



Children's Trust

Worcestershire's Children and Young People's Plan

2011-2014

Introduction

Welcome to the Children and Young People's Plan for Worcestershire. This plan has been produced by the Worcestershire Children's Trust as the single plan for all children and young people in Worcestershire aged from 0-19 years, and some groups of vulnerable young people up to the age of 25 years old.

Whilst there is no longer a statutory responsibility for producing a Children and Young People's Plan, the Children's Trust in Worcestershire recognises the importance of partnership working and co-operation between agencies working with children, young people and families in improving their life chances and wishes to build on the substantial work that has gone on previously.

To help decide the priorities for this Children and Young People's Plan, the Children's Trust has used data and information about the needs of children, young people and families in Worcestershire, and has consulted widely with children, young people, their parents and carers and those that work with them. The plan expresses a commitment to participation, co-operation and collaboration by the Children's Trust agencies. The priorities contained within this plan are joint overarching priorities. The plan also states how the priorities will be addressed and how the Children's Trust will know when the priorities have made a difference to the life chances of children, young people and families in Worcestershire. The priorities in this plan are commensurate with those of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board.

Most children and young people in Worcestershire achieve excellent outcomes, but the Trust recognises that a proportion of children and young people are vulnerable and in need of extra support, and a smaller proportion need specialist care. Whilst the Children's Trust want all children, young people and families to fulfill their potential, future activity will be focused on those who are currently not doing so well.

With this approach in mind, an area of focus is to reduce and mitigate against the effects of child poverty. Therefore, the Child Poverty Strategy for Worcestershire is incorporated within this Children and Young People's Plan. In doing so, the Children's Trust are acknowledging that the lack of parental resources and/or the lack of opportunities for children to participate in meaningful activities, services and relationships during childhood negatively affect children and young people's wellbeing, development and future life chances. Tackling socio-economic disadvantage and improving life chances is the mechanism for reducing the number of children who grow up in poverty and this plan demonstrates how the Children's Trust will help families to move out of poverty and to improve their economic wellbeing.

Publication of this plan would not have been possible without the support of all those who contributed to consultation. The Children's Trust would like to thank all those who have taken part, especially the children, young people, parents, carers and the Children's Trust Shadow Board whose input has been invaluable in shaping the plan.

Councillor Liz Eyre
Chair of Worcestershire Children's Trust <insert photograph here>

Gail Quinton
Director of Children's Services <insert photograph here>

Our Vision, Values and Approach

Vision

We want Worcestershire to be an outstanding place for children and young people to grow up.

We will strive to ensure that every child, young person and family in Worcestershire:

- is safe;
- is healthy;
- is valued and respected;
- achieves success;
- is happy and fulfilled.

It is important that every child grows up with enthusiasm for life and learning, through a range of engaging and stimulating experiences which will enable them to develop qualities to become confident citizens who respect others and make a full and positive contribution to their communities.

To enable them to have and achieve their aspirations, we will work in partnership to support, engage and empower children, young people, and their families.

Values

The Children's Trust wishes families to be at the centre of all it does or strives to do. Our values take account of the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child and are:

- respect for children, young people and their families;
- children, young people, families and communities are involved in decision-making;
- working together in partnership;
- valuing diversity;
- support if it is needed.

Please click [here](#) for details of our values.

Approach

The priorities contained in this plan:

- are based on evidence of need;
- incorporate recommendations from external assessment of the performance of some services in Worcestershire by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission;
- reflect local views, wishes and aspirations of children, young people and their parents and carers, as well as local community leaders such as elected members;
- draw upon the knowledge and experience of operational staff and managers.

Our approach will be to:

- focus actions on those children, young people and families living on a low income as well as those children, young people and families who are vulnerable¹;
- encourage local solutions to local problems/issues;
- provide services that deliver value for money;
- promote personalisation;
- encourage and empower families to help themselves;
- work in partnership whenever and wherever possible;
- do what we know has been proven to work.

Child Poverty

The Child Poverty Act, 2010 places a statutory duty on all local authority areas to outline how partner agencies will reduce and mitigate against the effects of child poverty. Living in poverty is associated with poorer health and wellbeing, living in poor quality accommodation, as well as low educational attainment, skills and aspirations. Children and young people who grow up in poverty lack many of the opportunities that other children and young people are able to access. There were 17,060 children and young people living in poverty² in Worcestershire in 2008 which represents 14.5% of all children and young people living in the county. Whilst levels of deprivation across Worcestershire are generally low compared to other areas of England, there are pockets of higher levels of deprivation situated in the urban areas of Kidderminster, Worcester City and Redditch, and also in some rural areas. Consultation indicates that rural isolation of families in some parts of Worcestershire exacerbates the issues related to living in poverty. Further information can be found in the Child Poverty Needs Assessment which can be accessed at **<hyperlink to be added in May>**.

