



The best start in life

South Tyneside's Children
and Families Board

2017-20



South Tyneside Council

**HELLO TOMORROW
CHANGE IS HAPPENING**

Working together to give children and young people the best start in life...



The best start in life



South Tyneside Council



Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust



South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust

Change is happening.

Foreword

The 'South Tyneside Vision', launched in 2010, marked the commencement of an ambitious 20 year journey to see *South Tyneside become an outstanding place to live, invest and bring up families.*

The next 5 years of the vision has recently been launched, which prioritises Early Help for children and their families, improved health and wellbeing and improved education and skills.

Our 2017-20 Best Start in Life Strategy sets out our commitment to improving the lives and life chances of children and families in South Tyneside, to ensure each and every child in South Tyneside is provided with the best start in life.

It remains our vision to provide the right services, in the right way, at the right time.

Over the course of the previous three year plan, we as a partnership have achieved much we can celebrate. I am proud to see the impact our collective efforts have made to improve the life chances in our borough, and remain excited to see what achievements the coming three years will bring.

Councillor Joan Atkinson

Lead Member Children, Young People and Families
Chair of the Children and Families Board



Executive Summary

Our [Best Start in Life Strategy](#) sets out our shared ambition for improving the lives of children and families in South Tyneside, and is both our [plan for children and young people](#) and our [child poverty strategy](#).

We want South Tyneside's children and families to get the [best start in life](#), remain healthy and aspire to a bright and prosperous future. To ensure everyone reaches their full potential, we will work together to provide the best possible learning and recreation opportunities, with targeted protection, care and support for those in greatest need.

Underpinning our vision are three priority areas, which outline our approach to supporting the children, young people and their families living in South Tyneside.

We will build [Safer and Stronger Families](#) through targeted early help and support, protecting children and young people at risk, and give our looked after children the best start in life.

We will improve [Enterprise Learning and Skills](#) opportunities through continuing to provide high quality early years and educational settings, providing support for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and working together to provide high quality training and employment opportunities.

We will support the development of [Healthier Communities](#) by protecting the health of our residents, promoting healthier lifestyles and reducing risk-taking behaviours.

This plan is produced on the basis of two underlying principles:

1. Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
2. A child-centred approach is adopted across all services

The combined efforts of the Children and Families Board in delivering on our obsessions will result in improved emotional wellbeing of all children and families living in South Tyneside.

John Pearce

Corporate Director Children,
Adults and Health, South Tyneside Council



Partnership Progress and Achievements

Since the 2016 Annual Refresh, the Partnership has achieved much we can celebrate.

South Tyneside's partnership was subject to the first [Joint Targeted Area Inspection](#) in February 2016, which had a particular focus on child sexual exploitation. The inspection process saw the local area welcome inspectors from Ofsted, CQC, HMIC and HMIP. Following this inspection a report published online highlighted the strengths of our shared working.

In September 2016, [Northumberland Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust](#) was judged to be 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission with regards to mental health support services.

2017 marks the launch of partnership working in South Tyneside, with our [Integrated Safeguarding Interventions Team](#) being the first step of fully integrated working to better the lives of the children and young people of South Tyneside.

The local authority's [Adoption Service](#) continues to perform extremely well with our 2016-17 performance placing us in the top 10 performing councils in England.

Our children's centres and schools continue to be graded positively by Ofsted, with 92% of pupils attending a school judged to be either good or outstanding.

A total of 51 schools have joined the [Healthy Schools programme](#) with 14 of our schools reaccrediting during this last year.

Regionally, partnership working on the [Operation Encompass](#) and [Sanctuary South](#) initiatives have targeted combined safeguarding resources, working to safely reduce issues such as sexual exploitation and domestic abuse.

Whilst we continue to operate in times of unprecedented change, demand for services continues to rise at the same time government funding is falling. It is more important than ever to ensure our shared resources continue to be put to the best possible use in the borough.

However, new pressures on current services have required a shifting approach to service delivery.

