



Darlington  
Where **Quality** comes to **Life**

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN  
A PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

2007  
REVIEW

THE NEXT STEPS



DARLINGTON  
BOROUGH COUNCIL



## An Inclusive Approach:

Darlington has a diverse community and we are committed to serving every member of the community to the best of our ability.

The Children & Young People's Plan Review 2007 is a partnership document that has had regard to equality and diversity issues that may impact on any members of our community for any reason, but particularly because of their age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, ethnicity, religion or belief. A copy of the Equalities Impact Assessment is attached in Appendix 4 (IS 18).

If English is not your first language and you would like more information about this document, or if you require information in large print, Braille or on tape please contact the Policy & Performance team on 01325 388949.

اگر آپ کو یہ کتابچہ انگریزی کے علاوہ کسی دوسری زبان میں درکار ہو تو برائے مہربانی ٹیلیفون نمبر 01325 388949 پر فون کر کے حوالہ نمبر بتائیں۔

ਜੇ ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਤੋਂ ਬਿਨਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਨੰਬਰ 01325 388949 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਅਤੇ ਰੈਫਰੈਂਸ (ਹਵਾਲਾ) ਨੰਬਰ ਦੱਸੋ।

यदि आप यह प्रकाशन अंग्रेजी के अलावा अन्य भाषा में चाहते हैं तो कृपया संदर्भ नम्बर (रेफरन्स नम्बर) बताकर निम्नलिखित 01325 388949 पर संपर्क करें।

如果你需要其它语言的版本, 請與以下電話聯係並報出參考號碼: 01325 388949

যদি আপনার ইংরেজী ছাড়া অন্য কোন ভাষায় এই প্রকাশনাটির দরকার থাকে, তাহলে 01325 388949 নম্বরে ফোন করুন এবং সূত্র নম্বর উল্লেখ করুন।

إذا رغبتكم الحصول على هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى غير اللغة الإنجليزية نرجو الاتصال بنا على رقم الهاتف التالي: 01325 388949 مع ذكر رقم الإشارة.

Jeśli chciał(a)by Pan(i) otrzymać polską wersję językową tego dokumentu, proszę zadzwonić pod numer 01325 388949 i podać numer identyfikacyjny dokumentu.

**BRAILLE**



**LargeType**

**Details on this document will be made available on request in Braille, tape or large print.**

## Contents

page

	Executive Summary	4
<b>1</b>	Introduction	7
<b>2</b>	The way forward: Delivering the vision	11
<b>3</b>	What is the review and how have we done it?	15
<b>4</b>	Darlington's Local Area Agreement <i>'Young People – Our Future'</i>	17
<b>5</b>	Our approach to consultation and engagement	19
<b>6</b>	Vulnerable groups	23
<b>7</b>	Children and young people with additional needs	24
<b>8</b>	What we know: progress against our 7 top priorities	42
<b>9</b>	'You said, we did': what we have done about what children and young people told us	57
<b>10</b>	Taking the work forward	61
<b>11</b>	Making best use of our resources	64
	<b>Appendices:</b>	
	Appendix 1 - What we are doing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being healthy</li> <li>▪ Staying safe</li> <li>▪ Enjoying and achieving</li> <li>▪ Making a positive contribution</li> <li>▪ Achieving economic well-being</li> <li>▪ Workforce Development</li> </ul>	
	Appendix 1 – What are we doing	
	Appendix 2 – Director's Priorities Paper	
	Appendix 3 – Childcare Provision	
	Appendix 4 – Information Schedule	
	Appendix 5 – DfES Questions, answered	
	Appendix 6 - Glossary	

## **Executive Summary**

Darlington produced its first Children and Young Peoples Plan (CYPP) in 2006. The CYPP is a three-year partnership plan covering the period 2006 – 2009.

One year on a full review of the CYPP has been completed.

Darlington has three key challenges on which it wants to deliver; the first is the idea of a 'Champion for Every Child', which is about parents and carers being responsible for bring up their children and being supported in doing this. The second is to ensure that 'Every Child goes to School', if children improve their attendance at school, the frequency, intensity and duration of the difficulties they may face are reduced. Finally we have to make sure there is a 'Job or Place for Every School Leaver'.

Each of these three challenges must permeate all of the work that we do and support our vision:

*“to improve the outcomes and maximise the life chances of all children and young people in Darlington by delivering effective, high quality, integrated services”*

This review report looks specifically at the period April 2006 to March 2007 and considers what we have achieved over this period. The review also examines our existing top priorities and adds two more.

During the first year of the review we continued to consult and engage widely with our partners and stakeholders, including children and young people.

The CYPP identifies specific vulnerable groups of children. These are children with additional needs who may need services beyond those, which are provided universally. The review has re-examined the needs of these vulnerable groups, looked at the progress we have made and identified improved outcomes for this group as an additional top priority.

### **Top Priorities**

The CYPP contains seven Top Priorities: -

- Promoting positive sexual health and reducing teenage pregnancy
- Improving the provision of information, advice and guidance
- Improving the stability of children's placements
- Reducing absences and exclusion from school
- Improving academic progress for all children and young people
- Improving opportunities for the 14-19 age group
- Empowering children and young people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision-making and the delivery of services

Following the review two further top priorities have been identified: -

- Focusing on 'Narrowing the Gap'
- Improving outcomes for vulnerable groups

Over the past twelve months there have been improvements in performance in many of our services, which we will strive to maintain. There are some areas where progress is not yet evident, as timescales have not been sufficient to show impact of ongoing actions.

Achievements so far: -

- Under-18 conception data published in May 2007, giving the most recent figures for the quarter March 2006, show a continuing reduction in under-18 conception rates.
- Connexions is leading on developing a Darlington model for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) which will embrace all areas of concern for children and young people and their families. Darlington's Children's Information Service meets current national standards and has achieved the matrix quality standard for IAG services.
- In the past twelve months there has been a continued increase in performance in the stability of placements for Looked After Children (LAC), and the number of children adopted or granted special guardianship orders has exceeded our target by more than 100%.
- Although Darlington had the 7<sup>th</sup> worst absence rate in the country and until recently performance had been declining, a number of strategies, including the development of vocational options at Key Stage 4, are already showing a positive effect on the rates of absence and exclusions, which have shown a downward trend in the Autumn and Spring terms of 2006/07.
- Performance in Darlington varies across the Key Stages. Key Stage 2 performance is better than the national average. At Key Stage 4, the percentage of pupils achieving 5 A\* - C grades is around the national average. At Key Stage 5, performance is excellent, with the Borough being ranked as 11<sup>th</sup> best nationally.
- The 14-19 long-term strategic plan is being revised by partners to highlight the key activities needed to ensure a sufficiently broad and high quality range of provision is available to address the needs of all young people in Darlington.
- In the past year Darlington has launched its Youth Participation Strategy, which includes a model for Youth Involvement and a vision for youth participation.

### **Future Actions and Areas for Improvement**

- Although under-18 conceptions rates are showing a decrease, rates in Darlington are still above the national average. Work will continue to deliver the actions in the Teenage Pregnancy Action Plan and target high-risk groups and hotspot areas in order to sustain this downward trend.
- Connexions continue to build access to IAG to meet young people's specific needs, through the engagement of a range of providers and services delivered through the town centre located Connexions One Stop Shop. A strengthening of provision of IAG for older young people has been achieved through services provided in partnership with Igen, which delivers careers and personal development services to young people and adults, and with Job Centre Plus.

- The permanence planning process, which has contributed to the increase in stability for Looked After Children, will be routinely monitored to ensure delivery of improved stability outcomes for LAC.
- Strategies which have been introduced to tackle exclusion and disaffection such as the attendance strategy and the behaviour strategy will continue to be implemented. Schools will be challenged on their curriculum delivery to encourage engagement and support the development of a wider choice of vocational subjects.
- In 2006 performance at Key Stage 1 dipped and fell below the national average. Key Stage 3 results are relatively poor and progress over the last 5 years has generally not kept up with national progress. There are a number of actions planned to address this performance including the further development of the School Condition Document, the setting up of a team of school improvements officers and the Director's Commission (See Appendix 2)
- A Learner Entitlement for 14-19 year olds is being developed. This will explain what 14-19 year olds in the Borough can expect in terms of a broad and developing curriculum, personal development and challenge, information advice and guidance, support and quality assurance.
- The Voice and Action Group will be further developed and will assess key priorities for other young people. The Children's Fund is developing the promotion of participation and communication with children and young people in the younger age groups.

The review has looked at what children and young people said they wanted in the CYPP and demonstrates how service providers have responded to this (see section 9).

There is an appendix attached which lists progress on priorities against each of the five Every Child Matters outcomes (see Appendix 1).

A statement on the use of resources within agencies providing services for children and young people has been included in the review at section 11.

This review is the result of positive partnership working between many organisations, which are working together to improve the outcomes for all children and young people in Darlington.



## 1. Introduction

The Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP; the Plan) is an important element in the reform programme *Every Child Matters* and has been a powerful force in helping drive forward better local integration of Children's Services and in developing the Children's Trust partnership arrangements.

In 2006 the Local Strategic Partnership in Darlington published *Investing in Tomorrow*, the Borough's first Children and Young People's Plan. The Plan effectively demonstrated the links between the Borough's Local Area Agreement and the priorities set through management information and stakeholder consultation. The Plan highlighted 7 broad areas, where it was clear from the evidence (data and consultation), that were priorities for action. The priorities covered:

- Promoting positive sexual health and reducing teenage pregnancy
- Improving the provision of information, advice and guidance
- Improving the stability of children's placements
- Reducing absences and exclusion from schools
- Improving academic progress for all children and young people
- Improving opportunities for the 14-19 age group
- Empowering children and young people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision making and the delivery of services

A year after the production of the first Plan the local authority has led a review, with partners. The review reflects the changing Community Strategy priorities<sup>1</sup> and also reflects the fact that the Children's Services team has undergone a significant change in approach following the appointment of a new strategic leadership team. This review has been completed with reference to the revised national guidance, with reference to changing local needs and with a particular view to ensuring that strong links are made between school attainment and improving outcomes for children, especially improving outcomes for vulnerable children.

As a result of the review, in addition to the 7 areas mentioned above, Darlington has identified 2 further top level priorities,

- Focusing on 'Narrowing the Gap'
- Improving outcomes for vulnerable groups, particularly addressing cross-cutting issues e.g. bullying

Darlington is the third smallest unitary authority and one of the poorest funded through national formulae. It is ranked as the 90<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority (having previously been 88<sup>th</sup>) and therefore just misses out on the key funds allocated to areas of significant deprivation. However, 9 super output areas across 6 wards in the Borough are in the most deprived 10% nationally, and this raises challenges for the local authority and its partners. In addition, Darlington has a growing population of migrant workers

---

<sup>1</sup> Six Enquiry Groups are currently investigating six priority issues for Darlington; their high level ideas will be developed as key priorities for the new Sustainable Community Strategy.

and their families and has a Traveller community, which is 9 times the national average size. Having maintained school numbers for a number of years when elsewhere in the region numbers were falling, pupil numbers are now rising.

There is significant variation in performance and in indicators of well-being between different areas within the Borough. For example, ward level data for 2004 showed that youth unemployment varied between 1% and 34%. In one ward, 90% of children lived in low-income households and in another it was 14%. Overall, 8 out of the 24 wards had more than a third of their children living in workless households and 25% of children in total in the Borough lived in workless households. It is pleasing to note that this picture is changing as new jobs are attracted to the Borough and as we exceed our targets for delivering welfare benefits. In parts of the Borough there used to be a lack of positive peer role modeling around aspiration and ambition because in some wards there were very few, if any, successful university applications and between a quarter and a third of adults lacked basic skills. Our performance in getting young people to apply to university and to be accepted is excellent, with steady increases over the last 2 years.

Information provided by the Primary Care Trust notes high levels of childhood obesity (as measured in Year 6) at 20% (measured in 2005/06, the information for 2006/07 not yet available).

Darlington has one of lowest average weekly wage rates in County Durham and Tees Valley (earning on average £81 per week less than the national average) and unemployment rates are consistently higher (>2.5%) than the national average (2005).

It is clear from this contextual data that Darlington faces some significant challenges. It is important, therefore, having set a context to show how the improvements will be made in the Borough. Darlington is a small authority and is using its size as a strength. The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) is a well-regarded example of partnership working and has led the delivery of the Local Area Agreement, which focused on children and young people. There is widespread partner engagement and well-developed tools for self-assessment, analysis and improvement.

There are 11 target wards in the Borough, which represent the most deprived parts of the local authority area, and these have been made the focus of a Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy designed to narrow the gap between the most deprived communities and the rest of the Borough. Targets have been set for improvement in key indicators for each of these and good progress is being made. These targets include those around achievements at different Key Stages. In April 2007 the performance management report showed that good progress had been made at Key Stage 2 in all target wards and good progress had been made in Key Stage 3 Maths. At Key Stage 4, the percentage of pupils achieving 5 A\*-C grades at GCSE improved in all of the priority wards.

The Children's Trust arrangements are also becoming an agent of change. The Trust operates as a sub-group of the LSP and is able to tackle significant multi-agency issues and share expertise and practice. The Trust is able to consider cross-cutting, themed reports, as well as monitoring the action plans included in the Children and Young People's Plan.



The function of a Children and Young People's Plan is to be a vehicle that ensures there is a shared vision across agencies and that this shared vision is delivered in such a way that it leads to improved outcomes for all. This is a lot to ask of a plan and there is a risk that the plan is so inclusive and wide-ranging that it becomes too wordy and stops being a delivery vehicle. However, in Darlington we want to have a plan that is in tune with, and connected to, all agencies and partners and one that is a practical tool.