This Plan includes the Child Poverty Strategy for Worcestershire. It outlines the commitment of partner agencies in Worcestershire to reducing child poverty and improving life chances for those who are socio-economically disadvantaged. All of the priorities within this plan will be targeted at those families who are socio-economically disadvantaged, with an emphasis on:

- Early intervention and the 'Foundation Years';
- Employment and skills;

¹ These include those children, young people and families who:

- live on a low income;
- have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or additional learning needs;
- are from ethnic minority groups;
- are looked after;
- are young offenders;
- are from families where there is domestic abuse;
- are young carers, teenage parents, excluded from school, have poor records of attendance at school, are at risk of harm, who are living with vulnerable adults or who are asylum seekers or refugees.

² defined as the proportion of children in families in receipt of out of work (means-tested) benefits or in receipt of tax credits where their reported income is less than 60% of median income.

- Financial support;
- Targeting resources more effectively at tackling childhood disadvantage.

This is consistent with the Department of Education's "Tackling child poverty and improving life chances: consulting on a new approach". Success at reducing child poverty will be measured through the former national indicator (116) - the proportion of children who live in families in receipt of out of work benefits – as well as other outcome indicators contained in this plan.

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Priorities

Our priorities are that:

children and young people will be protected from harm and neglect;

with a particular focus on:

- the impact on families of **domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental health issues**;
- **improving safeguarding services**;
- children and young people **feeling safe** wherever they are.

educational outcomes will be outstanding for all children and young people;

with a particular focus on:

- supporting and challenging **schools and other settings to improve pupil attainment and progress**;
- addressing **inequalities in educational outcomes**, especially vulnerable groups.

young people will move successfully into adulthood;

with a particular focus on:

- **transition arrangements** between children and adult services;
- **education, employment and training** opportunities for young people.

children and young people have the opportunity to grow up in stable and secure families;

with a particular focus on:

- **looked after children** and those at risk of becoming looked after;
- **targeted early intervention** and support for families most in need.

children and young people will grow up healthily.

with a particular focus on:

- effective and comprehensive **mental health, speech language and communication and disability services**;
- reducing **inequalities** in health outcomes.

Children and young people will be protected from harm and neglect.

This priority will focus on:

- the impact on families of **domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental health issues;**
- **improving safeguarding services;**
- children and young people **feeling safe** wherever they are.

The impact on families of domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental health issues

Why is this important?

- National research indicates that the experience of watching, hearing or otherwise being aware of domestic abuse can impact children and young people's physical, emotional and social development. This is a priority in Worcestershire's Community Safety Strategy and Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board's business plan.
- There has been an increase in the number of reported domestic abuse incidents and the number of domestic abuse crimes where a child was present in Worcestershire, although this varies across the county <Domestic Abuse Strategy to be hyperlinked in June 2011>.
- Children with Child Protection Plans are often from families where there is a high incidence of domestic abuse, parental alcohol and drug misuse, parental mental health issues and parental offending history.
- Mothers experiencing domestic abuse are more likely to become lone parents, less likely to be earning independently, and more likely to report their families getting into financial difficulties which lead to poverty. Family income is often withheld from the victim and child as part of the pattern of abuse.
- The Children's Trust Shadow Board considers domestic abuse to be a potential cause of significant harm, and young people feel that they need more support from professionals as well as information and advice.

What will be done?

- Multi-agency screening and risk assessment processes for incidents of domestic abuse will be developed and implemented.
- Individuals with children who are involved in, or at risk of, involvement in domestic abuse – either as perpetrators or victims – will be identified.
- Collaborative commissioning approach between Children's Services and Supporting People will be established.
- Preventing domestic abuse will be a key strand of the Early Intervention Commissioning Strategy.

What will success look like?

- Children are safer from the risk and effects of domestic abuse through a greater awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people amongst practitioners.
- Improved screening, risk assessment and identification of those in need of protection.
- More support is given to children and young people affected by domestic abuse.

How will success be measured?

- An increase in the number of reported domestic abuse incidents where a child was present in Worcestershire from 2752 in 2009/10.
- A reduction in the proportion of Child Protection Plans where domestic abuse is identified as a factor from 47.3% during 2009/10 to 45% for 2011/12.
- An increase in the number of CAFs where domestic abuse is a factor *baseline and target to be set*.