The South Tyneside Vision

The South Tyneside Partnership has outlined a vision (2011– 2031) that “South Tyneside will be an outstanding place to live, invest and bring up families”. To achieve our overall vision we have agreed 10 strategic outcomes under the themes ‘People’ and ‘Place’. These are the things we will achieve over 20 years:

People

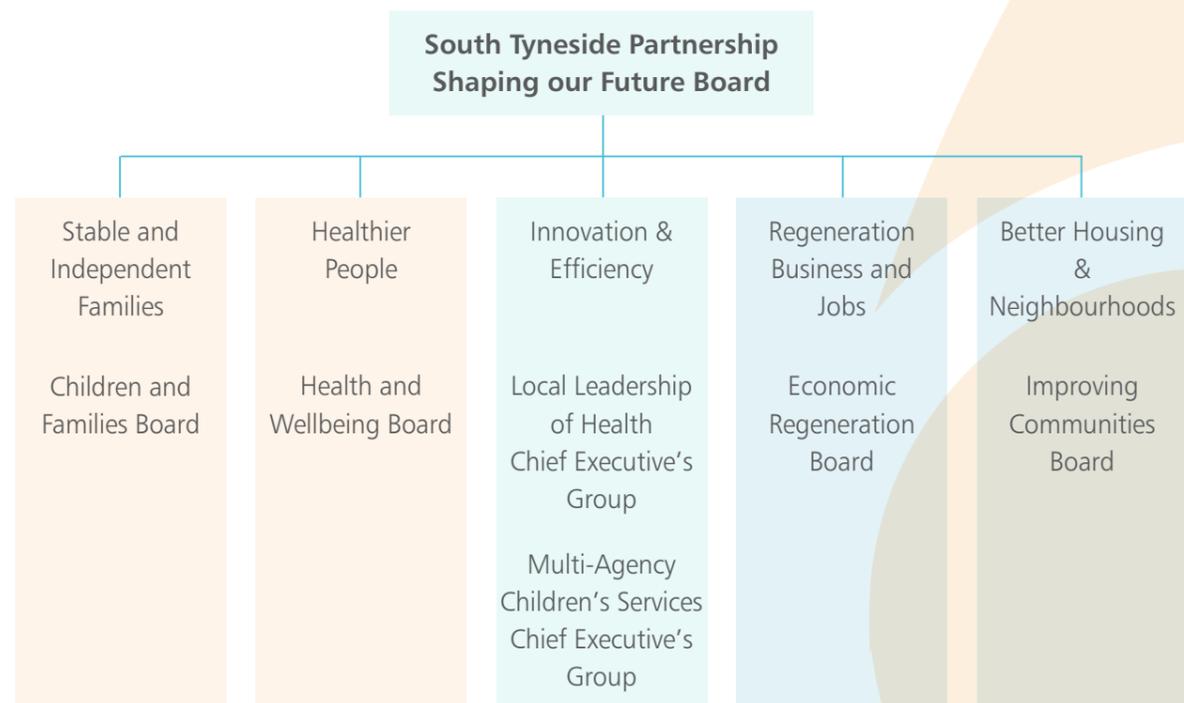
- Better education and skills
- Increasing prosperity
- Promoting independence and enablement
- Safer and stronger families
- Healthier people

Place

- A regenerated South Tyneside with increased businesses and jobs
- Better transport
- Better housing and neighbourhoods
- A clean and green environment
- Less crime and safer communities

With less public money available we all need to work more closely together with our communities to share and pool local public resources as well as rethinking how to use them to best effect.

The South Tyneside Partnership is shaped to deliver our strategic outcomes. The ‘Shaping our Future Board’ is supported by five strategic boards to deliver our community priorities – one of these boards is the Children and Families Board.

