Carmel/Eastbourne Academy	C3
10	Sufficiency of school places	B2

Plotting the Risks

These risks have been plotted on a risk matrix with reference to management controls in place and working. The shaded part of the matrix signifies the area above the 'risk appetite level'. The Children's Services Department has identified no risks identified in this region that require specific management through the development of distinct improvement plans.

LIKELIHOOD	A Very High				
	B High			5,10	
	C Significant		9	1,4, 7	
	D Low			3,6,8	
	E Very Low		2		
	F Almost Impossible				
		IV Negligible	III Marginal	II Critical	I Catastrophic
		IMPACT			

Risk Action Plan

Risk Scenario 5 Library performance impact on the CPA culture block performance				
Link to Change Driver Risk Analysis	Link to Risk (if applicable) 5			
Link to Service Plan objective	Link to Departmental objective 3			
Link to Corporate objective Ensuring access for All	Link to Community Strategy Themes Aspiring Darlington			
Actions needed to deliver improvement	NIs/LPIs	Targets	Lead officer	Date for completion
Continual use of monitoring of book request supply times and adequacy of books found	PLSS5		Ruth Bernstein	Mar 2009
Service improvement description Improved library performance impact on the CPA culture block performance				
Expected outcome Improved levels of service from library				
Expected efficiency gains (both cashable & non-cashable) None				
Resource required to implement change Within existing				
Implications for Corporate Services (please highlight changes to staffing, ICT requirements, HR implications, legal implications, etc.)				
Additional information None				

Risk Action Plan

Risk Scenario 10 Sufficiency of school places	
Link to Change Driver Risk Analysis	Link to Risk (if applicable) 10
Link to Service Plan objective	Link to Departmental objective 3
Link to Corporate objective Ensuring access for All	Link to Community Strategy Themes Aspiring Darlington

Actions needed to deliver improvement	NIS/LPIs	Targets	Lead officer	Date for completion
Temporary classrooms already in place at Mount Pleasant and Dodmire Infants Schools, providing 30 additional places at each. Action now being taken to extend the availability of this accommodation for a further year, until Summer 2009 (planning permission, building regs, etc). Additional accommodation at Corporation Road (15 places) and North Road Primary School (30 places) still available without the need for further work.			John Bell	Apr 2009
Work has been undertaken to collate statistical information and data returns to help identify children currently in nursery settings who have not applied for a school place. Significant work was undertaken in Oct and Nov 07 to encourage these parents to apply for a school place. Further work is now being undertaken to monitor the situation – realistically, little action can be taken if parents choose not to apply. Projections are currently being revised and monitored to account for these children. Work on-going to identify other potential sources of additional children who may be moving to the Borough (e.g. traveller children, immigrants, army-redeployment). Meetings have been held this week with representatives from Catterick Garrison as they have just identified a potential 120 families who are likely to be moving into the Darlington area in the summer of 2008.			Melanie Stainthorpe	Mar 2009

Actions needed to deliver improvement	NIS/LPIs	Targets	Lead officer	Date for completion
On-going work being undertaken by the Choice Adviser to support parents in making realistic choices and advising parents who have been unsuccessful in gaining their first choice.			Melanie Stainthorpe/ David Chambers	Apr 2009
Requirement for school places to be constantly reviewed and plans to be put in place to develop additional provision. A strategy for school places and buildings is currently being developed which will review the situation at present and outline plans for the future 5-10 years.			Richard Storey/ David Chambers	Apr 2009
Primary School Capital Programme – Strategy for Change also currently being developed. This document will outline and identify the capital funding contributions that will be used to support the re-development of the primary school estate (including provision of places) for the next 15 years.			Phill Monk/ Rachel Jones	Apr 2009
Service improvement description Improved library performance impact on the CPA culture block performance				
Expected outcome Improved levels of service from library				
Expected efficiency gains (both cashable & non-cashable) None				
Resource required to implement change Within existing				
Implications for Corporate Services (please highlight changes to staffing, ICT requirements, HR implications, legal implications, etc.)				
Additional information None				