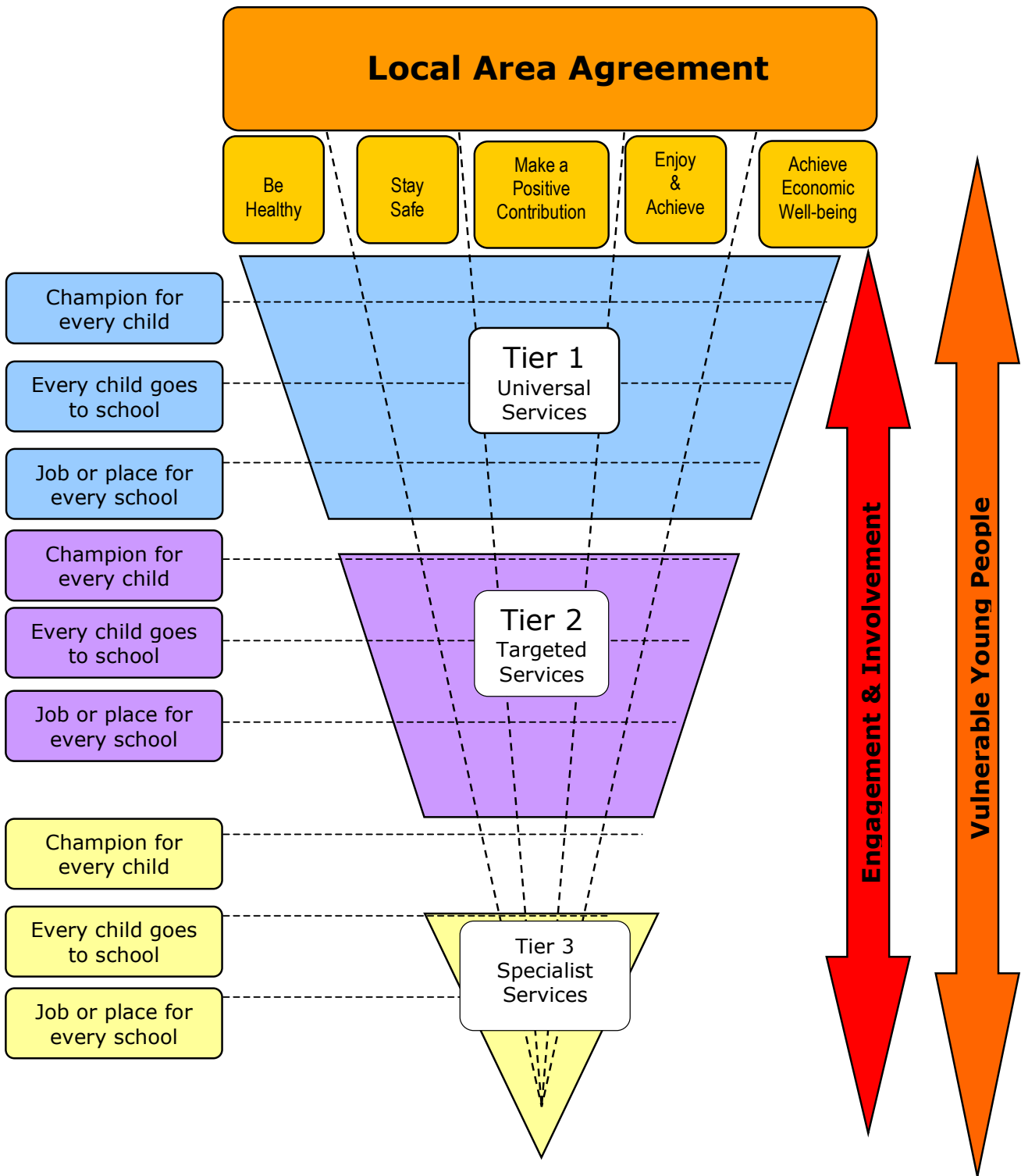
The diagrammatic representation, below, shows how the structure of the Children and Young People's Plan in Darlington has been framed. The starting point is the Local Area Agreement, informing all planning around priority activity at each of the 3 tiers of need (universal, targeted and specialist). Each of the 5 Every Child Matters outcomes is included in each of tiers. Darlington has adopted 3 key themes in the review of the plan and they are expanded later in the paper in Appendix 2. The 3 themes are described as *A Champion for Every Child*, *Every Child Goes to School*, and *A Job or Place for Every School Leaver*. These themes apply to all 3 tiers and across each of the 5 outcomes.

Throughout our work we must also ensure that children, young people, families and communities are involved and engaged in service design and this is represented by the arrow running throughout the diagram (our approach to consultation is set out in section 4).

One of the 'products' in the Local Area Agreement is the development of Locality Working. Based on the same five locality areas as 'Street Scene', this approach will enable teams of professionals from different disciplines to work together in a more joined up way, supported by common systems, shared information and, for some teams, co-location. By organising and focusing the relationships between different agencies, children, young people, their families and the wider community, Locality Working will substantially improve innovation capability and allow earlier intervention to achieve better outcomes for children and young people. Consequently, it will provide a sustainable and effective way of meeting many of the Local Authority's responsibilities under the Children Act 2006 and act as a delivery platform for the actions in this Children and Young People's Plan.

Darlington partners have also identified a number of vulnerable groups – children and young people who are at increased risk. These must be a focus for activity through the key themes and in each of the outcome areas in each tier. These groups are described in section 5.

Finally, the review contains much of the key data and strategy that governs our work but the review must also be read in conjunction with the suite of plans and information schedule attached to it.



## **2. The way forward: Delivering the vision**

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. The published vision is:

*To improve the outcomes and maximise the life chances of all children and young people in Darlington by delivering effective, high quality, integrated services.*

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. The vision contains three distinct requirements – delivering services, which are effective, delivering services, which are of a high quality and moving towards more integration of services.

A strategy paper has been produced which sets out high level priorities for action in Darlington Children's Services over the next 3 years. The strategy builds upon the agreed priorities already established through the Local Area Agreement and the Children and Young People's Plan. What it adds is a delivery framework and a framework to promote sustainable improvements taking account of a number of key issues: -

- National picture – understanding the distinct roles of schools and the local authority
- Delivering effective services
- Getting local authority and school relations right
- Communication and consultation
- Collaboration
- Framework for monitoring, support, challenge and intervention
- Responsibility for the individual child
- The role of schools
- Support for schools
- School improvement and Every Child Matters

Ultimately, our work must be about promoting success for all and in doing so we use the 5 Every Child Matters outcomes as reference points for action. However, this strategy describes a framework for delivering success for all and for promoting the 5 outcomes, which makes reference to a small number of propositions, which act as proxy indicators of progress against all 5 outcomes.

The implementation of this strategy will align the school standards agenda firmly with the Every Child Matters agenda and will lead to improvements in all 5 outcomes. The work done by schools to raise standards will be supported by wider efforts to intervene with children, families and communities where there is disadvantage.

The document, the Director's Priorities Paper, was developed with schools and other stakeholders over a 4-month period and is attached as Appendix 2.

## Re-framing the vision

It is important to recognise the implications of the agenda set by Every Child Matters. There is a challenge in ensuring that all children benefit from the provision made, that all are kept safe, that all achieve their potential and so on. Schools and the local authority need to work together to keep the child at the centre, ensuring that individual needs are met by:

- joint working across all agencies serving a school community;
- working with the wider community to ensure that children are safe;
- advocacy;
- admissions;
- SEN; and
- complex needs

There are three challenges faced by schools and services in Darlington. If these can be met, then it is more likely that children and young people will achieve their potential and that success will be delivered for all.

Schools now have a duty to co-operate with other agencies to promote the well-being of children and young people. This duty carries with it responsibilities for schools to understand and operate the developing framework for promoting well-being, such as the Safeguarding Board, ContactPoint and the Common Assessment Framework. This is a good starting point to describe the first key challenge in Darlington – the idea of *A Champion for Every Child*. First and foremost this is about saying that parents and carers are responsible for bringing up their children and that they should be supported in doing this.

In some cases this support is delivered at a universal level, through the provision of high quality maternity care and the provision of child care places, through a choice of schools being available and the prompt payment of benefits. There will be times, however, when parents require some targeted support or intervention. It may be that parents will require additional anti-natal support. For other parents it might be during the 'terrible twos' or during the equally terrible teenage years. It is about keeping families together, with the skills necessary to bring up children safely, and it is not about blaming parents.

The identification that some children or young people are causing concerns will only happen if all adults who come in to contact with children and families understand that they have a monitoring role to play in assessing how well parents are coping and how well children are developing. At some point, virtually every parent places the well-being of their child in the hands of other adults – whether with child minders, nurseries, schools or youth groups. Every one of these adults working with children and young people must champion them when they need help. The ongoing integration of services provided by the Authority and its partners will improve the well-being of children and young people through the promotion of welfare, safeguarding, early intervention and preventative action.

If someone sees a child having a difficulty, they will do something about it. That is the role of Early Years workers, of class teachers, of subject teachers, of Personal Advisers. Those staff are fulfilling roles that are better described now in the core competencies for the children's workforce and the recently developed joint statement of principles agreed by the General Teaching Council, the General Social Care Council and the Nursing and Midwifery Council. It is about putting the child or young person at the centre of the work we do. It is about preventing failure. If a child hasn't eaten school dinners for two days or if they squint from the back of the class, if they are alone in the playground or if they have not achieved the predicted grades, we do something about it. It might be the class teacher, the SENCO, the Head Teacher or a support worker but we do something about it. Outside of schools, the same rules apply to child minders, to Health Visitors, to Youth Workers and so on. Parents welcome the knowledge that when they hand their children over to professionals, they know that the professionals will champion the child or young person as if they were their own and will not knowingly tolerate failure to thrive.

Services such as health visitors, social workers and youth offending staff may all have to intervene to protect and safeguard children and young people and this may not always be with parental support but is a role that a responsible and responsive system requires. This is specialist work and only applies to a very small minority of children and young people each year but it might be an even smaller number each year if the targeted preventative services are working effectively.

To fulfil this it means that everyone needs to know about the Every Child Matters agenda. Staff need to track and record progress and they need to know how and when to share information if they think that a child or young person requires additional support. Staff must be trained in using the Common Assessment Framework and the ContactPoint system must be made to work.

The second challenge is to make sure that *Every Child Goes To School*. This is the best proxy indicator to determine the success of interventions and to measure the likely outcomes for children and young people. Data in Darlington tells the story that many families have a limited expectation of ensuring that their children attend school regularly and that absenteeism rates are higher than expected amongst 5 year olds (twice the rate of primary absenteeism in the Borough). Attendance improves through the subsequent primary school years but we must address the issue of school absenteeism in such young children.

National evidence already tells us why some children may stay away from school. Reasons include bullying, inappropriate curriculum, caring for sick relatives, witnessing domestic violence, abuse, sexual exploitation, exclusion or because they have a mental health need. If children improve their attendance at school then they have reduced the frequency, intensity or duration of the difficulties they face.

This aspect is obviously linked to the notion of *A Champion For Every Child*. If services are designed to prevent the development of concerns, or act promptly to intervene as soon as a concern is recorded, then we are likely to improve attendance. The joint Treasury and DfES report '*Aiming high for children: supporting families*' makes clear the detrimental impact of family, health and social problems on future school attendance.

What is clear from all research findings is that tackling attendance concerns is not simply a school issue. Whilst schools can and do make a difference, and make the biggest difference where they exercise their responsibility to not accept failure and challenge the poverty of ambition, the complex needs of some children and families makes it essential that services work together.

The final challenge is try to make sure that there is *A Job Or A Place For Every School Leaver* – ensuring that every 16-18 year old is in education, employment or training. In order to get every school leaver into a job, education or training means they have to be safe from harm, literate and numerate to the best of their ability, in their best possible health, they have to be socially skilled, free from offending and drugs, they must have recognised and accredited qualifications, they must be emotionally intelligent and with some sense of ambition and aspiration.

This aspect is the culmination of the *champion* and *attendance* issues. Transition into adulthood needs to be positive. All transitions can be points of potential failure and the transition to adulthood is no different. The development of targeted youth support teams is very clearly about multi-agency teams using information sharing to identify vulnerable young people and then putting schemes in place to ensure that they are supported. For some young people, their needs are so complex, even if they are temporary, that no single agency is configured to meet their needs and so services have to be designed around the service user.

Each of these three key challenges must permeate the work of services. This means that they become a feature of work at each of the 3 tiers of provision and for particularly for each of the groups identified as being vulnerable.

### **Taking the work forward – Director’s Commissions**

Each commission has an independent chairperson, drawn from the local community. Each Commission has a responsible Assistant Director who ensures that the commission delivers to timescale. The Assistant Director can draw upon any staff in Children’s Services to ensure that the work is completed and may invite representatives from other organisations to sit on the commission. Each Commission will produce a final report within 6 months of inauguration.

There are two immediate tasks into which resources must be put and which will be the subject of Director’s Commissions.

The first of these will be a focus on school attendance. It is important to understand why Darlington is a bottom 10 performing authority and take measures to tackle the underlying problems. The Chairperson for the Commission on Attendance will be Steven Robinson, the Managing Director of Capita in the region.

The second area is the transition from primary school to secondary school and the dip in pupil performance in some parts of the Borough. It is important to know what more can be done to support transfer to ensure that Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 value added is as high as possible. The Chairperson for the Commission on Transition/Standards will be David Heaton OBE, the retiring Principal of Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College.

### **3. What is the review and how have we done it?**

There is a statutory framework governing the review of the Children and Young People's Plan. The Children and Young People's Plan (England) regulations 2005 state:

*'The authority shall review their plan in each year in which the authority is not required to publish a plan;  
During the conduct of such a review the authority shall consult persons, as they consider appropriate;  
The authority shall publish the result of the review in such manner as they consider appropriate.'*

Darlington's CYPP covers the period 2006-2009. Reviewing the Plan is a continuous process, linked to the Local Area Agreement and the Children's Trust, and it is constantly updated as priorities change and actions are completed. There are a number of aims of the review and these are set out in the table below together with how they have been addressed.



<b>Aim of our CYPP Review</b>	<b>What we have done / are doing and where you will find it in this document</b>
Ensure that the CYPP is consistent with and has informed the Local Area Agreement process	Darlington's LAA ' <i>Young People – Our Future</i> ' is specifically about improving the lives of children and young people in Darlington.
Include background information to demonstrate the extent and range of partnership involvement in the review, and the ways in which the views of children, young people, families and carers have been sought and taken into account	Read about our consultation and engagement process in section 4.
Measure progress against priorities and milestones	The sections headed 'What we are doing' cover each of the ECM outcomes in turn (Appendix 1) Progress against our 7 top priorities for action in the CYPP is shown in section 7. 'You said we did' (section 8) explains what children and young people told us they needed and what we have done about it. Detailed performance data can be found in Appendix 5.
Take account of new circumstances and maintain the momentum for change; and demonstrate how we are challenging and supporting all of our schools to improve education standards including how standards can be improved through delivery of wider ECM outcomes	We and engagement and engagement talk about our future strategy 'Delivering the vision' and this is explained further in the Director's Priorities Paper (Appendix 2).
Draw on a wide range of information and data available to local partners	See Appendix 1
Consider the series of questions included in the Department for Education and Skills guidance for reviewing the CYPP	We have addressed each question in turn (see Appendix 5)
CYPP review and revision to be comply with Equalities legislation and ensure the Plan is accessible to all	Equalities Impact Assessment completed and Plan/Summary available in different formats [IS19]

#### **4. Darlington's Local Area Agreement 'Young People – Our Future'**

A Local Area Agreement (LAA) is a three-year agreement that sets out the priorities for an area and is agreed with central government. The primary objective is to deliver better outcomes for local people by strengthening partnership working and changing the way that some government funding is paid into an area, to enhance efficiency and allow a clearer focus on local priorities. Success in reaching challenging 'stretch' targets will be rewarded with extra grant funding from central government.

In Darlington, the LAA was developed through Darlington Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership), other public services, the voluntary and community sector and private businesses. The projected funding available to the LAA is a pooled budget of £8.4m over the period 2006-2009 and is a combination of new and existing aligned funding.

Darlington's LAA was signed in March 2006 and is specifically about improving the lives of young people in Darlington. This reflects the priority given to children's services locally. The LAA commits the Council and its partners to use funding in innovative ways to improve the lives of children and young people and, in turn, benefit the whole community. Over the three year period 2006-2009 Darlington's LAA will focus on:

- Improving educational opportunities for children and young people to give them the best start in adult life
- Reducing crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Improving the health of children and young people
- Ensuring all public and voluntary services in Darlington can work together to benefit young people, families and the community
- Creating a way of improving services that can be applied to other areas of the Council's work

By the end of September 2006 considerable progress had been made in the implementation of the Local Area Agreement:

- Effective planning of the whole programme, projects and products had been completed
- Stronger partnership working arrangements were in place and contributing to the delivery of the process
- Governance arrangements had been strengthened with monthly Steering Group meetings including financial and performance reporting in place
- The use of highlight reporting, monitoring and review ensures the links between performance and activity are being made

After the first six months, products are starting to make a difference on the ground and this will be monitored against key milestones; overall the programme is on track. It was important that process changes were delivered first, with the expectation that outcomes will be improved subsequently.

Early priorities were about creating the correct governance arrangements and setting out effective programme and project management. These goals have been achieved and the benefits of careful planning are starting to be seen. Schemes are coming into full implementation and delivering against the agreed outcomes. This first interim performance appraisal was positive with promising prospects for continued improvement. The full first six-month review is attached in the information schedule (see IS3a).

## **5. Our approach to consultation and engagement**

The first Children and Young People's Plan was produced after widespread consultation with children, young people and partners. Consultation has continued over the past year and will continue throughout the life of the Plan. Consultation has also informed the current review and there is symbolic representation of partners' ownership of the review through the logos on the cover.