- The number of men who access the Voluntary Access Perpetrator Programme who: a) have children; b) live with their children; c) have supervised contact with their children; d) have non-supervised contact with their children. *Baselines to be set.*
- An increase in the number of schools that have confirmed they are using the 'Expect Respect Programme' from 6 in 2010/11 to 50 in 2011/12.

Children's Trust Sponsor: Hilary Thompson on behalf of Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board.

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Improving Safeguarding services

Why is this important?

- Protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect is the joint responsibility of all partners involved in Worcestershire's Children's Trust and the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board.
- In October 2010, Ofsted assessed services that safeguard children in Worcestershire as inadequate.
- Ensuring that children and young people are safe and protected was rated as the top priority during consultation with all stakeholders, including the general public.
- Nationally, most children on child protection registers are from low-income families and the most commonly identified stress factors in all registered cases of child abuse are unemployment and debt, which are closely related to poverty.

What will be done?

- The improvements as set out in the Safeguarding and Looked After Children Services Notice to Improve will be delivered in order to ensure that children and young people are kept safe through consistently applied thresholds of access to services and support, high quality timely assessments and decision making and effective inter-agency working.

What will success look like?

- Children and young people who require support receive timely and consistently high quality services.
- All providers and settings will have appropriate safeguarding policies and procedures in place and adhered to.
- Fewer children and young people requiring social care or repeated social care support.
- Consistent application of thresholds and processes for access to services by all agencies involved in safeguarding children and young people.
- All agencies involved in safeguarding children and young people work co-operatively and share information in a timely and appropriate way.

How will success be measured?

- An increase in the percentage of initial assessments for children's social care carried out within ten working days of referral from 62.2% in 2009/10 to 80% in 2011/12.
- An increase in the percentage of core assessments for children's social care carried out within 35 working days of their commencement from 20.8% in 2009/10 to 78% in 2011/12.
- A decrease in the number of children with a child protection plan from 451 in December 2010 to 360 2011/12.
- A decrease in the percentage of children subject to a child protection plan for a second or subsequent time from 13.6% in December 2010 to below 12% by the end of 2011/12.
- An increase in the percentage of multi-agency case file audits assessed as being at least satisfactory from 33% in January 2011 to 100% in March 2012.

Children's Trust Sponsor: Hilary Thompson on behalf of Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board.

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Children and young people feeling safe wherever they are

Why is this important?

- Bullying, including cyber-bullying, was raised consistently as an issue during consultation with children and young people. Many knew how to report bullying to their school or an adult, but felt that they did not receive enough support once they had reported it.

What will be done?

- Anti-bullying strategies and good practice will be shared and promoted across schools and other agencies.
- E-Safety for children and young people who use ICT and mobile communication equipment will be promoted.
- Awareness of the anti-bullying reporting portal will be raised amongst all agencies, children, young people and parents/carers.
- Awareness of bullying issues for specific groups (including black and ethnic minority groups, children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those on low incomes and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender young people) will be raised and peer support approaches for those who have been bullied will be promoted.

What will success look like?

- Children and young people say they feel safe where ever they are.
- Children and young people say that their school and other agencies deal with bullying well.
- More children and young people volunteer to act as 'buddies' or mentors for those who have been bullied.

How will success be measured?

- A decrease in children and young people who experience bullying or aggressive behaviour from 70% in 2009 to 65% for 2011/12 and 60% for 2012/13, with a further 10% reduction to 50% by 2013/14.
- An increase in the percentage of children and young people who say that their school and other agencies deal with bullying well from 32% in 2010 (schools) to 35% in 2011/12, 40% in 2012/13 and to 45% in 2013/14 (schools).
- An increase in the number of schools (and, where possible, other settings) using an online tool (360 Safe) to review their e-safety provision. For schools the increase will be from 36 schools as at March 2011 to 50 by March 2012.

Children's Trust Sponsor: Hilary Thompson on behalf of Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Board.

Educational outcomes will be outstanding for all children and young people.

This priority will focus on:

- supporting and challenging **schools and other settings to improve pupil attainment and progress;**
- addressing **inequalities in educational outcomes**, especially vulnerable groups.

Supporting and challenging schools and other settings to improve pupil attainment and progress

Why is this important?