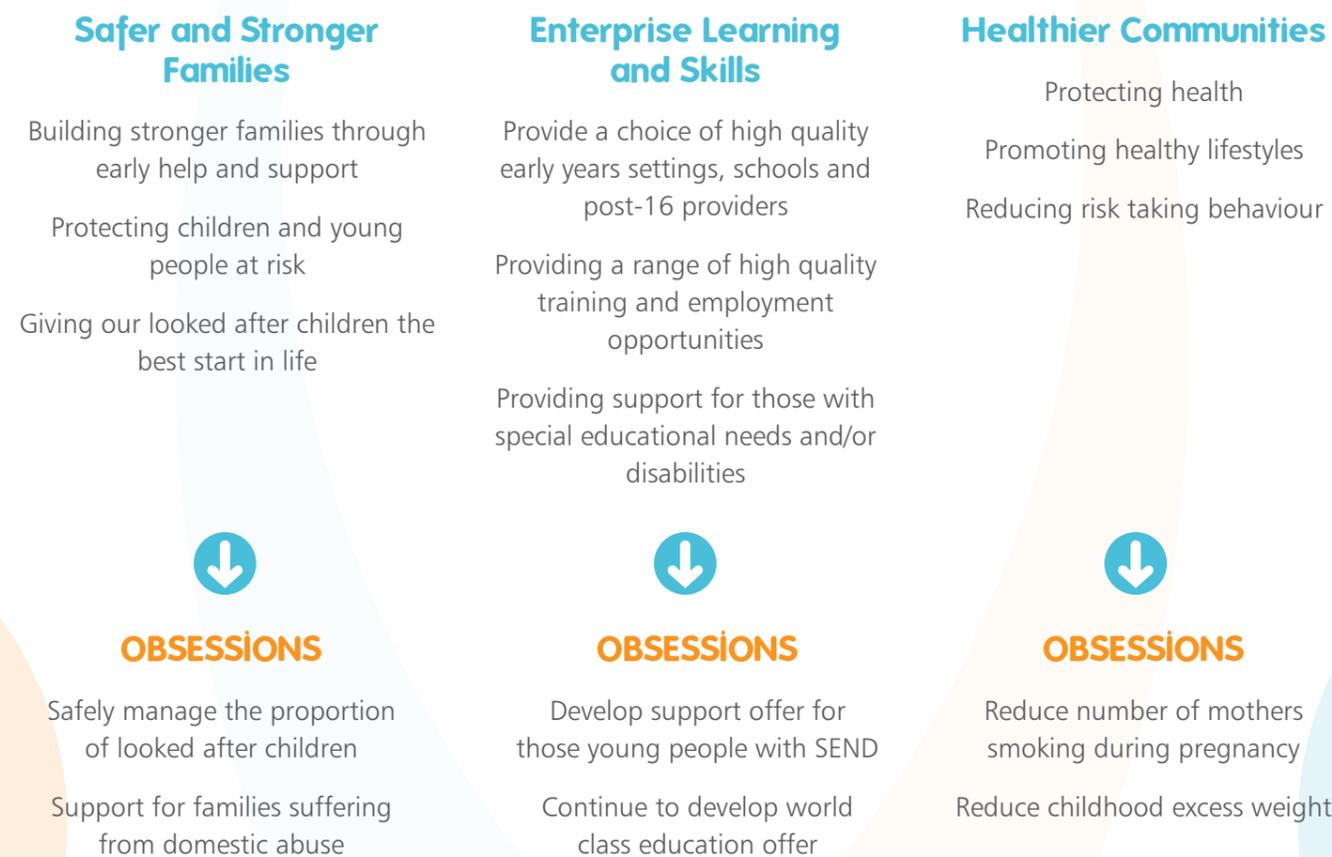


Our Vision

We want South Tyneside’s children and families to get the **best start in life** remain healthy and aspire to a bright and prosperous future. To ensure everyone reaches their full potential, we will work together to provide the best possible learning and recreation opportunities, with targeted protection, care and support for those in greatest need.