As the Plan matures it has moved a step closer towards turning consultation into engagement, within the framework agreed in the Community Strategy [IS1]. The appointment of Locality Co-ordinators has provided a capacity previously unavailable and the bringing in-house of the Connexions Service has also given scope for development, through targeted youth support. However, the best measure to promote active engagement in service review and design is by having it as a focus of Children's Trust activity. The Children's Trust arrangements in Darlington include the Trust being formally established as a themed group within the Local Strategic Partnership, with high level representation from all partners and a dedicated secretariat. Darlington piloted a Children's Trust with a focus on disabled children and young people and at the end of the pilot this work merged with the newly formed Trust.

The progress of the Plan is reported regularly to the Children's Trust, with formal performance reports being made to the Children's Trust twice yearly. There are youth representatives on the Children's Trust, which enable young people to have a voice at this strategic level.

In addition, the four sub-groups of the Children's Trust, the Safeguarding Board which are aligned to the ECM outcomes, all held development days in the second half of the year, to review priorities and progress during the year, the results of which have informed this review. The four sub-groups of the Children's Trust meet approximately six times a year. Their membership reflects the involvement of a significant variety of agencies and groups working with children and young people. There is representation from young people and parents within these sub-groups and this will be extended.

In May 2007 two large-scale consultation events took place. Both fulfilled symbolic roles in demonstrating partnership as well as gathering significant data to inform the Plan's review. The first event was the 'Children and Young People's Plan Review 2007 – Next Steps Conference'. This involved the Children's Trust and all partner agencies involved with providing services for children and their families in Darlington. This event looked at a draft review document and gave participants further opportunity to contribute to the final report. The event also symbolised the collective ownership of the Plan.

The second 'event' was the distribution, to all 43,000 Darlington households and to all businesses, of a statement about the Plan and its review, giving everyone an opportunity to comment on it. This raised the profile of the Plan and of the priorities established in the Borough.

In order to make best use of resources, links to the voluntary sector in Darlington exist via the Children and Young People's Network. The Parents' Forum, which consists of

over 80 parents of disabled children, fed their views into the original plan, and representations from the forum contributed to the review. Parents and carers involved in the Play Network were consulted about the new focus of the Children and Young People's Plan around the three strands - *A Champion for Every Child, Every Child Goes to School, A Job or Place for Every School Leaver*.

The basic principle that children and young people will be actively encouraged to become involved has been adopted in Darlington. A three-tier strategy for involvement is used. This is described in the Youth Participation Strategy, delivery of which has been undertaken over the past year.

There has been ongoing consultation taking place with young people over the last twelve months. These consultations have varied from specific pieces of work such as the consultation with young people about town centre development and the YOYO event around the Youth Offer (see Case Study below). Extensive consultation events have been carried out on a localised basis to enable young people to influence the activities or services on offer in their locale e.g. Harrowgate Hill, Lascelles and Middleton St George. A consultation exercise was also carried out by the Voice and Action Group to identify the concerns of young people in Darlington.

As part of the development of parks, open spaces and play areas, young people have been heavily involved in the consultation process to agree what is required, in particular the projects to date - North Park, Eastbourne Park/Lascelles Open Space, the Denes, Pensbury Street and further work planned for other projects, including Red Hall, Skerne Park, Branksome, Beech Wood and general play area improvements.

Looked After Children have been involved in making a film, which is used; in training events for social care staff and they are also involved in developing quality assurance procedures for residential homes.

The PCT facilitates the Young Peoples Health Group via Investing in Children. The group reports to the PCT Board. The group carries out project work and consults with other children and young people to inform service development. The Voice in Action Group, part of the Youth Participation Strategy, is developing work with the Young People's Health Group and other similar established youth engagement groups in the town to ensure that voices of all young people in Darlington are heard by the Children's Trust across all services. Services are innovative in their use of technology to seek engagement, and software called Mi voice is being used to allow young people to give their opinions by text or the Internet.

There is a recognition that direct consultation with the under 11s and some vulnerable groups needs to be further improved and this is now a priority.

Our schools have active school councils and we are developing ways to bring these bodies together.

## Case study: The Youth Opportunity Fund

Through the partnership delivery model and building upon the work of the Youth Service across the Borough we have been able to target disadvantaged and hard to reach young people at all levels in Darlington. The Partnership has also been able to encourage successful applications from more marginalised groups of young people (for example, young carers, young people at risk of school exclusion, young people in 'priority' wards). In the second year of the Fund, the Partnership plans to extend this reach further and stimulate successful bids from more vulnerable groups. The Youth Board was trained to assess and award funds and prioritised applications that were submitted from these groups. Within this process, the Board was given some definitions of hard to reach and disadvantaged groups, and was given descriptions of project applications that met the definition.

Youth Board members have fed back a number of key points, which will affect service design. Board members liked the idea of the Youth Board and that the Funds are youth-led and this strongly signalled to them that they were important. They asked to increase the frequency of meetings so that members remain interested, that there should be more activities for them as a Board, and that sometimes there is a lack of information about meetings. They have indicated that the application form and process needs to be made simpler.

Crucially they indicated that they felt they still needed more input and control and this is also being addressed. They have indicated a willingness and desire to visit projects 'to see how they are going' and this is seen as a crucial part of the Board's function in Year 2.

An additional function and role of the Youth Board has been to begin developing their own methods of evaluation which will include them visiting projects and writing case studies. The Youth Board at each assessment round has looked at the applications coming in and made decisions on how these applications have demonstrated their ability to evaluate and meet the measured criteria for the fund. From this initial assessment the Board has also contacted projects to provide more detailed information prior to agreeing to allocate the funds and has also been involved in follow up evaluation visits and meetings with grant recipients.

Youth Board members have also played an active role within the scrutiny process following the assessment rounds with Directors and staff from Darlington Borough Council.

The authority has consulted with all the required partners. Each of these partners was sent a draft copy of the review to allow them to comment on its contents. A draft of the review was also sent to Government Office for comment.

A multi-agency reference group drawn from the Children's Trust partners produced this review of the Plan.



## 6. Vulnerable groups

The Children and Young People's Plan is the key strategic plan for enabling all children and young people to achieve their potential. The lives of many children and young people have improved as a result of increased investment in Children's Services. Nationally, there has been a 33% increase in the number of students attaining GCSEs at A\*-C since 1997. Per pupil funding for schools has doubled over the same period.

In spite of the rising attainment levels at a national level, there is now considerable evidence that not all groups in society have shared in the same improvement. The Feinstein and Sabates 2007 report '*The prevalence of multiple deprivation for children in the UK: Analysis of the Millennium Cohort and Longitudinal Survey of Young People in England*', commissioned by the Treasury and the DfES, identified the link between multiple problems in the family and the increased likelihood of truancy and school exclusion. The family problems the report identified included mental health problems, domestic violence, learning difficulties, physical disability and teenage parenthood.

Nationally, the current intervention strategies are not breaking the cycle of deprivation and difficulty that lead to limited life chances for the most deprived children and young people. The report also noted that if a child was vulnerable at birth, starting school, transition or leaving school, then they had a good chance of still being vulnerable at the next age / stage.

The data analysis in Darlington confirms most of the national trends in '*Aiming Higher for Children: supporting families 2007*', the Treasury / DfES report which summarised all of the commissioned work. An analysis of the attainment levels of the children living in the very poorest parts of Darlington show that they have not benefited from the increased standards locally over the last 5 years to the same extent as other children and young people. It is pleasing that most of our performance indicators in the target wards are moving in the right direction but more needs to be done to improve the outcomes for groups of children and young people still currently under performing. In Darlington the following under-performing vulnerable groups have been identified, with identification stemming from data analysis and from consultation:

- Disabled children and young people
- Looked After Children
- Black and Minority Ethnic groups, including Travellers
- Young carers
- Children living in the most deprived Super Output Areas
- Young offenders
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender young people
- Children and young people educated other than at school

## **7. Children and Young People with Additional Needs**

Darlington's model of need consists of a three-tier delivery framework of Tier One – Universal Services, Tier Two – Targeted Services and Tier Three - Specialist Services.

This model of need seeks to ensure that the appropriate services are available to all who need them and that it addresses issues of equality in delivering all its services.

The level of need of individuals may vary over their lifetime and this applies to children and young people as well. While the majority of children and young people will not require additional services to those provided universally, there may be points in their life where their needs change and they require more specialist or targeted services. For example, young people who become pregnant or involved in the Youth Justice System will require extra support, but this may be temporary according to their circumstances. Other children and young people, for example, those with significant impairments, may need specialist/targeted support throughout their lives.

### **7.1 Disabled children and young people**

Disabled children and young people in Darlington are recognised as a vulnerable group who may require specialist and targeted provision in addition to the universal provision of services, available to all children and young people in Darlington. There is an increasing number of disabled children with complex health needs who are likely to draw more heavily on services.

Disabled children and young people are vulnerable for several reasons including: -

- Being particularly vulnerable to bullying and discrimination
- Often meeting social and access barriers in accessing sports, leisure and recreational facilities
- Having increased likelihood of living in low income households where parental working opportunities are limited by their caring role
- Often finding their impairment is a barrier to accessing further education training and employment.

### **What Darlington is doing for disabled children and young people**

Agencies have always worked together through robust partnership arrangements to deliver services to disabled children and young people in Darlington. Further development of an integrated approach to service delivery remains a priority. An Integrated Services Manager for disabled Children has recently been appointed and this will further the integration of service delivery. In addition, a joint management post between the local authority and the PCT has been established to lead on Commissioning.

The development of Harewood House (a multi-agency point of delivery of services for disabled children) as a hub to provide inclusive and accessible services for disabled

children and their families is ongoing. The sensory centre has recently been refurbished. The site of co-located service provision has been designated as a virtual Children's Centre.

Eligibility Criteria supported by the Parent's Forum has been introduced and there has been an increase in the number of disabled youngsters using the short-break care service and of those accessing support through the Direct Payment Scheme.

An early years support key worker system across all agencies has been established and plans are being developed to roll out key worker/lead worker provision to all disabled children and young people.

Existing reviewing mechanisms have been evaluated and a more robust child centred system has been implemented in consultation with parents and young people.

Darlington will be participating in a Department of Health Continuing Care decision-making tool pilot and is working to establish protocols across all agencies/services for continuing care requirements for children with complex needs.

Training opportunities have been provided across all services/agencies and further work is being carried out on implementing comprehensive core training in line with the workforce development strategy.

An SEN/LD transitions group has been formed to embed a comprehensive transition strategy for disabled children across all agencies/services. An Education Psychologist has been identified as the Transitions Champion.

A needs-led assessment process for social care has been implemented and shared language information systems and a common assessment process is being developed.

The Inclusive Opportunities Fund, which is a pooled budget with funding from Children's Services, Primary Care Trust and the Children's Fund, has continued to offer access to leisure opportunities for disabled children. This funding opportunity is actively promoted.

There has been an increase in both the number of children accessing a direct payment (April 2006 - 15, April 2007 - 23) and in the number of children accessing a service from the social care team (April 2006 - 90, April 2007 - 142).

The following have also been identified as priority areas for disabled children and young people, and action plans will be developed to progress these priorities: -

- Sign up to the Every Disabled Child Matters campaign
- Develop a disabled children's sub-group to lead on issues affecting disabled children and young people
- Work towards the Kids Inclusion Framework for Local Authorities
- Re-establish a welfare rights service for parents and carers of disabled children to ensure they receive timely, sensitive and appropriate advice which is easily accessed

- Develop a joint Autism strategy / framework
- Ensure that disabled children and young people are fully included in the Youth Participation Strategy

Darlington Borough Council along with its partners will consider the content of any proposed 'Core Offer' for disabled children in their local planning and provision of services.

### **Children and young people with Special Educational Needs [see IS11]**

Darlington Children's Services has committed itself to raise the achievements of all pupils within increasingly inclusive educational settings, thus complementing the Government's programme of action, which encourages the development of more inclusive practices in all schools.

Children and young people who have special educational needs do not necessarily have a disability and not all disabled children and young people have special educational needs. Individual assessment will be needed to determine needs.

Darlington's inclusion strategy is underpinned by the following key principles:

- **Valuing Diversity:** Children present a rich and diverse range of strengths and needs. Inclusion is most likely to be achieved when this diversity is recognised and regarded positively.
- **Entitlement:** Children are entitled to receive, with a suitable peer group, a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Wherever possible, this should be in a mainstream school, recognising that appropriate support, advice and resources may be necessary to achieve this. Parents and young people are entitled to express a preference for where that education should take place.
- **Dignity:** All children and their parents are entitled to be treated with respect and to have their views taken into account. All arrangements should protect and enhance the dignity of those involved.
- **Individual Needs:** The development of inclusive practice should not create situations within which the individual needs of children are left unmet. A range of flexible responses should be available to meet such needs and to accommodate their diversity.
- **Planning:** All educational and inter-agency planning should be based on inclusive principles. Inclusion requires ongoing strategic planning at both system and individual pupil level. Considerable effort is needed to overcome the barriers to such inclusion that exist.
- **Collective Responsibility:** The principle of inclusion extends into society as a whole - within schools, local authorities and government departments. It should therefore

be an issue for **all** staff rather than the exclusive responsibility of a particular group of individuals.

- **Professional Development:** Inclusion requires both extension of the application of existing skills and the development of new ones. All staff will need to feel supported through this process and have access to range of advice and resources.
- **Equal Opportunities:** There is a potential tension between an emphasis on those 'standards', which lead to a placement in a hierarchy, and the pursuit of inclusion. Whilst the two are not incompatible, it is essential that the tension is recognised and that account is taken of all pupils' needs in planning educational development.

The following table shows the number of children and young people by primary need at School Action Plus and Statements of SEN (Source - PLASC January 2007).

Primary Need	School Action (Primary Need not recorded)	School Action Plus	Statement of SEN
Cognition and Learning		322	200
Behaviour, Emotional and Social Development (BESD)		203	93
Communication and Interaction		218	161
Sensory/Physical Needs		54	34
Other		22	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1286</b>	<b>819</b>	<b>488</b>

**Current priorities for the SEN Inclusion Service are:**

**Revision of 'Planning, Provision and Review Guidance for Schools'**

This guidance was first made available to schools in November 2004. The document was revised and expanded after consultation with special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs). A separate file is being developed for Early Years settings and practitioners. The updated file will be in all schools by September 2007.

**Consultation on the further delegation of SEN resources to schools without recourse to a statement of Special Educational Need**

There is general agreement that early intervention for children who experience barriers to their learning is an essential element in the resolution of difficulties and in ensuring progress is made. Schools clearly need resources to be available in order to respond flexibly as needs arise.

### **The development of new ways to increase the involvement of parents, carers, children and young people in the assessment, planning and review of individual educational arrangements**

The manager of the Parent Partnership Service is developing a closer working relationship with the Parent Forum facilitated by Darlington Association on Disability (DAD).

Information is collected about parent and carer attendance at statutory annual reviews of statements of SEN, and work with others is underway to increase attendance rates and help parents take a full part in the process.

A Children's Fund project involving Parent Partnership and the Educational Psychology Service (EPS), both based in the Education Village, is helping young people report on their own progress and plan next steps. This will lead to better transition planning at 14. The work involves others from Children's Services and colleagues from Adult Social Care. The next step is to provide training and development opportunities in Person Centred Planning.

### **The development of transition guidance for schools, settings, parents/carers and children**

The Children's Fund has provided resources in order for the Parent Partnership Service to work in association with the EPS to carry out Action Research project on Year 6/7 transition. The Pathfinder Children's Trust also provided funds for an evaluation of the Early Support Programme.

Both of these projects have led to a decision to develop guidance for schools, parents/carers, children and other agencies on transition which focuses on ways to build resilience in children so they can develop strategies which will help them cope with times of change in their lives.