- Giving children and young people access to high quality education is crucial to enable them to reach their full potential and fulfil their aspirations. Even high performing schools, FE Colleges and other settings can continue to improve so that they become amongst the best schools nationally.
- Educational attainment and pupil progress were highlighted as issues during consultation and the needs assessment indicates that educational outcomes in Worcestershire are consistently below statistical neighbour averages. [Click here for further information](#)
- Children from lower socio-economic groups are at much greater disadvantage at every stage in their education than those from higher socio-economic groups particularly if they form a small proportion of a school's population. However, educational attainment determines outcomes in later life and is a route out of living in poverty.

What will be done?

- Schools and other settings will work in collaboration, particularly through local partnerships.
- Schools will be encouraged and supported to enable them to be in a position to convert to Academy Status, as appropriate.
- Services will be brokered and commissioned to enable schools and other providers to improve their quality of provision.
- Every school or setting will provide a learning environment (including the curriculum) that is appropriate for its learners.
- Schools and other settings that are causing concern will be identified, challenged and supported, and their progress will be monitored regularly, including intervention where appropriate.
- Schools and other settings will be supported to select, recruit and develop high quality and inspirational leaders, teachers and governors and to engage parents, carers, children and young people in the life and leadership of the school.

What will success look like?

- Fewer schools and other settings in Ofsted categories of concern and fewer schools below floor standards.
- More schools and settings rated by Ofsted as outstanding.
- Improved quality of early years and child care provision.
- An improvement in educational outcomes for children and young people of all ages.

How will success be measured?

- A decrease in the number of schools being judged as by Ofsted as being in a category of concern from 8 in July 2010 in to 3 in July 2012.
- Maintaining that no short stay schools are judged by Ofsted as being in a category of concern from 2010/11 to 2011/12.
- A decrease in the number of early years settings being judged as inadequate by Ofsted from 1% in 2009/10 to 0% between 2011/12 and 2013/14 (excludes childminders).

- An increase in the number of schools that are rated as good or better from 38 out of 62 inspected during the academic year (2009/10) to *'target to be confirmed'*.
- Maintain the number of short stay schools that are rated as good or better in line with the 100% of those inspected during 2009/10.
- An increase in the number of early year settings that are rated as outstanding from 16% during 2009/10 to 24% during 2011/12 and 29% during 2012/13.
- A decrease in the number of schools below floor standards from 15 in 2009/10 to 5 in 2011/12 and 0 in 2012/13 at Key Stage Two.
- A decrease in the number of schools below floor standards from 2 in 2009/10 to 0 in 2011/12 at Key Stage Four.
- An increase in the percentage of pupils who scored at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 points for each of the scales in Personal, Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy from 56% in 2009/10 to 62% in 2011/12 and 68% in 2012/13.
- An increase in the percentage of pupils that achieve at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2 from 71% in 2009/10 to 77% in 2011/12.
- An increase in the percentage of pupils achieving five or more A*-C at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths from 54.9% in 2009/10 to 63.6% in 2011/12.

Please also refer to the priority on education, employment and training opportunities for young people [Education, employment and training opportunities for young people](#).

Children's Trust Sponsor: Viv Cranton on behalf of schools and other educational settings.

Addressing inequalities in educational outcomes, especially vulnerable groups

Why is this important?

- Most children and young people in Worcestershire achieve well, but inequalities exist in the educational outcomes for specific groups of children and young people compared to the outcomes for the wider range of children and young people of which the groups form a part. ([Click here for further information](#)). Such vulnerable children and young people often require additional support to enable them to achieve as well as their peers.
- The needs assessment indicates that at every stage of education, the overall gap in attainment between pupils eligible for Free School Meals (FSM) and their non-FSM peers in Worcestershire is greater than the national average. ([Click here for further information](#)). FSM eligibility is a proxy for income poverty.
- This priority focuses on improving educational outcomes for vulnerable children and young people (especially those living in poverty, looked after children and those from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families), with a view to reducing the differences in outcomes between these groups and children and young people as a whole – whilst improving outcomes for all children and young people in Worcestershire.

What will be done?

- Identify children and young people whose prior attainment and progress indicate that they are at risk of underachieving when compared to their peers.
- The progress of pupils from vulnerable groups will be tracked and monitored. An appropriate curriculum, adequate resources and targeted support will be provided so that provision meets the full range of pupils' needs.
- Schools and other settings will engage with parents and carers to enable their active involvement in the education of their children, including the active participation of children and young people in their educational setting.

What will success look like?