The best start in life



Improved emotional health and wellbeing of all children and young people

Demographic profile of our children and young people



There are approximately **1,700 births per year**. This is projected to decrease to 1,600 by 2024



50 / 50 gender split for children and young people



57.7% achieved 5 + A*-C including English and Maths – national average is 53.8%



In 2015, **5.7%** 16-18 year olds were not in education employment or training



25.2% of 4-5 year olds have excess weight. In 10-11 year olds, this is 39.3%



20.1% of households in the borough were classed as 'workless' in 2015.



Smoking status at time of delivery is worse than England average, with **21.8% pregnancies** at 31 March 2016



At 31 March 2017, **280 children and young people were looked after**



33% of all A&E attendances in 0-17 year olds have been due to accidents



The teenage pregnancy rate is slightly higher than the England average, with a rate of **30.09 per 1,000 at March 2016**

Safer and Stronger Families

All children and young people should be encouraged, where appropriate, to remain safely in the care of their families, with appropriate levels of support offered to facilitate this. Where this is not possible however, the local authority has a duty of care, as a Corporate Parent, to ensure that safe, suitable accommodation is found that best meets the needs of that particular child.

By adopting a child-centred approach, ensuring that any intervention is informed by a thorough understanding of what life is like for each child in their own home environment, as a partnership we will be able to work towards this shared goal. We want to see more children and young people live safely and positively within their family homes and local communities. Supporting families to become safer and stronger is essential to achieving this.

Important to the work of strengthening families in South Tyneside is the Integrated Safeguarding Interventions Team (ISIT). The triage element of ISIT ensures the right service is provided to support the right families at the right time. Working together in this way means families are supported and strengthened at the earliest opportunity.

What are we going to do?

Building stronger families through early help and support

At March 2017 there were 666 cases requiring preventive support at a lower intervention level. Some have been worked with for short periods, and some have had support for more than 18 months.

The rate of referrals in 2016/17 (at 632.9 per 10,000) is lower than the 2015/16 rate (663.5 per 10,000) however it remains above the national rate (532.2), the rate of statistical neighbours (598.6) and the North East (622.6). 21.8% of referrals received in 2016/17 were repeat referrals.

The most common assessment factors identified throughout 2016/17 were concerns about the mental health of parents and carers (27.2%), and concerns about the child's parent/carer being the subject of domestic violence (25.2%). Compared to 2015/16, mental health of the child is increasingly being highlighted as a factor, and was identified in 12.9% of assessments.

These factors identified during assessment work, show how important it is to work together as a partnership to build stronger families not just through the work of the Children and Families Board but also through the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The number of children and young people living in households where neglect or domestic violence are a feature continues to be significant and is reflected in our safeguarding activity. Safeguarding is everyone's business, but families, and parents and carers in particular, have the greatest impact upon children. Supporting families by developing services that facilitate early identification of problems and early intervention can ensure that the needs of children and young people are properly addressed.

Our Edge of Care project "Families First" will provide those families in need with a dedicated respite resource at critical points in a young person's journey, to prevent unnecessary admissions into care.



Protecting children and young people at risk

The number of children in need of formal safeguarding intervention in South Tyneside has risen significantly in recent years, with the rate of child protection plans as at the end of March 2017 as 59.7 per 10,000 of population, which is lower than the 2015/16 rate, and lower than the rates of statistical neighbours (63.9). This however remains significantly higher than the rate in England at the end of 2015/16 (43.1). This changing trend may be a reflection of increased early identification of risk and evidence that the partnership approach to safeguarding is being effective.

Children affected by domestic abuse are typically identified as being at risk of emotional abuse. The presenting issues, whatever the associated cause or risk factor, could in almost all cases be described as neglect.

The number of children discussed in relation to child sexual exploitation at MSET (Missing, Sexually Exploited and Trafficked) Group continues to increase, from 65 cases in 2015/16 to 85 in 2016/17. Between April and December 2016, 68 children were discussed specifically in relation to CSE. Safeguarding initiatives such as Sanctuary South will continue to support young people identified as being at risk.

The launch of our Integrated Safeguarding Interventions Team will strengthen our combined partnership approach to providing all children and families with the best start in life, and ensure that the right service is provided at the right time, with an increased focus on Early Help.