### **Planning and delivery of Inclusion Training for schools**

The SEN Monitoring and Evaluation team regularly audit training needs in schools and these are used for planning the focus of general and bespoke training.

Piloting an online INSET training system using in-house tutors is currently being considered. Courses are available in Autism Spectrum Disorder, Speech, Language and Communication Needs and Behaviour, Emotional and Social Development.

### **Develop the use of costed provision mapping**

The SEN Inclusion Monitoring and Evaluation Team has developed a self evaluation document for schools *'The Standards Document'*, produced data on the progress of children with SEN (giving comparisons with schools across Darlington and Stockton as well as against national data) and is currently working on ways of helping schools track and monitor how they use resources for SEN within their school through the production

of electronic costed provision maps. It is hoped that some good examples of innovative practice will come to light when this data is collected. Darlington's finance section and the finance section from Stockton have been involved in the development and piloting of costed provision maps.

### **Further develop systems for monitoring outcomes of special provision**

A system is in place for monitoring outcomes for children and young people in the resource bases for Autism Spectrum Disorder, Speech, Language and Communication Needs and Complex Learning Needs. This has been further developed to provide consistency across settings and improve the transparency of the information so parents can be better informed.

The SEN dataset, prepared by the performance team, is taken out to schools by the SEN Monitoring Team so that they can have conversations with schools about the interpretation of the data and how to use the information to plan intervention and provision. Conversations are also taking place with schools to help them more effectively evaluate any interventions they put in place.

### **Review provision within the context of the ongoing audit of needs**

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) - Increasing numbers of children are being given a diagnosis of ASD and schools are expressing concern about their capacity to meet the needs of this group. Darlington has an Outreach Service, which is developing practice, and there is resourced provision at both primary and secondary level. The secondary provision is at Hurworth School and is slowly building capacity with the expectation that 12 places will be filled there by 2009. This allows for 2 or 3 young people to be placed in each year group. All ASD provision needs to be kept under review to look at ways of developing capacity in all mainstream schools. Consideration will be given to removing the need for children and young people to have a statement of SEN to access the resourced provision.

Cognition and Learning (CL) – Successful Key Stage 2 provision is available at Heathfield School. This is being extended to Key Stage 1 and the notion that children can access this provision without a statement of SEN is being considered.

### **Build capacity in schools for developing emotional well-being and positive ways of changing behaviour**

The capacity of mainstream schools to develop emotional well-being, intervene early and respond in a positive way to concerns about challenging behaviour is being increased. Two to four schools at a time will be worked with intensively using solution oriented frameworks to develop staff skills and nurturing environments. The EPS and Behaviour Support Service will work together with additional staff to carry out this work.



**Support and challenge schools regarding response to DDA. This would include access planning and Disability Equality Schemes.**

The local authority access strategy has been revised and this provides guidance for schools and a template for plans to comply with the Disability Discrimination Act. The strategy shows the adaptations needed to provide 'basic' or 'universal', 'enhanced' and 'enhanced plus' levels of access to the curriculum, building, information and trained staff for a range of disabilities. The SEN Monitoring Team and Information and Systems Manager monitor Accessibility Ratings and draw up an overview document.

## **7.2 Looked After Children**

Darlington sees its Looked After Children (LAC) as a priority not only in terms of the stability of their placements, which is one of our top priorities, but also in terms of every one of the ECM outcomes.

Darlington in April 2007 looked after 139 children and young people. However there are, in addition to this, living in Darlington, 90 Looked After Children who have been placed here by other authorities who still receive services in Darlington from, for example, the LAC health coordinator and schools.

In addition to the evidence presented against our top priorities in section 7, it is worth noting that:

- Darlington PCT employs a full-time health coordinator for LAC.
- By March 2007, 93% of LAC had an annual health assessment and their teeth checked by a dentist. This is an increase on the previous year. There are several initiatives taking place to ensure that LAC remain healthy.
- A new permanence planning process has been introduced in Darlington, which has seen an increase in the stability of LAC. There has also been a doubling in the number of children adopted or granted a special guardianship order.
- The number of children participating in their looked after reviews has increased by over 2% to 97.6%.
- Darlington has recently appointed a worker to record and exchange information concerning Darlington LAC placed out of the authority and to record LAC placed in Darlington by other authorities.
- Of the 152 Looked After Children in Darlington in school:
  - 65 Darlington LAC were in Darlington Schools
  - 26 were Darlington LAC in out of authority schools
  - 41 were other authority LAC in Darlington Schools
  - 20 were other authority LAC in other schools

Darlington is currently implementing Personal Education Plans for LAC, which are reviewed regularly. By April 2007, 63 children at school had PEPS.

The Corporate Parent is now offering work experience placements.

### **Case Study: Creative Arts Project**

In 2006 DBC Children's Services together with CAHMS and the PCT ran a six month Creative Arts Pilot Project for LAC. The project involved 35 children of all ages and centred on Saturday morning workshops at the Arts Centre, where they gained experience of working with visual art, music, poetry and drama.

Simultaneously, young people had queried why they were not involved in the training of Children's Services staff. Further meetings with young people established that their preferred method of involvement would be film making. An approach was made to staff development who agreed to fund a film that they could use in the induction of new staff.

The idea was taken to the Saturday morning workshops and the Darlington Eye Film Crew was created. One of the young people developed a script, which we took along to Teeny Tiny Films, a community film company. TTF agreed to train the young people in every aspect of film making over a series of three workshops. Corporation Road School kindly offered to provide a venue for the training to take place. At the end of the training the young people produced a short film, 'Red Riding Hood', using the skills they had learned. Two young people from Jack Drum Arts were employed to help with acting skills.

The main film 'Listen to Me' was filmed over two days in August, using Harewood Lodge as a location. A brief improvisation session was held at Cobden Street Children's Home, with a drama coach, to develop the script and characters. The cast and crew only had this opportunity to meet with each other which makes the level of cooperation and team working that went on over the two days remarkable. The professionals involved were astounded at the hard work, enthusiasm, dedication and creativity that the young people showed over the two days of filming.

Listen to Me is now used as a training tool in both Departmental and Service staff inductions and recruitment. The film looks dramatically at a sequence of events in a Children's Home and provides opportunity to look at a whole range of skills that staff will need to employ, and how we communicate with young people and each other.

Effectively, this project was about both drawing on strengths and achieving recognition for those strengths of the children involved - it was also about presenting opportunities to develop the skills for which the young person was being recognised.

On 26<sup>th</sup> October 2006 a celebration event was held to showcase the work that the young people had produced, as part of the project, and to recognise the talents and skills they had demonstrated. The event was held at the Forum Music Centre in Darlington and 150 guests were invited. As well as exhibiting visual artwork, some of the group performed their poetry, songs and music live on stage, alongside adult musicians. All the young people who had taken part in the project were presented with certificates by the Director of Children's Services and the young people who had taken part in the film were presented with a copy of the film. The event was a huge success and the young people were asked to repeat the performance at the annual Children's Services Conference in November. Again they produced an impressive performance. Young people recorded both events on film.

Through projects such as the case study above, LAC have been able to make a positive contribution to their own lives and also in the training of those who provide services to them.

A group of LAC is currently reviewing the Quality Assurance standards for residential homes within the town

There was a continued decline in the proportion of LAC receiving a caution, final warning or conviction down to 1.67 at March 2007 from 2.7 the previous year.

### **7.3 Black and Minority Ethnic groups, including Travellers**

Darlington has a relatively small BME population, although its Traveller community is 9 times the national average. Although in relative terms their numbers are small, partners work to ensure that these groups receive appropriate services which are seen to be inclusive.

The Traveller community receives a targeted and direct health service for example, immunisation and child health surveillance, which has improved uptake rates. Children's Centre services are working on an outreach basis with the Bangladeshi community. Services around health promotion through healthy eating and exercise are delivered by Children's Centres on a weekly basis.

A swimming session for Asian women is facilitated by Children's Centres.

The number of racial incidents recorded in schools has fallen from 80 in 2006 to 74 in 2007. All reported incidents in schools result in further action.

Many of the Traveller population are educated at home especially after Key Stage 2. Darlington has a Language for Learning and Traveller Education service, which supports 122 children (April 2007), although this figure can fluctuate when families go travelling. The McNay Street Children's Centre runs a homework club, which has been targeted at the children of the Gypsy and Traveller Community.

The Language for Learning service supports 141 children with English as an additional language. The service is school based and is demand led with most referrals coming through schools. The service also undertakes visits within early years settings and Children's Centres have established English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses within the community.

Details of the comparative attainment of the Traveller and Bangladeshi Communities follow.

#### 2006 Performance

	<b>KS1 Reading L2b+</b>	<b>KS2 English L4+</b>	<b>KS3 English L5+</b>	<b>KS4 5A* - C</b>
Travellers	44.8%	60.0%	23.1%	50.0%
Cohort	29	20	13	2
Non-travellers	70.5%	81.1%	67.2%	57.9%
Bangladeshi	66.7%	58.3%	37.5%	37.5%
Cohort	9	12	8	8
White British	70.5%	81.2%	67.2%	57.8%

#### 2005 Performance

	<b>KS1 Reading L2b+</b>	<b>KS2 English L4+</b>	<b>KS3 English L5+</b>	<b>KS4 5A* - C</b>
Travellers	57.1%	60%	50%	9.1%
Cohort	14	25	6	11
Non-travellers	76.1%	79.3%	72.4%	56.8%
Bangladeshi	50%	60%	75%	0%
Cohort	10	18	8	5
White British	76.4%	79.4%	72.5%	58.6%

Because of the small number involved in the cohorts, it is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions other than that these groups appear, generally, to perform below their non-Traveller/white British peer groups.

A capital grant of £75k from SSLP has been used to build a facility on Honeypot Lane Traveller site.

The Youth Service in Darlington has been involved in establishing relationships with key people on the Honeypot Traveller's site and has also formed links with partners working on site.

There is a weekly youth provision set up on site and young people have been involved in Youth Service activities off site during holidays. There are plans to set up a regular provision for housed young Travellers.

The Youth Service also works with the Bangladesh Community. During school holidays they have provided a service for both boys and girls. A girls club runs weekly and an additional boys club was set up during the summer holidays. Both girls and boys have been involved with activities town wide and regionally.

### **Case Study**

A is a Bangladeshi single mum with five children aged from 4 to 15 years. She has been accessing Sure Start activities and training for the last four years. Four years ago her husband left her to fend for herself and the children. Her youngest child was 3 months old at the time.

A had neither qualifications nor formal education and was isolated by the community for her single status. She joined many activities and training sessions: - ESOL, sewing, aerobics, Childminding information sessions and found the crèche facilities a huge boon as it enabled her to do things despite having young children. A's confidence has grown tremendously and she will now make phone calls and try to communicate in English whenever she can. She supports and encourages other new ethnic minority parents to come to different activities.

A is now enrolled in ESOL classes at Darlington College, which she attends independently. She has recently passed the Food and Hygiene Certificate and is looking for work in the catering industry.

## **7.4 Young carers**

Darlington recognises that young carers may be at greater risk of not achieving their full potential due to their caring responsibilities. It is acknowledged that the physical, mental and emotional health of young people with significant caring responsibilities can be seriously affected unless adequate support is available to them.

The YMCA Timeout Young Carers Project was established in May 2001 and works with young carers aged 8 – 18 years. It offers support according to individual need via a number of evening groups, one-to-one sessions and provision of activities during the school holidays. It also undertakes general awareness raising with other agencies, including work within schools with both pupils and staff.

Funding for the project comes from 3 main sources – the children's element of the Carers Grant, Children's Fund monies and charitable funding obtained by the YMCA.

The YMCA Young Carers Time Out Groups provide regular opportunities for young carers to participate in activities and discussions, which promote physical, mental,

emotional and social well-being. The young carers project has also addressed issues, which can affect young carers such as bullying or drug and alcohol use.

Young carers are often at a disadvantage in schools because of their caring responsibilities. The School Liaison worker has run awareness raising and support sessions to highlight the importance of school attendance and educational achievement for young carers, the barriers that caring responsibilities can create and ways of ensuring that young carers are given equal opportunities to do well at school.

Young carers have their own steering group, which feeds into the Young Carers Strategic Group and represents the views of young carers of the management, development and delivery of the service and in relation to the planning of support for young carers at a more strategic level.

Darlington will continue to build on the work already undertaken and deliver further actions including continuing to increase the number of young carers identified and referred on to an appropriate source of practical and emotional support.

The number of young carers identified and supported by YMCA has risen to 75 in 2006/07 and incremental targets set until 2009.

## **7.5 Children living in the most deprived Super Output Areas**

The Index of Multiple Deprivation was revised in 2004 focusing on sub-ward areas (Super Output Areas). Analysis of the IMD in 2004 showed that ten of the wards previously identified were still within the worst 25% nationally.

An analysis of the attainment levels of children living in the very poorest parts of Darlington show that they have not benefited from the increased standards locally over the last five years to the same extent as other children and young people.

A key part of Darlington's Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy [see IS4] is to raise educational achievement and the following learning actions were identified and developed to reduce the gap that exists for children and young people living in these areas:

- Develop parenting strategy/parenting skills
- Create Children's Centres
- Develop mentoring projects
- Analyse educational performance in priority wards
- Undertake truancy sweeps
- Improve adults and family learning strategy
- Develop NEET strategy
- Develop school clusters
- Develop extended school programme/ family learning vocational courses

Many of these initiatives are now well established and reference has been made to them in the review. The Children's Centres make a significant contribution through the

extensive work they undertake with children and families to narrow the gap, especially as they are situated in Darlington's most deprived wards [IS10]. They are also a good example of partnership working. A Foundation Stage advisory teacher and a child care development officer have been relocated into a Children's Centre in each of the five locality areas. The aim is to support the implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage into every early years setting and improve standards to ensure that the gap is narrowed at the end of Foundation Stage particularly in relation to communication, language and literacy, and personal, social and emotional development.

69 staff in childcare settings have been funded to pursue higher qualification levels.

Children's Centres provide a variety of services, such as at Skerne Park, with a neighbourhood nursery primary school and adult learning facility. This provides many opportunities for joint working as the mainstream health visiting team for this area is accommodated here and run child health clinics.

A Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Mobile Advice Cooperative delivers advice in Mount Pleasant and Skerne Park and at the '*bump n babi*' clinic for teenagers at Park Place.

Numerous training courses for parents are run from Children's Centres from literacy and numeracy, ready 2 cook to how to chair a meeting and drug awareness.

A tracking system has been developed to track the number of parents who subsequently continue into employment, training or education as a result of attending Children's Centre training courses.

### **DH/DfES Health-Led Parenting Support Programme for At Risk Families**

County Durham PCT and Darlington PCT are one of ten pilot sites across England to host the DH/DfES Health-Led Parenting Support Programme. This programme is named the Family Nurse Partnership. The over-arching aim of this intervention is to support vulnerable young first time mothers up to and including the age of 20, from early pregnancy until the child reaches the age of 2. The programme involves a structured programme of home visits by trained nurses. Pregnancy and birth are key points when most families are highly receptive to support and extra help.

The programme focuses on prevention and early intervention before problems arise. The programme is delivered by family nurses, who are all health visitors or midwives, working within integrated services for children and families linked to Sure Start Children's Centres. Family Nurses will engage with all first time mothers up to and including the age of 20, recruiting 25 each. There is a Family Nurse based at the Maidendale Children's Centre in Darlington.

In general, although not exclusively, all the activities delivered from Children's Centres are targeted at vulnerable groups.

It is not always possible to quantify impact; therefore some cases studies have been used to illustrate this.

Webster-Stratton parenting programme '*The Incredible Years*' is being delivered, for parents of children under 8, by Skerne Park Children's Centre staff and local health visitors.



### **Case Study**

G is a 27-year-old single mother of four boys living in local authority accommodation.