- The gap is reduced between educational outcomes at all key stages for vulnerable groups of children and young people and the cohort of which the group is a part, particularly for those living in poverty, looked after children and those from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families.
- An improvement in the educational outcomes of children and young people from vulnerable groups at all key stages.
- Better engagement at school and other educational settings by children and young people from vulnerable groups and families, including improved attendance and exclusions.

How will success be measured?

- A decrease in the attainment gap at Foundation Stage Profile from 31.2% in 2009/10 to 29.8% in 2011/12 and 27.5% in 2012/13.

- A decrease in the percentage gap in achievement between pupils eligible for Free School Meals³ and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stage 2 from 33% in 2009/10 to 15% in 2011/12 and 10% in 2012/13.
- A decrease in the percentage gap in achievement between pupils eligible for Free School Meals and their peers achieving the expected level at Key Stage 4 from 32% in 2009/10 to 15% in 2011/12 and 10% in 2012/13.
- An increase in the proportion of young people eligible for FSM attaining the level 2 threshold at 19 from 51.5% in 2008/09 to 62% in 2011/12.
- An increase in the proportion of young people eligible for FSM attaining the level 3 threshold at 19 from 27% in 2008/09 to 29% in 2011/12.
- A decrease in the achievement gap between Looked After Children achieving level 4 at Key Stage 2 and all children in Worcestershire for English and Maths from 31% in 2010 to 15% in 2011/12 and 10% in 2012/13.
- An increase in the percentage of Looked After Children obtaining 5 GCSEs A*-C or equivalent from 19% in 2008/09 to 20.9% for 2010/11.
- A decrease in the inequality gap in the average point score per candidate at AS/A2 or equivalent '*baseline to be agreed and target to be confirmed*'.
- An increase in the percentage of pupils that achieve at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2 by the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Group from 0% in 2009/10 to 30% in 2011/12 and 40% in 2012/13.
- An increase in the percentage of pupils that achieve at an A* - C grade in both English and Maths at Key Stage 4 by the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Group from 0% in 2009/10 to 25% in 2011/12 and 35% in 2012/13.
- A decrease in SEN/Non SEN attainment gap at Level 4+ at Key Stage Two English and Maths from 59% in 2009/10 to *target to be confirmed*.
- A decrease in the SEN/Non SEN attainment gap for 5 A*-C at GCSE including English and Maths from 42% in 2009/10 to *target to be confirmed*.
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Children's Trust Sponsor: Anne Starr on behalf of schools and other educational settings.

³ The free school meals group is used as a proxy for low income families. Pupils whose parents receive the following are entitled to FSM: Income Support, Income based job seekers allowance, support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999, child tax credit provided they are not entitled to Working tax credit and have an annual income not exceeding £14,495 or the Guaranteed Pension Credit.

Young people will move successfully into adulthood

This priority will focus on:

- **transition arrangements** between children and adult services;
- **education, employment and training** opportunities for young people.

Transition arrangements between children and adult services

Why is this important?

- Transition between children's and adult's services and agencies is a key point in a young person's life, but can be a time of change, anxiety and uncertainty for the young person and their parents or carers.
- Successful transitions need to be planned well in advance to ensure that there is continuity in service provision or support.
- For young people in the criminal justice system, transition between the services for young people and adults is challenging. This is the time when those already involved in offending are at risk of becoming the most prolific.
- Transfer protocols are in place for children leaving care, but not enough have a Pathway Plan ([click here for further information](#)) and some say that they feel unsupported and unprepared for adulthood. Health care pathways for those leaving care are also insufficiently defined and young people have limited advice and information at this transitional stage.
- Consultation indicates that there is a lack of available good quality housing for young people, particularly care leavers and/or young parents. Young people feel that they need more training for independent living and skills for adult life.

What will be done?

- Transparent, consistent and personalised pathways for transition between a range of children's and adult's services and agencies will be implemented.
- The Adolescent Safeguarding Strategy and health transition pathways for young people with long term conditions and risk-taking behaviour will be implemented.
- An integrated transitions team for children and young people with complex needs will be commissioned.
- Additional supported accommodation in North Worcestershire will be commissioned.

What will success look like?

- More young people receive appropriate support to ensure a smooth transition between children and adult services and agencies, including those young people with learning difficulties and disabilities, care leavers, young offenders and young people with mental health problems.
- Young people who are living independently are in appropriate accommodation.
- High quality and affordable transition plans are in place.

How will success be measured?