Giving our looked after children the best start in life

Our looked after children are children who are unable to remain safely in the care of their family regardless of support and interventions offered. This may be a reflection of the complex and hidden needs that exist within families and needs escalating over time. Looked after children are a population group that are particularly vulnerable and giving them the attention and support that they require is a priority.

Historically South Tyneside has had a higher level of looked after children than in similar authorities, although the trend is that local numbers are reducing. Numbers of looked after children have safely and steadily declined in recent years from 320 at March 2013 to 280 at March 2017. The age 10-15 cohort represents the largest proportion of our looked after children, with 42% of all looked after children falling into this age bracket. The educational development that occurs during this period is key to shaping future success and so understanding the needs of this cohort whilst in care is vital to provide them with the best start in life.

Key Strategies and Delivery Plans

- Early Help Strategy
- Children and Families Social Care Improvement Plan
- ISIT Strategy
- Corporate Parenting Strategy
- Looked After Children Sufficiency Strategy
- Child Permanency Strategy
- Local Safeguarding Children's Board Business Plan
- Community Safety Partnership Strategy
- Children and Young People Participation Strategy

Key Actions

- Ensure that all agencies are proportionately represented as Lead Professionals of Early Help Plans
- Continue threshold training across partnership to increase awareness leading to fewer inappropriate contacts and an increased referral rate
- Further develop integrated working to understand prevalence and need for targeted interventions
- Continue to safely reduce the numbers of looked after children
- Promote and increase the participation of our children and young people ensuring their voice is heard in a number of strategic plans and projects



Enterprise, Learning and Skills

As a partnership, we are committed to ensuring that all children and young people are enabled and encouraged to achieve to the best of their abilities. We want to do so in such a way that our children, young people and their families understand and are equipped to be lifelong learners.

Our young people must leave school with the skills and qualifications that they need to ensure that they are successful whichever path they follow. We need to continue to develop industry relevant pathways to employment for school age young people.

The proportion of primary and secondary schools that are good or better is at 94.4%. Children's baseline assessment at age 5 is below the national average. When tracking the cohort through key stage development however, attainment improves and by Key Stage 1 our children have higher average point scores that regional and national averages in reading, writing and mathematics.

	South Tyneside	Regional	National
Reading	78%	75%	74%
Writing	72%	68%	65%
Mathematics	77%	74%	73%

In 2016, 62.3% of all local pupils achieved Grade C or better in GCSE English and Maths, compared to the national average of 59.3%.

At March 2017, there are 8 academies operating within South Tyneside. We will continue to engage with our family of schools, to promote a singular co-ordinated approach to maintained school improvement. We will also actively work to share information and learning opportunities with academies to provide the best possible learning environment for all pupils with a world-class education offer.

What are we going to do?

Providing a choice of high quality early years settings, schools & post 16 providers

As part of the Transforming Our Primary Schools (TOPS) programme, we have invested £143 million in secondary, special and primary schools around South Tyneside to ensure that our children and young people get the world class education they deserve. In light of a changing national funding context, all local secondary schools will have been rebuilt or comprehensively remodelled, and most special schools will be operating from new premises.

Providing a range of high quality training and employment opportunities

The percentage of unemployed young adults in the North East is higher than the national average, but there is also a significant gap between the North East average and South Tyneside, and our most recent JSNAA identifies South Tyneside as being 7th most deprived in terms of employment.

Over 300 16-18 year olds are not in education, employment or training, equating to 6% of the cohort. This is higher than the national average of just 4%.

April 2017 has seen the launch of the Apprenticeship Levy; a national scheme promoting the use of apprenticeships and other work-based training opportunities. As a partnership, we need to identify opportunities for apprentices in all organisations, helping to provide learners and employers in South Tyneside with the skills for continued future economic development.