W is three months old, suffers quite badly with eczema and often attends clinics for check-ups.

X is three years old. X is a live wire, always running around and copying his older brothers' actions. His older brother has ADHD.

Y is five years old. Y has a statement for ADHD and had a classroom assistant in school.

Although prone to the odd episode, his condition is largely controlled by medication and counselling.

Z is eight years old. Z is sensible and appears to have taken on the role of carer within the family. He is mature for his years.

G registered with the Children's Centre in February 2007. G can become overwhelmed by the boys' individual demands and needs. G became distressed a number of times in groups. Children's Centre staff have spent a lot of time with G over the past three months building trust and encouraging her to attend groups and trips.

When G first came to the Centre her family home had become overcrowded and she recently, with very little support from other agencies, moved into a new house closer to the school and within closer walking distance of the Children's Centre.

G feels that lots of different agencies are involved in her families 'problems' but she feels that they don't always give the level of support she needs. In April G appeared to becoming more agitated and depressed. She explained that the move and other family pressures were getting too much and she wasn't coping very well. Centre staff suggested that X spent some time in the Nursery giving her time to herself and with the baby. Health Visitors have expressed their concerns regarding X's speech and language skills and this could also be supported within in the Nursery setting.

X is now attending Nursery full-time, everyday. G attends groups with W and is now talking about looking for a college course to further her education and possible full-time employment in the future.

### **Case Study (Family Learning Intensive Support Project)**

R is currently expecting her first baby. R said that she would never attend the local Children's Centre or engage with Sure Start. R also couldn't read.

Her midwife for literacy support referred R to the project. At her first visit R identified herself that she would like to learn how to care for her baby as well as improve her literacy skills. It was discussed with R the things that she would like to learn and developed a qualification that was appropriate to her needs called, 'Understanding Baby Basics.' R is doing very well with this unit and is on target to achieve.

R has developed a good relationship with the Family Learning Tutor, who encouraged R to come along to the local Children's Centre for a look around and to meet some staff. R subsequently visited and chatted to Sure Start and Family Learning staff. Since that day R has visited the centre on 2 other occasions, one of these making her own way there and meeting her tutor. The Tutor and R have now agreed to meet at the Centre on a weekly basis to work on literacy skills.

R's self confidence is improving all the time and the progress she has made in such a short time is fantastic. R took a literacy level 1 practice test and achieved a pass! The plan is to continue with the work that we have been doing and for R to sit a national test after the birth of her baby.

## **7.6 Young offenders**

The Youth Offending Service (YOS) incorporates a wide range of representatives, including Police, probation, Children's Services, health and drug and alcohol misuse services. This wide representation of services allows the YOS to respond to the needs of young offenders in a comprehensive way. The response to a child or young person's offending needs to be constructive and appropriate. [see IS16 & IS 17]

The YOS recognises that prevention remains the key to the youth crime and anti-social behaviour agenda in Darlington. In consequence, limited resources have been focused against these services and a Youth Justice Board (YJB) grant has also been secured for the period 2006-2008 to develop these services further in respect of parenting services and the development of a Safer Schools Partnership at Eastbourne School. Key to the success of YOS prevention work in reducing offending and re-offending by young people is collaborative work with the new Children's Services Directorate and the development of the Darlington Partnership Local Area Agreement – '*Young People our Future*'. Five locality based multi-disciplinary teams are being established that will develop detailed knowledge of local schools, communities, children, their extended families and social networks support.

Across the performance indicators, which the YOS collect, at the end of the 9-month period April-December 2006, performance was very good.

The poorest performance was around Education Training and Employment. The KPI target of 90% has been difficult to achieve and performance has fluctuated over the year to an unverified 2006-07 year end position of 64.5%, which is broadly in line with average national, regional and family group performance for the nine month period April to December 2006. The continual difficulties that have been experienced attaining this target and include:

- The YOS has a part-time Connexions worker and a part-time Education and Welfare Officer.
- A number of young people receiving short 3–4 month Community Orders who were not engaged in education, training or employment upon entry to the YOS – timescales, therefore, to motivate, co-ordinate and achieve success is very short.
- Young people receiving Final Warnings with Intervention who were not in full-time education, training or employment. Involvements with the YOS are usually between 2–4 weeks, which is a very short timescale to motivate, co-ordinate and achieve success.

The YOS has developed a number of key objectives for 2007-2008: -

- Develop YOS prevention services within the locality based teams particularly in our work with parents and schools to reduce the risk of offending, anti-social behaviour and to reduce the numbers of first time entrants to the youth justice system.
- Work closely with our partners in Children's Services, to develop a Parenting Strategy for Darlington.
- Prioritise the development of restorative justice in the form of reparation activities and work with victims.
- Ensure the swift administration of justice and delivery of Premium Service Agreements established for Persistent Young Offenders and Prolific and other Priority Offenders.
- Ensure high quality training and development opportunities for staff to meet individual personal and professional needs, which assist the service to consolidate current good performance and effective practice.
- Consolidate our governance and partnership arrangements to enable improved performance in those areas that need strengthening - education, training and employment, substance misuse, CAMHS, accommodation and reducing the use of custody.
- Work with Darlington Partnership to deliver the vision and outcomes set out in the Local Area Agreement and ensure young people are involved in the development of services.

## 7.7 Bullying

Although each of the vulnerable groups, which have been identified, has differing needs, some issues can be crosscutting.

Bullying has been identified as big issue by members of all of these groups and other vulnerable groups such as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender groups, which have not been dealt with above.

Darlington has established a Bullying and anti-Discrimination Action Group that has produced an action plan. The key objective for this action plan is to prevent and deal with any behaviour deemed as bullying or discriminatory, and to promote an ethos where bullying is regarded as not acceptable, so that a safe and secure environment is created for everyone to learn and work in.

The agreed aims are:

- To establish a culture in which bullying will not be tolerated
- To develop clear strategies and procedures that empower children to disclose
- To raise awareness of bullying and its effects on children and young people
- To involve children, young people, parents, carers and partner agencies in developing policies and practice
- To provide tailored support for all individuals who may be involved in a bullying situation
- To define roles and responsibilities throughout the procedure to ensure that there are clear lines of accountability
- To create minimum standards for agencies to maintain

Effective eradication of bullying is a shared responsibility and strategies should involve parents/carers, children, young people, professionals and the wider community. It is important to invest time and resources in the prevention and management of bullying.

In April 2006 a consultation exercise was carried out with children in a secondary school from Years 7 to 12. The young people worked in groups and looked at bullying in and out of school. The main conclusion drawn confirmed the statement above, that eradication of bullying was a shared responsibility.

There is a web-based system, Sentinel, running in three schools and Darlington College to establish effective reporting and recording mechanisms with effective follow up. This system will be rolled out to other schools.

One of the key tasks within the plan is to establish the provision of advice and guidance on bullying and discrimination to any service that deals with children and young people.

The full Bullying and Anti-Discrimination Action Plan is attached in Appendix 4, as IS9.

## 8. What we know: progress against our 7 top priorities

Following wide ranging consultation with our partners, young people and the completion of a needs analysis, a series of priorities was included in the CYPP. However, the Plan highlighted 7 broad areas that were the top priorities for action. Progress against each of these priorities is described below. Where there are specific performance measures for these 7 areas, the tables show the overall scorecard and performance measures using the following coding (more detailed information about each of the performance measures is included in Appendix 5)

★ (Green Star) = Above target performance	▲ (Red Triangle) = Below target performance
● (Blue Circle) = On target performance	

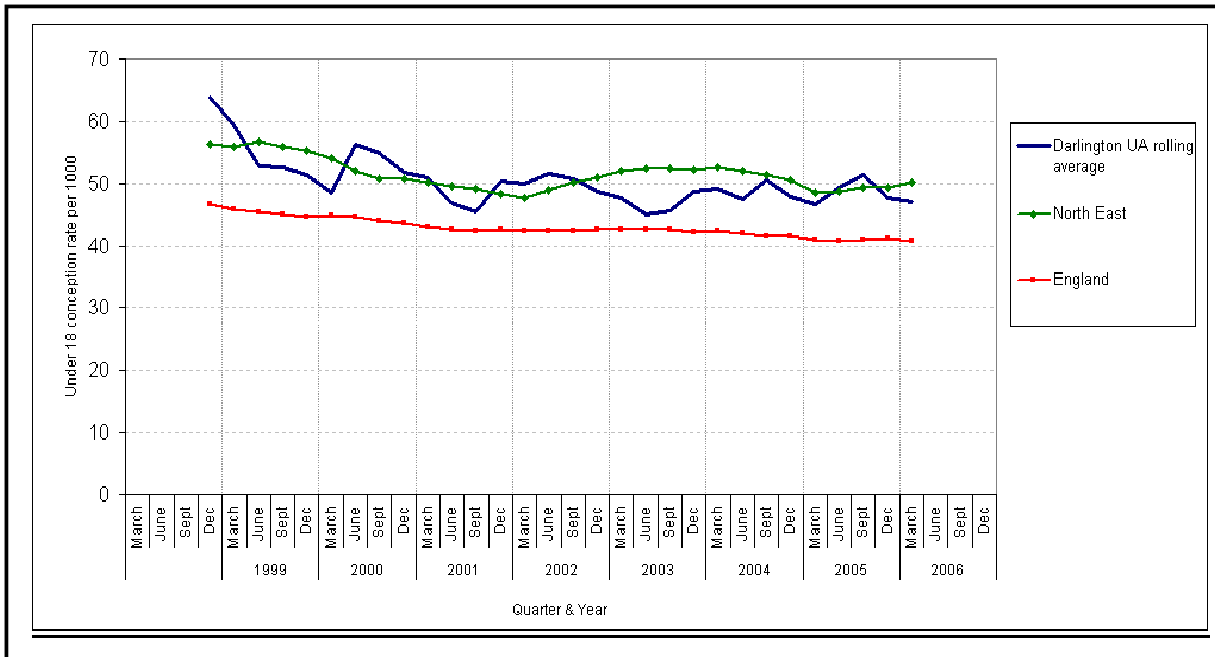
### Priority 1: Promoting positive sexual health and reducing teenage pregnancy

LAA Funding has enabled the development of initiatives at high-risk groups and conception hot spot areas. A dedicated sexual health specialist post will be maintained to provide support, training, information and advice. Delivery in community settings involves a range of providers including the voluntary sector. The annual self-assessment identified actions below target and measures to accelerate the action plan. Darlington's under-16 conceptions have shown no decrease since the 1998 baseline position. All under-16 actions themed as 'better' prevention are being performance managed, reviewed and strengthened.

NB: The scorecard below represents statistical performance from 2004/05 which is the most up to date information available)

Scorecard			
Outcome: Promoting positive sexual health and reducing teenage pregnancy			
Performance Indicators	Status 30/09/06	Performance Trend	Expected Out-turn (2009)
<b>LAA 3.3.1</b> Change in the number of conceptions to females under 18 per 1,000 females aged 15-17 compared to 1998 baseline (BV197) [CP]	●	↑	●
<b>LAA 1.3.2</b> Access to GUM services within 48 hrs (Local PI) [PCT]	●	↑	●
<b>3.3.3</b> Screening rate for Chlamydia in 13-24 year olds for all sexually active young people (Local PI) [PCT]	▲	↑	●

The graph below represents the figures published by the Teenage Pregnancy Unit in May 2007, showing a continuing decrease in the under 18 conceptions rate.



## Priority 2: Improving the provision of information, advice and guidance

In Darlington, Connexions is leading on developing a Darlington model for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), which will embrace all areas of concern for children and young people and will have clear protocols for referrals and signposting.

The local authority is responsible for identifying and mapping key providers of IAG for delivery of universal provision. An inter-agency service planning group, involving young people, will be established to prepare a model for IAG in Darlington. An assessment tool will be available to assist organisations to review their practice against the standards. The existing skills of practitioners will be identified and training needs addressed. A regional review of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities highlighted the need for IAG provision to recognise the needs of such learners and ensure effective pathways and appropriate support are made available.

Connexions supports the Youth Service and has developed a joint website as the first phase to having a Darlington website for young people. In addition, Connexions will work with the Youth Service over their needs concerning the provision of information.

Darlington currently operates a Children's Information Service (CIS), which has already developed a substantial proportion of the base infrastructure. The service meets current national standards for such Children's Information Services and has achieved the Matrix quality standard for IAG services. Darlington CIS will be used to develop the Information Hub required by the local authority, and to co-ordinate the delivery of information to families via Children's Centres, Extended Schools, and other appropriate delivery channels. The development of this service directory provides the opportunity for the

Children's Trust to raise its profile with the community through the provision of a direct service to children, young people and their families/carers.

A key factor in ensuring young people are able to make an informed choice will be the development of a 14-19 Prospectus. The Prospectus will highlight all education and training opportunities available to young people within Darlington and the wider North East. It is anticipated that successful delivery and promotion of the prospectus – to young people and their parents - will be a factor in raising aspirations amongst young people.

### **Priority 3: Improving the stability of children's placements**

Darlington Children's Services continues to see the long-term stability of their Looked After Children (LAC) as a top priority. In the past twelve months there has been a continued increase in performance in the stability of placements for LAC, and the number of children adopted or granted special guardianship orders has exceeded our target by more than 100%.

A recent Fostering Inspection [IS16] resulted in the comment that "overall your service provides excellent outcomes for people who use it".

Work is ongoing to ensure that the reduction in the number of LAC continues and that there is a continued reduction in the rates of teenagers becoming looked after. There has also been a reduction in the number of LAC in external placements. Various initiatives are in place to support this work including targeted family support services.

An improved permanence planning process and the restructure of teams within the service has resulted in a continued focus on LAC and permanence planning.

As well as prioritising the level of stability for LAC, Darlington also wants LAC to have the best possible outcomes. Darlington implements Personal Education Plans for LAC, which are reviewed regularly to monitor achievement of targets. There have been improvements in the rate of school attendance and exclusions of LAC resulting from specific actions.

The level of participation of LAC in their looked after reviews is very high. Darlington PCT employs a health co-ordinator for LAC and young people. The Statutory LAC Review Health Assessments are completed by the most appropriate health care professional at a time and place suitable to the child/young person and parent/carer, i.e. Health Visitor or School Nurse.

Improved contact and liaison is being developed with private residential children's homes to offer health advice and support including Cook It, Condom Cards and support to stop smoking. Health promotion, education and support is given to groups of LAC e.g. Care Leavers via the E2E group and a LAC group has been developed by the LAC Development Worker.

There is direct access to CAMHS consultation for foster carers and professionals involved in caring for LAC. A dedicated CAMH service for children in need has been established including two dedicated LAC workers and a post adoption support worker. This enables rapid access to CAMHS for LAC but also direct access to advice for carers and other professionals.

<b>Outcome: Improving the stability of children's placements</b>			
Performance Indicators	2005-06	2006-07	Performance Trend
% of children who had been looked after continuously for at least 4 years, who were currently in a foster placement where they had spent at least two years	49%	50.80%	↑
% of children who had been looked after continuously for at least 2.5 years, who were currently in a foster placement where they had spent at least two years	40%	44.4%	↑
No of children who during the year were granted an adoption/special guardianship order	7	22	↑
% of children who communicated their views to a statutory looked after review	95%	97.60%	↑

#### **Priority 4: Improving academic progress for all children and young people**

Performance at Key Stage 1 dipped in 2006 and fell below the national average, compared to 2005 when results were better than the national average. Key Stage 2 performance is better than the national average, with particular strengths in Mathematics. Key Stage 3 results are relatively poor and progress over the last 5 years has generally not kept up with national progress. At Key Stage 4, the percentage of pupils achieving 5 A\*- C grades is around the national average – although ranked 61<sup>st</sup> as a local authority, but there is a larger percentage of the cohort achieving no passes compared to national figures. At Key Stage 5, performance is excellent, with the borough being ranked as 11<sup>th</sup> best nationally.