- An increase in the percentage of young people leaving care with a pathway plan from 62% in 2009/10 to 80% in 2011/12.
- A consistent percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation at 90% between 2008/09 and 2011/12.
- A decrease in the number of young adults who are first time entrants into the Adult Criminal Justice System '*baseline to be agreed and target to be confirmed*'.
- All young adults for whom it has been clinically decided that they will transfer to Adult Mental Health to have a high quality transition plan completed to aid

their successful transfer to Adult Mental Health. Baselines to be defined in June 2011, target to be defined by July 2011.

Children's Trust Sponsor: Richard Keble on behalf of the Joint Commissioning Executive.

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Education, employment and training opportunities for young people

Why is this important?

- Young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) are at risk of not achieving their potential, economically or socially. National research suggests that there is a reasonable expectation that 1 in 6 of young people who are NEET will never secure long term employment.
- There has been an increase in the percentage of young people who are NEET in Worcestershire, although there are variations across the county. Many of these young people are from some of the most vulnerable groups ([click here for further information](#)). Consultation showed that progression into employment and the availability of employment opportunities were important to all stakeholders.
- Young people from families living in poverty and those living in deprived areas are more likely to leave school and to become NEET ([click here for further information](#)). Low aspirations, poor educational achievement and economic circumstances mean that many are then subject to lifelong unemployment, benefit dependency or low paid employment.

What will be done?

- Support will be provided for young people who are currently NEET to enable them to re-engage in education, employment and training.
- An appropriate mix and balance of flexible high quality education, training and employment opportunities for all young people will be developed.
- High quality and impartial information, advice and guidance will be available to all young people when they need it.
- Transition planning for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities into post-16 settings will be improved.
- Local Children's Partnerships will commission positive activities and opportunities for volunteering to ensure the engagement of children and young people.

What will success look like?

- More young people, including those from vulnerable groups, engaged in a diverse range of high quality education, employment and training opportunities, including apprenticeships.
- Improved educational outcomes for young people between the ages of 16 and 19.
- Widened participation, especially of 17 year olds, in preparation for raising the age of participation.

How will success be measured?

- A decrease in young people who are NEET from 5.5% in 2009/10 to 5% in 2010/11.
- A decrease in the number of 18-24 year olds claiming Job Seekers Allowance for six months or more from 29% in June 2010 to *'target to be confirmed'*.
- An increase in the percentage of care leavers in employment, education and training from 61.5% in 2009/10 to *'target to be confirmed'*.
- An increase in the average AS/A2 or equivalent point score per candidate from 704.5 in 2009/10 to 720 in 2011/12.

- An increase in the proportion of young people attaining the level 2 threshold at 19 from 77.9% in 2008/09 to 84% in 2011/12.
- An increase in the proportion of young people attaining the level 3 threshold at 19 from 53.5% in 2008/09 to 58.9% in 2011/12.
- An increase in the number of 16-18 year olds participating on the Apprenticeship programme from 1,764 in 2009/10 to over 2,000 in 2011/12.

Children's Trust Sponsor: Michael Kitcatt on behalf of the 14-19 Partnership Board.

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Children and young people have the opportunity to grow up in stable and secure families.

This priority will focus on:

- **Looked After Children** and those at risk of becoming looked after;
- **Targeted early intervention** and support for families most in need.

Looked After Children and those at risk of becoming looked after

Why is this important?

- Looked after children are amongst the most vulnerable children and young people in society and local authorities and their partner agencies have a corporate parenting responsibility to improve the life chances for the children and young people who are in their care.
- There has been an increase in the number of looked after children in Worcestershire ([click here for further information](#)).
- The Ofsted Safeguarding and Looked After Children's Services inspection indicated that care planning needs to be more robust; more focused activity is required to enable children to return safely to their families (or to live with a family if in residential care, when this is in their best interests) and improvements in partnership arrangements are required to prevent the need for children to become looked after.
- Nationally, children living in poverty are 700 times more likely to become looked after.

What will be done?

- Deliver the improvements as set out in the Safeguarding and Looked After Children Services Notice to Improve in order to reduce the number of looked after children and to improve their outcomes.
- Commission a range of appropriate high quality provision and services for looked after children.
- Commission high quality support services to prevent children and young people coming into care.

What will success look like?

- More children safely and securely cared for at home, and thus fewer who are looked after.

How will success be measured?

- A decrease in looked after children from 599 as at December 2010 to 530 by March 2012, with a further reduction to 480 by the end of March 2013.
- An increase in the percentage of children adopted during the year who were placed for adoption within 12 months of the agency decision that they should be adopted from 67% as at September 2010 to 80% in 2011/12.