Providing support for those with special educational needs and / or disabilities

The Portage Service works with on average 24 children with identified SEND in the home and 26 in pre-school settings at any one time. In addition to this, the Pre-School Service provides direct support or advice for the support of 39 identified children in pre-school settings at any one time. Parents and professionals rate the service as very good. In 2015/16, 97.7% of respondents to our satisfaction questionnaire judged the service as 'very good' or 'excellent'. However, there is still work to be done to ensure the local offer for those with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities continues to meet the identified needs, providing the best possible service.

Key Strategies and Delivery Plans

- Approach to School Improvement and Plans
- Business Employment and Skills Post-16 Education
- Local Strategic Commissioning Statement
- SEND Strategy

Key Actions

- Carry out analysis of end of EYFS school-based & LA data, using this to identify settings for targeted and intensive support
- Support settings and Early Years practitioners to raise outcomes for disadvantaged children so that gaps between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children are narrowed at the end of EYFS
- Develop schools risk tracker so local authority has a comprehensive view of risks in schools to include safeguarding and health and safety.
- Improve intensity of monitoring of NEET and "not known" young people through revising deployment of specialist officers
- Support schools and post 16 providers to improve quality of Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance so that more students make the correct choices.
- Support increased uptake in STEM subjects at Key Stage 5
- Identify employers who can offer IAG on the range of opportunities with STEM Employers and promote opportunities to students
- Continue regional collaborative work on the International Advanced Manufacturing Park (IAMP) to increase economic wellbeing within South Tyneside.

Healthier Communities

It is clear from evidence available that action to improve health and wellbeing and tackle inequalities must start before birth and continue throughout childhood into adult life to break the links between early disadvantage and poor outcomes.

What are we going to do?

Protecting health

SMOKING: South Tyneside has a high rate for smoking in pregnancy, as was highlighted in the 2016 refresh of this strategy. In 2015/16, 352 babies were born to mothers who smoke – this is 21.8% of all pregnancies in South Tyneside; nationally it is only 11.4%.

Smoking remains a challenge through the lives of local children and young people, with 5.9% of children aged 11-15 smoking in South Tyneside.

However, smoking among adults has reduced locally. In 2012, nearly 22% of adults were smokers compared to 19% nationally. By 2015, this had reduced to 17.4% locally compared with 16.9% nationally.

This reduction was due, in part, to the continued promotion of local smoking cessation services and awareness-raising amongst residents. There are stop smoking services operating in 10 of our children's centres, targeting those communities where inequalities exist. The Council's People Select Committee launched a Commission on Tackling Smoking in 2016, which oversees much of the work taking place locally.

BREASTFEEDING: The North East region has the lowest number of mothers that continue to breastfeed up to 6 to 8 weeks among all 10 English regions and the proportion remains below the North East average in South Tyneside. Breast feeding initiation in 2014/15 was at 53%, which is worse than the England average of 74.3%.

MENTAL HEALTH: The Mental Health Profile for South Tyneside shows that the borough's population has a higher prevalence of many risk factors associated with mental ill health. The risk factor for mental health in South Tyneside is 39.9% of the relevant population living in the most deprived areas in 2010, compared to national average of 19.8%. Moreover, 17.77% of adults in South Tyneside live with depression (11.6% nationally). The total number of children and young people in South Tyneside accessing CAMHS services in 2013 was 1,423. Better engagement of people with mental health problems has been picked up as a priority action in the Change4Life and A Better U programmes.



Promoting healthy lifestyles

Following a peak in 2011/12, the prevalence of obesity among Reception Year children has fallen and is now close to the regional average at 10.4%. There are areas within South Tyneside where the local prevalence of obesity is between 13% and 19%.

The proportion obese among Year 6 children (23%) has fallen compared to the previous year but remains higher than the regional average. There are areas within South Tyneside where the local prevalence of obesity is between 26% and 32%. The Health and Wellbeing Board has established a Childhood Healthy Weight Action Planning Group to specifically address this.