See Appendix 4, IS13 and IS14 for further information about progress and future actions.



The local authority performance targets for 2008 are as follows:

	Aggregate of school targets	Local authority target	National target or aggregation
<b>Foundation Stage Profile (children achieving 6 in all PSED and CLL scales)</b>	n/a	62.5%	n/a
<b>Gap between the mean of the worst performing 20% and the median of all children</b>	n/a	39%	n/a
<b>Key Stage 2 English</b>	82%	83%	83.7%
<b>Key Stage 2 Maths</b>	82%	82%	82.9%
<b>Key Stage 3 English</b>	81%	81%	80.7%
<b>Key Stage 3 Maths</b>	82%	82%	80.5%
<b>Key Stage 3 Science</b>	78%	78%	77.8%
<b>Key Stage 4 5+ A*-C</b>	64%	64.4%	63.5%
<b>Key Stage 4 5+ A*-C inc English and Maths</b>	50%	50.2%	51.4%
<b>Primary absence</b>	n/a	4.9%	n/a
<b>Secondary absence</b>	n/a	7.8%	n/a
<b>LAC achieving KS2 L4+ % compared to peers</b>	n/a	40.4%	57%
<b>% LAC achieving a graded result GCSE or equivalent</b>	n/a	100%	29%
<b>% LAC achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs</b>	n/a	*	n/a
<b>% LAC achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs inc English and Maths</b>	n/a	*	n/a

\* Targets not set as cohort numbers too small to be statistically viable.

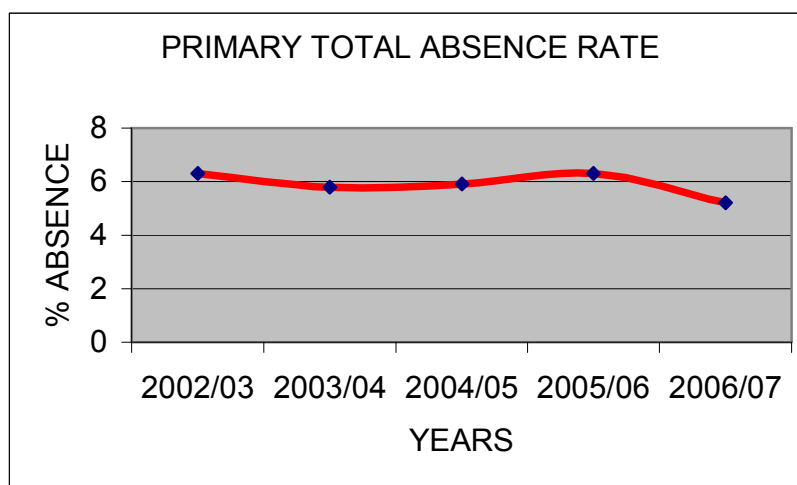
Darlington has set itself ambitious targets for 2009, including 70% of young people achieving 5 A\*-C grades. The strategy for working with schools to deliver the targets is in the Director's Priorities Paper, attached as Appendix 2.

<b>Scorecard</b>			
<b>Outcome: Improving academic progress for all children and young people</b>			
Performance Indicators	Status 30/09/06	Performance Trend	Expected Out-turn (2009)
<b>1.1.1a</b> Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above in Key Stage 2 – Mathematics (BV40) [CP]	●	↑	●
<b>1.1.1b</b> Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above in Key Stage 2 – English (BV41) [CP]	▲	↑	●
<b>1.1.2a [RE]</b> Percentage of 14 year old pupils in schools maintained by LEA achieving at least level 5 or above in Key Stage 3 - English (BV181a) [CP]	▲	↓	●
<b>1.1.2b [RE]</b> Percentage of 14 year old pupils in schools maintained by LEA achieving at least level 5 or above in Key Stage 3 – Maths (BV181b) [CP]	●	↑	●

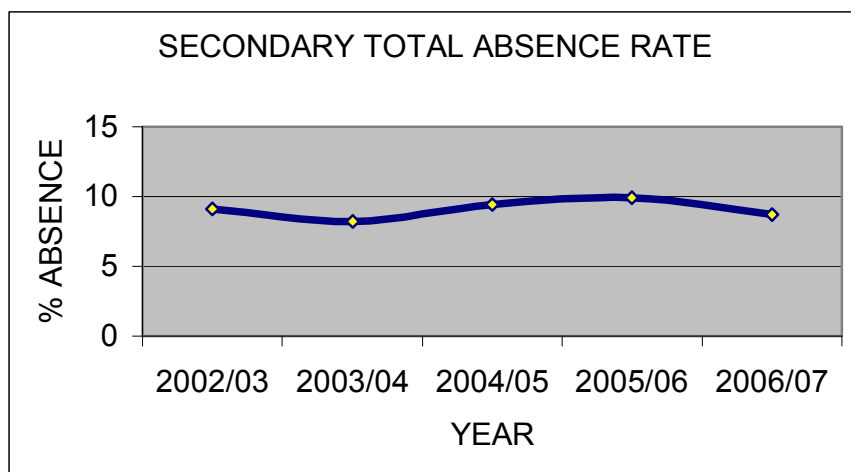
Scorecard			
Outcome: Improving academic progress for all children and young people			
Performance Indicators	Status 30/09/06	Performance Trend	Expected Out-turn (2009)
1.1.2c [RE] Percentage of 14 year old pupils in schools maintained by LEA achieving at least level 5 or above in Key Stage 3 – Science (BV181c) [CP]	▲	↑	●
1.1.3 Percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C grade GCSEs or equivalent (BV38) [CP]	▲	↑	●
1.1.4 [RE] Number of pupils leaving school without achieving any GCSE A* - G passes or equivalent (Local PI ED121) [CP]	●	↑	●
Average point score per student for General and Vocational A/AS or equivalent achievement	●	New system established 2006	●

### Priority 5: Reducing absences and exclusion from schools

Not surprisingly, given some of the attainment concerns, exclusions and absenteeism are higher than the national average. Darlington has the 7<sup>th</sup> worst absence rate in the country and performance has been declining. However a number of strategies have been developed which are already showing a positive effect on the rates of absence and exclusions. Primary absences, after 2 years of declining performance have begun to improve. The table below shows the trend, with the 2006/07 figures being the Autumn and Spring term census figures, and it represents a turning of the curve in performance.



The pattern is replicated in secondary school absenteeism, with the Autumn and Spring term figures showing a pleasing improvement.



A significant contributory factor to reducing school absenteeism has been the development of vocational options at Key Stage 4. This year 95 young people from 5 schools and the PRU have participated in Skills +. This meant that young people who were becoming disaffected with the normal school curriculum have been given the opportunity to follow an educational route that will engage them. Another element in this reduction is that schools are looking for alternative provision as a possibility to avoid exclusion. This alternative provision offers a range of vocational options that also lead to accreditation. In 2006/07 59 young people accessed alternative provision including provision funded through the Increased Flexibility programme.

The Education Welfare team has one team leader and 8 team members. Updated policy and procedures have been issued to schools in March 2007. The majority of new referrals are placed onto fast track procedures in the first instance. Penalty notices are used as an early intervention. In the period up to the end of February 2007 there have been 28 prosecutions. There have also been 74 penalty notices issued, of which 12 proceeded to court. The team has introduced a town pass system across all schools, which provides confirmation of a child or young person's authorised absence during the school day.

Truancy sweeps are carried out on a regular basis; 4 sweeps have been held since September 2006. In total, 110 children and young people were stopped. Of these 84% (74) were accompanied by an adult. 31 were from out of the area, 51 were secondary age and 59 primary age pupils. Further sweeps will be carried out until June. Information from the DfES states that the national initiative of sweeps will no longer run, so national data will no longer be available. During the year 2005/06, 271 children and young people were stopped on truancy sweeps in the town, 60% of whom were accompanied by an adult.

A number of strategies have been implemented to tackle school exclusion and disaffection. The Educational Psychology Service provides anger management group work and social skills group work for pupils' individual schools.

Staff from the Behaviour Support Service and Counselling Service, as well as Outreach staff from the Stevenson Centre have provided Dinosaur School group work with primary schools as part of the Primary Behaviour and Attendance Strategy. Parenting support has been offered to the parents of the pupils accessing these groups. The behaviour support service and the Secondary Teaching and Learning advisor have developed their work to work with teachers on a coaching model. This work is well regarded by staff who participate.

Mentors support individuals and small groups of pupils to break down barriers to learning in areas such as organisation of work, promoting positive attitudes to work and success, self-esteem and behaviour. They work with a wide range of pupils, but mainly those who are disaffected, underachieving and vulnerable to try to give them a better chance in life. Secondary schools employed Learning Mentors from September 2004 to April 2006 using their EiC funding. Schools recognised the value of these staff and all continued to employ them after the EiC funding ceased. Seven primary schools were involved in the EiC and they use some of their Teaching Assistants in a part-time mentoring role.

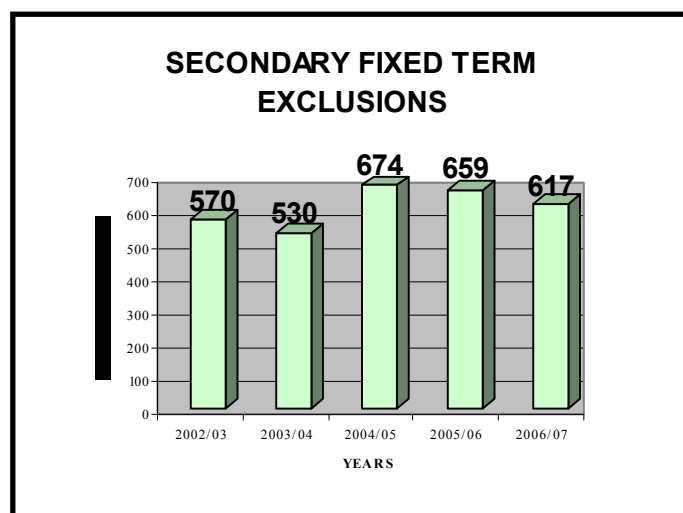
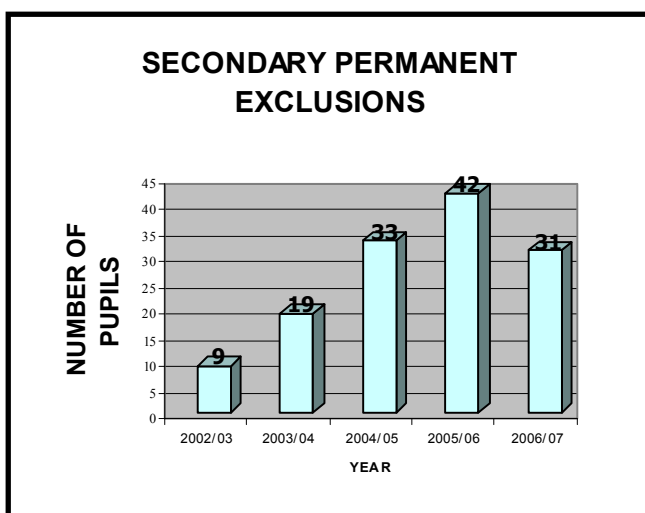
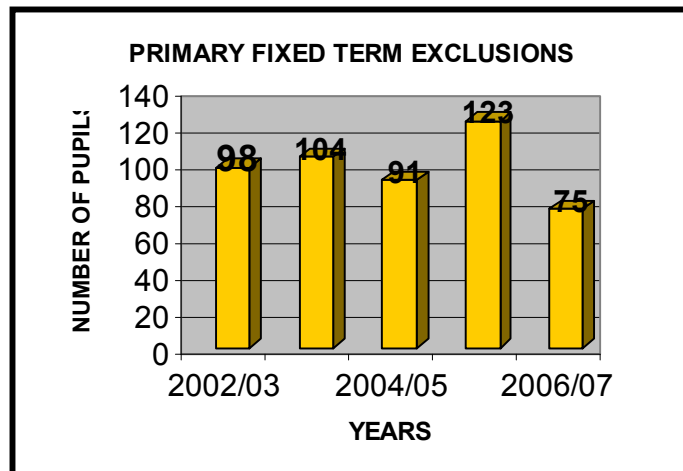
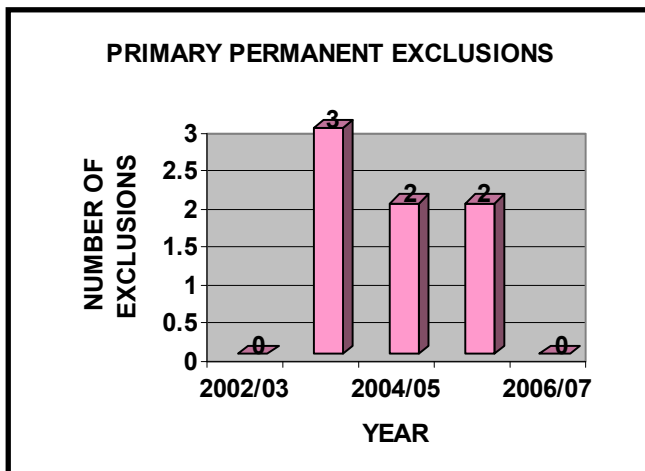
Local authority staff runs courses on behaviour management, particularly for NQTs and those in their first few years of teaching.

All schools run PSHE programmes, which contain a strong emphasis on the development of social skills. The local authority supports teacher development through the certificated course for PSHE coordinators.

The School Counselling Service works with both primary and secondary schools offering pupils access to counselling through a SLA.

Permanent exclusion from primary schools continues to be a relatively infrequent occurrence and the Schools Forum has agreed a strategy for dealing with exclusions from the 6<sup>th</sup> day. Secondary school permanent exclusions have increased over the last 4 years but are beginning to fall. Secondary schools have established Collaboratives to manage the Pupil Referral Unit and to make provision for exclusions from the 6<sup>th</sup> day. The Schools Forum has supported the arrangements and released funding.

See following tables regarding exclusion.



Following any permanent exclusion, plans are developed for that young person's education. This might be to attend the PRU, access alternative provision or Skills + or reintegration might be deemed appropriate.

### Case Study

R was excluded from Haughton School in 2004 and was placed in the Key Stage 3 Pupil Referral Unit. Work was undertaken to reintegrate her into Branksome School in January 2005. R had to be removed from Branksome School to avoid another permanent exclusion. R re-entered the Pupil Referral Unit in September 2005. In January 2006, she was placed at Darlington College on a Skills+ course studying for NVQ Level 1 in Hospitality and Catering. In May 2007 she exceeded expectations and achieved Level 2. R is about to start initial work experience (as she is not as yet of school leaving age) with Darlington Borough Council with a plan to obtain a full-time job in the kitchen at the Dolphin Centre.

Another strategy being developed to avoid the need for permanent exclusion is managed moves. A Managed Moves Protocol across the town has been developed. If a young person is experiencing difficulties, a managed move can be offered with the agreement of all parties on a temporary trial basis. This enables the young person to attend another school, with support, to give them an opportunity of a fresh start. If this proves successful the young person can remain at the new school, however, they return to their home school if this is not satisfactory.