Children's Trust Sponsor: Michael Hunter on behalf of the Voluntary and Community Sector.

Targeted early intervention and support for families most in need

Why is this important?

- The rising numbers of children and young people in the care system in Worcestershire and the length of time they spend in care indicate that services are not intervening early enough to support families in an appropriate manner.
- Effective early intervention from universal and targeted services can bring about cost savings, as well as meet the needs of families before they require more intensive support.
- Consultation suggests that integrated, personalised and targeted support is not always available to families when and where they need it to prevent their problems from developing further.
- Families living in poverty tend to be least pro-active in seeking the information, advice, guidance and support that will enable them to access universal and targeted services such as childcare, benefits and tax credits, training, transport and employment.

What will be done?

- Services for children, young people and their families will include common approaches to pathways to and from specialist services.
- Children's Centres and the services they provide will be re-commissioned to provide appropriately targeted and localised services (to include health services for children under the age of 5 years).
- Parents, carers, children and young people from vulnerable groups will be able to access information, advice and guidance on universal and targeted services when and where they need it.
- Capacity will be built within the Voluntary and Community Sector to enable a range of localised support and opportunities for children, young people and families to be provided.

What will success look like?

- Universal and targeted services, and information on them, made more accessible to families.
- Universal and targeted services, and information on them, meets local needs and are provided in an appropriate location with a common care pathway in place.
- Better co-ordination and information sharing between service providers.
- Fewer children and young people requiring social care services.

How will success be measured?

- An increased use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) from 556 in 2010/11 to a target of 680 during 2011/12.
- A decrease in referrals to children's social care from 269 per 10,000 in 2009/10 to 261 per 10,000 for 2011/12.
- An increase in the take up of formal childcare by low income working families from 19.7% in March 2010 to 20.1% in 2011/12.

Children's Trust Sponsor: Richard Keble on behalf of the Joint Commissioning Executive.

Children and young people will grow up healthily.

This priority will focus on:

- effective and comprehensive **mental health, speech, language and communication and disability services**;
- reducing **inequalities** in health outcomes.

Effective and comprehensive mental health, speech, language and communication and disability services

Why is this important?

- Consultation indicates that more needs to be done to improve referral and access to specialist services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), speech, language and communication services and disability services
- There has been a growth in the number of children with speech, language and communication needs ([click here for the SLCN needs assessment](#)). Children and young people cannot access the services they require in a timely manner.
- There is a strong correlation between areas of high overall deprivation and the areas in Worcestershire where higher numbers of CWD ([click here for CWD Needs Assessment 2009](#)) and children and young people with speech, language and communication needs live. At a national level, disabled people are twice as likely as other citizens to live in income poverty and also find it more difficult to access education, housing, employment and transport.
- There is an increased risk and rate of mental health problems in children and young people living in families with low incomes compared to those in better-off households.

What will be done?

- CAMHS provision will be developed to provide a clinically effective full CAMHS service, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for urgent cases.
- Sustainable CAMHS for Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and effective transitions protocols for 16/17 year olds will be put in place.
- Integrated speech and language and communication services that are available equitably will be jointly commissioned according to evidenced need and a 'Speech, Language and Communication Pathway' will be published.
- Assessment and support appropriate to the needs of children with disabilities will be commissioned; eligibility criteria for short breaks provision developed; overall provision reshaped; and equipment provision reviewed.

What will success look like?

- Children and young people will access comprehensive, high quality CAMHS, speech, language and communication, and disability services that meet their needs in a timely manner.

How will success be measured?

- A decrease in the percentage of children and young people waiting for more than 18 weeks from CAMHS referral to treatment from 7% (provisional) 2010/11 to 5% for 2011/12, to 3% for 2012/13 and 0% by 2013/14.
- A decrease in waiting times for speech, language and communication services '*baselines and targets to be confirmed*'.
- More children and young people reporting that overall the help that they receive from CAMHS is good. Baseline to be established by October 2011.
- An improvement in the percentage of young people with Speech Language and Communication Needs achieving 5 or more A*-C at GCSE from 22% in 2009/10 to 40% in 2011/12 and 50% in 2012/13.

Children's Trust Sponsor: Richard Keble on behalf of Joint Commissioning Executive.

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Reducing inequalities in health outcomes

Why is this important?