Reducing risk taking behaviour

Parental problems such as mental illness, alcohol and drug use and domestic violence are all known to increase the likelihood of children experiencing emotional abuse and neglect, particularly when they appear in combination. The incidence of adult alcohol and substance misuse within the context of parenting is important given the high numbers of child protection plans where parental substance misuse is a factor (13.9% of social care assessments in 2016/17).

South Tyneside has the 6th highest Alcohol Treatment prevalence per 1000, population. There has been an increasing trend of alcohol specific hospital admissions since 2008/9 and this is reflected in the high number of young people adversely affected by alcohol misuse.

The annualised 2016/17 rate of admissions due to accidents for South Tyneside (1,913.87) remains higher than the North East aggregate (1,301.66); this rate remains highest in the region. 35% of all admissions due to accidents were in the 12-17 age group, with the most common reason being 'poisoning by drugs, medicaments and biological substances'.

There remains a large and persistent gap between England and South Tyneside in the proportion of women that continue to smoke throughout pregnancy, with rates that are significantly higher in South Tyneside (25%) than in England as a whole (12%).

Since 1998, the under 18 conception rate has fallen by 40% across England and the North East and by 50% in South Tyneside. However, South Tyneside's rate is still higher than England's and in 2013, approximately 29 girls aged under 18 conceived for every 1,000 women aged 15-17 years in this area. In 2013-14, 11 looked after children and care leavers became pregnant.

Working together to strengthen communities

Colleagues from a number of partner agencies have recently been working to implement a 'locality delivery team' model, providing universal as well as targeted intervention to families living in the borough.

By locating services 'under one roof' in the places people visit frequently, they are more likely to find the help they need. We are working closely together to identify the criteria for an integrated working model and will implement this later in 2017.

Key Strategies and Delivery Plans

- Better Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy for Children & Young People
- Alcohol Strategy

Key Actions

- To continue to encourage participation in the National Child Measurement Programme
- To implement the key recommendations from the Childhood Obesity Strategy
- To continue to promote smoking cessation services across the borough
- To prioritise and promote sexual health services
- Implement recommendations as identified in the refreshed Alcohol Strategy
- Continue to plan and prepare for integrated children and family teams implementation



Equality and Diversity

As a partnership we have an important responsibility to secure the wellbeing of all children and young people, with a particular focus on safeguarding those groups who are vulnerable because of their background, beliefs, ethnicity, or disability. To achieve this, we know that we need to focus in part on raising the aspirations of our young people and closing the attainment gap between those who live in our most deprived neighbourhoods and the rest of the borough, so that every one of them has an equal opportunity to succeed.

How will the results be used?

It is important that the Partnership not only recognises the borough's demographic profile and performance, but understands the wider implications for residents.

By monitoring our joint performance, the findings will enable service delivery to be reshaped in a meaningful way, with resources targeted at the right areas of the borough.

The Children and Families Board will receive regular performance updates from each of the strategic priorities from our Vision. Partnership scrutiny and information sharing will strengthen our combined effort to provide our children and young people with the best start in life.

A model of regular review will enable us all to adopt a co-ordinated approach, with an increased awareness of performance against our shared vision.

Through the shared delivery of our Strategy, we can work together to improve the emotional health and wellbeing of our children and young people, reducing child poverty and provide the best start in life.

Governance & Delivery

The Children and Families Board will have overall responsibility and ownership this strategy and its delivery.

As a partnership, the Board will focus on those issues that we are able to deliver collectively. This will be strengthened through the recent improvements made in moving towards truly integrated service delivery models.

The responsibility for safeguarding children and young people is shared across the partnership, through the Children and Families Board, the Community Safety Partnership, and Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Local Safeguarding Adults Board. Whilst each group have different roles with individual priorities and aims, they all have a shared vision for promoting the welfare and life chances of children and young people, helping them to reach their full potential.

To ensure effective delivery of our vision, performance data will be received and scrutinised by the Board at regular intervals. Each meeting of the Board will have a particular strategic focus on a strand of objectives allowing full and complete analysis of performance of key agencies in that area.