<b>Scorecard</b>			
<b>Outcome: Reducing absences and exclusion from schools</b>			
<b>Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Status 30/09/06</b>	<b>Performance Trend</b>	<b>Expected Out-turn (2009)</b>
<b>1.2.1a [RE]</b> Percentage of half days missed due to all absence in Secondary Schools maintained by the authority (BV45) [CP]	▲	↓	●
<b>1.2.1b [RE]</b> Percentage of half days missed due to all absence in primary schools maintained by the authority (BV46) [CP]	▲	↓	●
<b>1.2.2a [RE]</b> Number of days lost due to fixed term exclusions (FTE) (Local PI ED130) [CP]	●	↓	●

### **Priority 6: Improving opportunities for the 14 -19 age group [IS15]**

Priorities:

Partners are revising the long-term strategic 14-19 plan, to include articulating a vision for Darlington and highlighting the key activities needed to ensure a sufficiently broad and high quality range of provision is available to address the needs of all young people in Darlington. To date the 14-19 Trust has agreed the following priorities and initial actions to meet the priorities. These are:

Collaboration and planning:

- Oversee provision
- Develop specialisms
- Respond to national developments
- Develop new collaborative provision in extended settings
- Develop junior apprentice programmes

Promoting participation and engagement:

- Developing use of mentors in school and colleges
- Developing further the WBL provider forum

Raising attainment and standards:

- Staff accessing short term placements in other institutions
- Developing programmes for gifted and talented students

The outcomes of the 14-19-progress check are reflected in Appendix 1 in the section '*Achieving Economic Well-being*'.

Taking the strategy forward - Establishing a learner entitlement in Darlington:

Whilst levels of attainment and progression are generally good, the aim must be for excellence for all learners and this can best be delivered through a learner entitlement. Such an entitlement will be set within the context of a changing landscape of 14-19 provision with enhanced opportunities available through delivery of Diplomas and strong and effective collaboration between providers. A key focus for partners and a target identified within the Local Area Agreement is to reduce the number of young people Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) in Darlington.

It is also important that the entitlement is informed by and addresses the needs of young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Research undertaken on behalf of the Learning and Skills Council found that in 2004/05, 14.8% of school students in Darlington were assessed as having special educational needs. Within the FE Sector the figure was 9.4% and in work based learning, 10.3%. 91% of 16-19 year-olds with LDD are in education, employment or training.

The entitlement will clearly explain what 14-19 year olds in the borough can expect at each age and stage of their education and training and would be in 6 parts, covering the curriculum, personal development, progression pathways, support, quality assurance and the September guarantee.

A broad curriculum:

All 14-19 year olds in Darlington should have access to a wide range of continuously developing provision that reflects their needs as learners and the needs of the community and economy. The curriculum should also value academic, vocational and enterprise skills. All young people should be able to reach an appropriate level of key skills in order to move with confidence on to the next level. Ultimately, all 14 specialised diplomas should be available locally. The current offer needs to be broadened through provision of additional Work Based Learning opportunities as well as action to address the variable quality of provision evidenced by the current wide spectrum of attainment at Key Stage 4.

At Key Stage 4 this would mean access to the core curriculum, guided options, which included GCSEs and section 96 qualifications, vocational learning, early access to appropriate Level 3 qualifications, key skills and a programme that complements the local economy.

For post 16 year olds this would mean access to entry level, foundation level, intermediate level and higher-level courses. These would include access to a co-ordinated programme of vocational courses, after discussion with the relevant sector skill councils, and all would have pathways into employment and into higher education. Programmes would include key skills.

Discussions are taking place between partners to ensure curriculum developments are informed by a clear understanding of the current and future skills needs of the Darlington economy.

Personal development and challenge:

Darlington has a rich heritage and sporting, cultural and leisure base. Each learner should be able to have formal opportunities to engage with learning organisations beyond their school, college or employer.

Clear progression pathways:

Every learner will have access to high quality, impartial information, advice and guidance in order to make informed choices about progression. This would include high quality careers education and guidance delivered in schools and colleges. Progression pathways into further and higher education, into training and into employment will be clearly identified, transparent and signposted in all settings and documentation.

Activities would also need to exist to ensure that learners were prepared for progression onto the next stage of learning.

Young people will also have access to details of provision available within and beyond Darlington through an on-line interactive prospectus providing detailed information on current provision, progression pathways and learning support.

Support:

Personalised learning, tailored support and pastoral support will be provided to ensure that all learners reach their potential. The learner entitlement will be reviewed with learners and with parents/carers.

Support would include tutorials, preferred learning styles, access to technology, common recording of information and assessment tools and intensive support for those who need it.

Quality assurance:

All learners should be able to access course or programmes which have been quality assured. Each learner will be the responsibility of one named institution for monitoring attendance and progress. Progress will also be monitored by the local authority and by the Learning and Skills Council.



The September Guarantee:

All 16 year olds will be placed in appropriate and high quality provision from the September after they leave school.

The Youth Offer:

Darlington is already well on the way to producing a Youth Offer for the young people of the Borough.

The Youth Offer will be about the provision of activity to young people aged 13-19 in their leisure time, in which they can voluntarily engage. The activities offered will be varied in range and location and will promote personal and social development.

The Youth Offer will be promoted to young people so that they are aware of its component parts and will consist of:

- The creation and promotion of a wide range of activities and opportunities – sport, cultural, social, environmental and political
- The offer is borough-wide and includes rural wards
- It has developed new and different activities as well as building on existing practice
- It is sensitive to issues of accessibility to ensure the Offer meets the needs of, for example, young people with disabilities, black and minority ethnic young people, young people under served by existing provision
- It links to wider service provision for young people (including services, commercial outlets, clubs and groups, libraries etc.)

A Youth Offer Co-ordinator is in post and the action plan is currently being updated to ensure the Youth Offer will be available and accessible to young people by 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008. A young people's steering group has been recruited to assist in the development and promotional processes.

The role of the Connexions service in Darlington is as a universal provider of IAG for young people 14-19, with a particular focus on engagement in learning and employment. The Connexions Service, from April 2007, became part of the local authority and work is underway to integrate it fully within the structure.

Within the Tees Valley, the five Local Authorities decided to disaggregate the Connexions Company into five separate services integrated with all services for children and young people at local level rather than at sub-regional level. This has involved a closer integration of the work of Connexions Locality Teams with the evolving local integrated youth support offer, and a strengthening of the work of the Local Management Committees.

Connexions is providing the lead for an IAG model in Darlington. Connexions also contribute to the youth support agenda that requires the young people have access to 'someone to talk to'. In Darlington, Connexions and the Youth Support Service are integrating practices as they work on developing youth support services. The development of the first community based youth venue in Nickstream Lane will provide an opportunity to gauge the services young people wish to access on their doorstep and will facilitate integrated working specifically for 11-19 year olds.

### **Case Study: Nickstream Lane**

This is a vacant unit in a row of shops in the middle of a large estate in Darlington and is currently being renovated to become a Locality Base and Drop-in Centre for young people.

The concept is quite simple. The ground floor space will allow for a multi-functional drop-in space - for young people to meet and socialise; to access key adults and key information when/if required; to get information on and participate in a wide range of opportunities and activities; and to help shape the development of the facility.

The first floor space will house professionals from a range of agencies and departments who share the common themes of working with young people and working within the community. By being based together, the scope for accurate and timely communication, and joint planning and delivery, is maximised.

Nickstream Lane is about taking services to the heart of the community, so that young people can know and recognise key professionals, that positive relationships can develop and appropriate and relevant provision be developed and delivered. Nickstream Lane is due to open in June 2007.

### **Priority 7: Empowering children and young people to have a greater voice and influence over local decision-making and the delivery of services**

Darlington realises that participation by young people results in tangible results for themselves and for society. Meaningful participation is a process, which requires developing new youth-adult relationships rooted in mutual trust and respect and engaging in real dialogue. Darlington sees this as one of its top priorities.

In the past year Darlington has launched its Youth Participation Strategy [IS8]. This includes a Model for Youth Involvement in Darlington, which contains a vision for Youth Participation.

To achieve this vision we have adopted the basic principle that any young person can and will be actively encouraged to become involved.

The Youth Participation Strategy adopts a three-tier approach to the involvement of young people.

- Tier 1: All young people
- Tier 2: Local youth groups
- Tier 3: elected representatives from Tier 2 form the Youth Voice and Action Group.

<b>Scorecard</b>			
<b>Empowering children and young people to have a greater voice</b>			
	<b>2005-06</b>	<b>2006-07</b>	<b>Current Trend</b>
<b>Performance Indicators</b>			
<b>CS 221</b> Number of people involved in Voice and Action Group	New PI	<b>93</b>	<b>Above Target</b>
<b>CS104</b> The level of reach into resident 13-19 population	25% (Dec 2005)	<b>33%</b>	↑
<b>CS105</b> The level of participation in the 13-19 population in youth work	12.5% (Dec 2005)	<b>16%</b>	↑

## 9. 'You said, we did': what we have done about what children and young people told us

What children and young people told us they need to BE HEALTHY	What we have done
Greater access to subsidised sport and leisure opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Launched the Darlington 'LIVE' card, providing eligible young people with discounts on a range of things to do and places to go</li> <li>▪ Secured Big Lottery funding to provide a variety of activities. Sports coordinator activities have been extended</li> </ul>
Improved access to confidential health information, advice and guidance in locations convenient to young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Darlington's C-card has been reviewed and recommendations for further development of the service have been made.</li> </ul>
Greater access to help and information on sexual health, and relationship guidance including access to all forms of contraception in locations convenient to young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Safe Zone (a directory of services/information for young people which includes information on non-clinical sexual health service) has been reprinted and distributed to all Year 9 and 10 young people (excluding Carmel RC College students) through school assemblies</li> <li>▪ Workforce development opportunities have been offered to all partners involved in the delivery of the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy</li> <li>▪ A County Durham and Darlington sexual health and G-UM website has been commissioned with a young person focus and links. This will be launched mid 2007</li> <li>▪ Delay training for staff and workshops for young people, and young person friendly quality standards introduced into general practice have been put on hold. This area of work is a priority and the challenge for the Teenage Pregnancy Board will be to ensure it takes place 2007/08</li> <li>▪ Harrogate Hill Primary School working with the TP Coordinator have reviewed and updated their SRE policy. Consultation with parents and inset training with the school team and governors will assist delivery of SRE through reception to Year 11 once this pilot has been rolled out across the town from September 2007</li> </ul>
Improved access to health services within schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Currently working with Branksome to develop a comprehensive health service within the school which will include a family planning/contraceptive service – timescale next academic year 2007/08</li> <li>▪ An independent consultant has been commissioned through Darlington's Teenage Pregnancy Board to develop an SRE policy within a secondary school. Working with Darlington's Healthy School Lead, this model will be cascaded into all secondary schools</li> </ul>
More help to give up smoking and information, guidance and advice on alcohol and substance misuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School nurses deliver smoking cessation in schools. All Schools had No Smoking Day awareness activities. Guidance and advice on alcohol and substance misuse delivered in individual workshops to targeted schools. Information and guidance to all schools through PSHE. Darlington supports the national FRANK campaign</li> </ul>
Better school meals and access to fresh fruit and vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ School meals (lunches) reflect the new Food Standards. Fruit and vegetables are available every day</li> <li>▪ 5 schools have full healthy schools status and our target is for 21 schools to have achieved healthy school status by December 2007</li> <li>▪ All children attending Children's Centre activities are provided with fresh fruit, milk and water</li> </ul>

<b>What children and young people told us they need to BE HEALTHY</b>	<b>What we have done</b>
Better hygiene within schools and access to fresh drinking water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If a school is found to have low standards of cleanliness this is brought to the attention of the school. All 26 schools participating in the healthy schools programme have fresh drinking water and most others are working to comply with this if they have not already done so</li> </ul>

<b>What children and young people told us they need to be STAY SAFE</b>	<b>What we have done</b>
Improve street lighting in parks and green spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As part of the refurbishment of parks, street lighting is assessed and installed where appropriate</li> </ul>
More safe places which are easy to get to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Within the past year opening of youth club facilities at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ St Mary's, Cockerton</li> <li>○ Corporation Road YC</li> <li>○ Northlands YC</li> <li>○ YC at Honey Pot Lane</li> <li>○ Re-opening of Red Hall YC.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Additional sites/places being identified on an on-going basis, e.g. Nickstream Lane</li> <li>▪ Refurbishment of parks and open spaces ongoing with work already taken place in North Park, Pensbury Street, Bensham Park and Fryers Crescent</li> </ul>
Increase the number of cycle paths and improve traffic management and make roads safer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ As Darlington is a Cycle Demonstration Town a large capital programme for cycling is in place. As a Cycle Demonstration Town we are receiving extra funding over a three-year period, which will come to an end in August 2008. The funding is £1.5 million to be match funded by the authority. This has enabled us to considerably extend cycle routes within Darlington.</li> </ul>
Increase the numbers and locations of CCTV cameras	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ During the past year, 4 additional cameras have been installed in parks and open spaces – Red Hall, the Denes, Springfield and Lascelles</li> </ul>
Police Service should be more 'child friendly' in its approach to policing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A safer schools project has been established in a pilot Secondary school with a police officer permanently based in the school and working with young people.</li> </ul>
Co-ordinated responses are required to minimise alcohol use and to discourage large groups of young people gathering on street corners which can feel intimidating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Development of Youth Service Locality Teams and increase in range of provision and activity in many wards</li> <li>▪ Increase in level of street based youth work engaging with young people who do gather in public spaces</li> <li>▪ Wardens work closely with the Police and PCSOs confiscating alcohol from young people</li> <li>▪ The Anti-social Behaviour officers work with young people and residents where there are concerns with young people gathering. Where appropriate action is take e.g. dispersal orders</li> </ul>
Strengthen anti-bullying measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Healthy schools must have an anti-bullying policy and all schools are encouraged to adopt one. 'Bullying' is part of the PSHE curriculum. The SEAL programme in primary schools addresses bullying</li> <li>▪ An anti-bullying and anti-discrimination action group has been established</li> </ul>

<b>What children and young people told us they need to be able to ENJOY AND ACHIEVE</b>	<b>What we have done</b>
Greater choice of subject options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Modern foreign languages now taught in all primary schools</li> <li>▪ 14-19 Strategy</li> <li>▪ Introduction of Skills+ to offer vocational training. 95 students currently receiving Skill+ training</li> <li>▪ Assessment for learning initiatives has begun in all schools</li> </ul>
Increase the number and type of after school clubs including Homework Clubs, and more options for activities during break times	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Working in clusters we have provided more after school clubs, homework clubs and activities and are continuing to create more</li> </ul>
More support during transition from Primary to Secondary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Range of activities have been developed through cluster plans to support transition. Year 7 pupils in one school have produced a transition booklet</li> <li>▪ The Director's Commission on transition and standards is investigating how we can support transfer</li> </ul>
More youth clubs and greater access to a wide menu of sports, leisure and arts activities at affordable prices in safe locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promotion work on places to go things to do is supported by the youth opportunities fund.</li> </ul>

<b>What children and young people told us they need to MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION</b>	<b>What we have done</b>
Greater involvement and participation in school decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Voice in Action Group provides peer support to school councils in secondary schools. Secondary School Councils are encouraged to provide support to School Councils in a number of primary feeder schools</li> </ul>
Better engagement and consultation with young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Hear by Right promoted to all agencies working with children and young people. Youth service has run a workshop for agencies to buy into Hear by Rights and is intending to run more in future</li> </ul>
Strengthen anti-bullying measures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ See above</li> </ul>

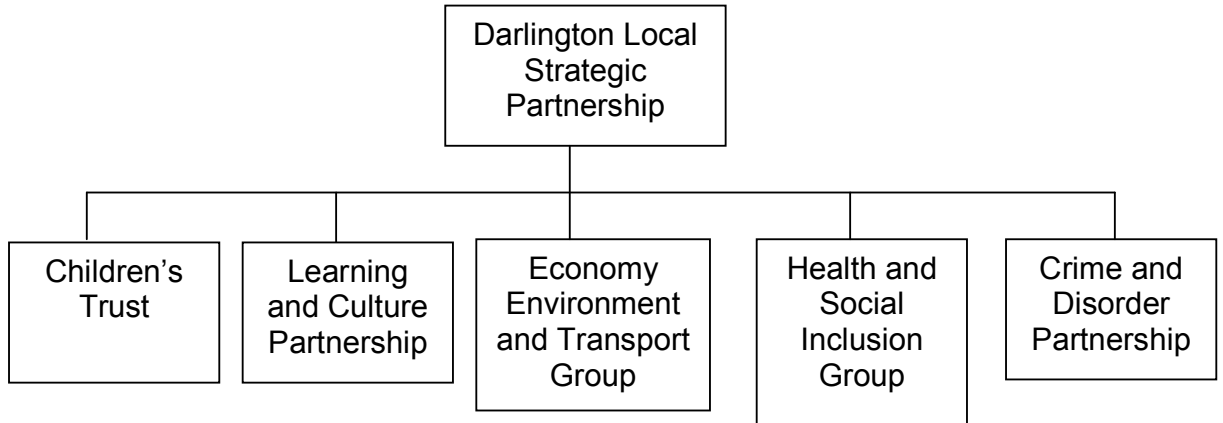
<b>What children and young people told us they need to ACHIEVE ECONOMIC WELL-BEING</b>	<b>What we have done</b>
More information and publicity for homeless services, both statutory and voluntary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improvement of information on the council website. Publication of “Livin’ here Is doin’ my head in!” a guide to housing options for under 25s</li> <li>▪ Provision of a young peoples targeted services by First Stop to reduce homelessness and emergency access to inappropriate accommodation</li> <li>▪ First Stop for Youth also opens every Wednesday 3pm – 5.30pm for 16 – 25 year olds only and in the evening between 6-8pm for 13 – 16 year olds only, with the addition of positive activities</li> <li>▪ Supported Lodgings Scheme for Care Leavers</li> </ul>
Improvement to the cleanliness and safety of the street scene environment including parks and open spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 29 young caretakers have been recruited to help develop cleaner and safer environments and young people have been involved in creating environmental action plans within their Wards</li> <li>▪ Satisfaction with parks continues to rise</li> <li>▪ Increased the engagement of young people in the improvement agenda for parks and open spaces</li> </ul>
More help with careers ideas/choices/becoming more confident about leaving school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continued promotion of the Connexions service. Local website on e-Vibe to promote access to service. Activity calendars are provided in schools</li> <li>▪ Work being carried out on 1:1 basis re attendance absenteeism, which will inform a bigger piece of work. Work being carried out on the integration of targeted support.</li> <li>▪ Targeted support team established.</li> <li>▪ Review of CEG and IAG across all school and outreach locations</li> </ul>
More job opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Connexions Employer Liaison team is undertaking targeted work with employers and training providers to increase the number of job opportunities</li> </ul>
Cheaper more accessible transport, particularly from more remote rural areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The regional Learning and Skills Council has commissioned a feasibility study to on accessible transport for young people. The consultants are due to report back a number of options in June 2007.</li> <li>▪ From 4<sup>th</sup> March, a multi-operator weekly ticket became available in Darlington. Travel by bus provided by any operator costs £8 a week for any route and any number of journeys. This is particularly valuable for young people living in rural areas.</li> </ul>

## 10. Taking the work forward – enhancing vehicle for delivering priorities

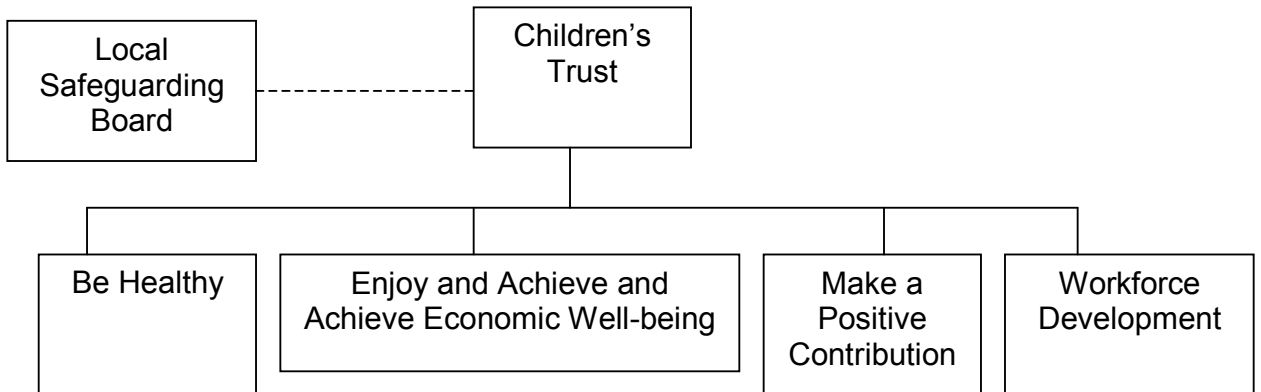
- Review of Children’s Trust arrangements

### Children’s Trust

The Children’s Trust was established in September 2006 as one of the 5 themed groups of the Local Strategic Partnership in Darlington, as follows:



The Children’s Trust has four sub-groups and strong links with the Darlington Local Safeguarding Board, as follows:





The Terms of Reference for the Children's Trust are as follows:

The Children's Trust aims to:

- Lead the way in delivering a step change in services for children and young people
- Have a key role in planning and delivering improved outcomes (as defined by Every Child Matters) for children and young people
- Bring together a range of partners, including agencies of consequence to children and young people that are not under a duty to co-operate, in order to integrate the planning and commissioning of child and family-centred services
- Focus on inter-agency working, making the Children's Trust the key means of delivering services personalised to a child or young person's needs.

Partners, working through Children's Trust arrangements, will:

- Understand the local supply and demand for children's services, engaging children and their families and the wider community
- Joint commission from statutory, voluntary, community and private sector partners
- Involve front-line deliverers of services, helping them meet the full range of children and young people's needs and to increasingly provide targeted support and early intervention within universal settings.

The Children's Trust will achieve these aims by leading in the following areas:

- Integrated front-line delivery: multi-agency working and co-location of teams building on Extended Schools and Children's Centres
- Integrated processes: common assessment and information sharing including designation of Lead Professionals
- Integrated strategy: planning and joint commissioning of services with pooled resources
- Integrated workforce development, planning and strategy
- Consulting and involving children, young people and their families and carers.

A Development Day is planned for 6<sup>th</sup> July 2007 to finalise partnership arrangements for the Children's Trust.

The Children's Trust meets six times a year and monitors the progress of the Children and Young People's Plan through reports received twice a year.

The **Children's Trust** has the following membership:

Director of Children's Services (Chair)	Darlington Borough Council, Children's Services
Member	Youth Parliament
Deputy Member	Youth Parliament
Development Manager	Darlington Association on Disability representing the Voluntary Sector
Darlington Resident	Representing the Community
Lead Member for Children's Services	Darlington Borough Council
Assistant Director (Partnerships & Integrated Services)	Darlington Borough Council, Children's Services
Assistant Director (Children & Families)	Darlington Borough Council, Children's Services
Head of Performance and Development	Darlington Borough Council, Children's Services
Policy and Performance Manager	Darlington Borough Council, Children's Services
Assistant Director	Darlington Borough Council, Environmental Services
Head of Youth Service	Darlington Borough Council, Youth Service
Chief Executive	Darlington Primary Care Trust
Darlington Safeguarding Board Training and Development Officer	Darlington Borough Council, Children's Services
Safer Communities Co-ordinator	Darlington Borough Council, Chief Executive's Office
Partnership Director, Darlington	Learning and Skills Council
Children's Health Services Lead	Darlington Primary Care Trust
Policy Lead Child Health	North East Strategic Health Authority
Director of Nursing	Co Durham and Darlington Acute Hospital Trust
Chief Inspector	Durham Constabulary
Lead member for Children and Young People	Durham Police Authority
Assistant Director	National Probation Service – County Durham
Head Teacher	Hummersknott School and Language College, representing secondary schools
Head Teacher	High Coniscliffe CE Primary School, representing primary schools
Principal	Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College
Principal and Chief Executive	Darlington College
Chair	Darlington Local Strategic Partnership
Chief Executive	Darlington Local Strategic Partnership
Development Officer	Children's Trust / Learning and Culture Partnership
Chief Executive	Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Trust

## 11. Making best use of our resources

This section demonstrates how Darlington prioritises and uses its funding. The strategy highlighted earlier in 'Delivering the vision' also provides an action plan for improvements and this action plan is rooted in what we know and what we can do.

### How we co-ordinate and deploy resources: Darlington Borough Council

Darlington Borough Council is an excellent authority, having maintained its 4 star rating in the Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment in 2006. We have a strong track record for managing finances and providing value for money services, achieving 3 out of 4 for value for money (vfm), which means that only 6 authorities in the country achieve a higher vfm score.

The Council has operated a medium term approach to its financial planning since 2000. This medium term financial planning (MTFP) process forecasts future resources and service demands for the next four years. This helps to plan and manage service priorities and initiatives, delivering sustained performance against the Council's priorities.

In 2005/06 a major internal restructuring was undertaken within the Council to create the Children's Services department, bringing together the Education and Children's Social Care budgets for 2006/07. The MTFP for 2006/07 to 2009/10 includes indicative allocations of resources to services, which reflect the Council's priority to increase funding for Children's Services. **From 2006/07, over the following three years, spending on Children's Services is planned to increase by £9.452m or 14.2%.**

Darlington's Local Area Agreement was signed in March 2006 and is specifically about improving the lives of young people in Darlington. This reflects the priority given to children's services locally. **The projected funding available to the LAA is a pooled budget of £8.4m over the period 2006-2009 and is a combination of new and existing aligned funding.**

The voluntary sector in Darlington makes a major contribution to the community and the economy of the town and has an aggregate annual income of £20m. **It is estimated that 22%, or £4.4m, of this funding is used by a number of different groups to serve the needs of children and young people.** Read more about this in the publication 'The Voluntary and Community Sector in Darlington, a picture of the resources available to the community' (Information Schedule - IS7).

There continues to be sustained capital investment in services for children and young people in Darlington. Since 2003 eight schools have moved into new premises in the Borough, with funding secured for a further 6 replacement school projects. This means that 34% of Darlington schools are, or soon will be, in brand new 21<sup>st</sup> century accommodation. The Council has also committed £2.4m towards replacing the Pupil Referral Unit, expected to open in 2008.

Performance on cost indicators is extremely good. The cost of services for children looked after (PAF B8) and the relative spend on children in need (PAF E44) remains in the optimum banding. Data published by the Audit Commission comparing cost and performance has been used to provide indications of value for money across the Council's services. The position for Children's Services shows average spending when compared to other unitary authorities, and above average performance thereby demonstrating exceptional value for money.

A substantial amount of money is spent on children and young people in Darlington. This is reflected in the amount of money the Council spends on Children's Services and the schools, which equates to approximately 56% of the Council's net budget. It is difficult to calculate precisely the total expenditure from all agencies in Darlington because information on spend relating specifically to children and young people from, for example, GPs is not available. However the tables below give an indication of the level of investment over time from the Council and the Primary Care Trust.

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
	£m	£m	£m
Schools	63.596	64.281	67.941
Non-school funding (including youth service)	4.660	6.580	9.861
Children's and families' services (including youth justice)	7.748	8.458	8.842
<b>Total Darlington Borough Council</b>	<b>76.004</b>	<b>79.319</b>	<b>86.644</b>

Source: RA Forms

	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08
	£m	£m	£m
Universal Services	1.582	1.769	N/A
Targeted Services	0.074	0.076	N/A
Hospital Services	5.980	6.257	N/A
Maternity Services	5.128	5.352	N/A
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	0.870	0.893	N/A
<b>Total Darlington PCT</b>	<b>13.634</b>	<b>14.347</b>	<b>N/A</b>

Source: Commissioner Summary for Darlington PCT 30th March 2007

### **How we co-ordinate and deploy resources: Darlington Children's Services**

For 2007/08 we have undertaken an extensive review of the CYPP and MTFP. This has involved the determination of priorities through the service planning process and linkage to required improvement in performance. This planning process has also involved partner agencies via the Children's Trust to ensure the most effective utilisation of resources to achieve common aims.

### **Resource deployment is matched to required improvements in service delivery.**

The Schools Forum approved a centrally held budget of £500k to support Every Child Matters and some major national and local issues. Some of these issues are current

such as behaviour, attendance and attainment. Other emerging issues include the 14-19 entitlement and the 6<sup>th</sup> day rule for permanent and fixed term exclusions and it is felt that they will have major implications in the near future. Children's Services will adopt a multi-agency approach, working with schools to tackle these issues and will support and encourage schools to work in partnership.

Investment of £100,000 has been made to support the roll out to all secondary schools of our highly successful Skills + programme. Skills + was introduced as a pilot in 2005 to pre-empt the national programme to transform secondary education. Each student follows a chosen vocational option plus key skills in Maths, English and ICT. Results from last year show a stunning increase in attendance and achievement and all Year 11 pupils on the course last year have successfully enrolled onto post-16 courses this year.

### **We are continually re-focussing resources while maintaining essential services.**

Darlington's Local Area Agreement is being used specifically to improve outcomes for children and young people. We are using the additional funding available through the LAA to experiment with new ways of improving quality of life and outcomes for children and young people in addition to the services that already exist. A specific example is the employment of additional staff to take forward developments in school clusters and locality-based working. The LAA enables us to invest in the transition to this way of working while ensuring existing services remain at full capacity.

The LAA has ensured that national and local initiatives are being effectively joined up to avoid duplication e.g. Safer Schools Partnership, National Healthy Schools Status and School Travel Plans.

### **Improved outcomes are achieved by using resources in the most effective way.**

A planned increase in the use of in-house foster care placements rather than more expensive independent fostering agencies is ongoing. This results in improved outcomes for children and families and is recognised as a key strength in the 2006 Annual Performance Assessment report. We have re-directed resources of £100,000 within our MTFP to address this.

### **Investment in universal provision and early intervention.**

There are a number of very good examples including Targeted Multi-Disciplinary Team, Safer Schools Partnership, Intensive Family Learning Project, Family Intervention Project and Mainstreaming Effective Health Support.

### **Measurement of performance allows specific outcomes to be related to deployed resources**

Specific performance measures have been developed for each of the schemes within the LAA. This information will be used to determine, at the earliest opportunity, whether the scheme is having the required impact and will inform future plans for increasing the scale of the project or adopting an alternative course of action. An example of this is the small-scale Intensive Family Learning project which impacts upon a small number of

families - unique objectives and milestones are set for each family at the start and progress is monitored against these.

### **How we co-ordinate and deploy resources: Children's Trust**

The principle of the Darlington Borough Council approach has been adopted to support the Children's Trust financial planning framework. The providers of services for children and young people will increasingly work together to plan long-term resource strategies and commission services. The Children and Young People's Plan has a key role to play in setting out the Trust's resource requirements and in providing a link to service and budget strategies across agencies. The best example of this can be evidenced in Darlington's approach to developing our Local Area Agreement.

The development of the Children's Trust is a crucial vehicle in moving towards pooling budgets and closer integration of services. We have a variety of joint funding and integrated working models, which involve the pooling of financial and/or human resources to support priority areas, namely:

- Local Area Agreement
- CAMHS
- Children's Fund
- Children's Centres
- 14-19 Trust
- Disabled Children
- Extended Schools
- Substance Misuse
- Youth Offending

Agencies have always worked together through robust partnership arrangements to deliver services to children and young people in Darlington and further development of an integrated approach to service delivery remains a priority. Opportunities for future working between the local authority and the health services lie in the following areas:

- developing a close public health partnership for the town
- moving to more joint commissioning for the best services for Darlington
- moving local health services provision into the Children's Trust in Darlington

Developments have already started to take effect in some of these areas. An Integrated Services Manager for disabled children has recently been appointed and this will further the integration of service delivery. In addition, a joint management post between the local authority and the PCT has been established to lead on commissioning.