- The needs assessment indicates that in 2009/10 more than one in five children in reception and one in three children in year six were either over weight or very over weight [Click here for further information.](#) and the prevalence is significantly higher for boys than girls.
- Very over weight children in both reception and year 6 are more likely to live in areas that are more deprived and children growing up in poverty are less likely to have a healthy diet, access to fresh fruit and vegetables and take regular exercise.
- Children living in deprived areas are often more likely to have poor health outcomes and are less likely to access services, particularly those providing preventative and specialist care. Children in more affluent areas of Worcestershire are less likely to have a low birth weight and more likely to be breastfed. Hospital admission rates for accidental injuries to children aged 0-18 years are almost 50% higher in deprived areas of Worcestershire compared to the most affluent. Teenage conception rates also tend to be higher in more deprived areas of the county ([click here for further information](#)).

What will be done?

- Services will be planned and commissioned jointly to reduce duplication and increase the quality and efficiency of local services in order to reduce health inequalities, particularly in areas of deprivation.
- The Health and Wellbeing Board will develop a Health and Wellbeing Strategy to secure improved outcomes for the population of Worcestershire, including children and young people.
- Implement the Worcestershire Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives Strategy and action plan, including the Infant Feeding Plan.
- Review the Worcestershire Sexual Health Strategy, including teenage pregnancy.
- Develop and implement a strategy for childhood accident prevention.

What will success look like?

- More children and young people following a healthy lifestyle.
- A decrease in health inequalities for children and young people across the county.

How will success be measured?

- A reduction in the percentage of very over weight year 6 pupils from 18.9% in 2009/10 to 18.6% by August 2011 and 18.5% by August 2012.
- Reduce the gap in the percentage of very overweight year 6 pupils from disadvantaged communities from 9.9% in 2009/10 to 9.7% by August 2011 and 9.5% by August 2012.
- An increase in breast feeding initiation and continuation rates from 73% at initiation and 40.9% at the 6-8 week check in 2009/10 to 75% for initiation and 43.9% at the 6-8 week check in 2010/11.
- A reduction in hospital admissions due to unintentional injuries to children from *'baselines and target to be confirmed'*.

Children's Trust Sponsor: Richard Harling on behalf of the Joint Commissioning Executive.

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What else is needed to support the achievement of the priorities?

In order to achieve what this plan sets out to do, we will have to:

- commission services using joint and pooled budgets from a range of providers, especially the Voluntary and Community Sector. This includes the development of pooled budgets and the commissioning of a range of co-ordinated local services through Local Children's Partnerships;
- develop and train the workforce to ensure that it has the skills required to deliver universal, targeted and specialist services and better outcomes for children, young people and their families. Redeployment may be necessary to provide a workforce that meets local need;
- provide accessible, high quality information, advice and guidance to families when and where they need it;
- share information between agencies appropriately, developing and implementing information sharing protocols where necessary;
- listen to the voice of children, young people and their parents/carers, and engage them in the development of services;
- build effective partnerships locally and strategically;
- target resources on areas and communities of highest need and support communities to find local solutions to local problems;
- provide children, young people, parents and carers with access to evidence-based approaches and interventions that are quality assured and delivered when and where they are required.



Worcestershire Children's Trust wishes to thank Claire from NEW College for taking the photographs contained in this plan **<Photographs to be added in May>**.

Appendix One

Our Values

1. Respect for children, young people and their families

We believe that:

- every child, young person and family is unique;
- every child, young person and family has the right to have their basic needs fulfilled (e.g. warmth, clothing, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment) and a standard of living that is good enough to meet their needs;
- every child, young person and family should be valued and show respect for those around them;
- every child, young person and family should have a right to discover their individual strengths;
- every child, young person and family should have a right to realise their emotional, cultural and spiritual well-being;
- every child, young person and family should enjoy themselves, have fun and plenty of opportunities for recreation easily accessible from where they live;
- every child, young person and family can make a valuable contribution to their local community and that this should be acknowledged and celebrated.

2. Children, young people, families and communities are involved in decision-making

We believe that:

- families should shape their own futures;
- children, young people, families and communities should be listened to and be empowered and enabled to shape decisions that affect their future;
- children, young people and their families should be encouraged to have aspirations.

3. Working together in partnership

We believe that:

- to succeed, agencies must work together in partnership to provide accessible services in local communities which meet the individual needs of children, young people and families;
- good partnership working depends on trust, openness, sharing ideas, resources and solutions.

4. Valuing diversity

We believe that:

- the richness in cultural and religious diversity is to be celebrated;
- community cohesion must be promoted so that people's different backgrounds and faiths are recognised, respected and valued.

5. Support if it is needed

We believe that:

- stable, caring families are the right place for children and young people to grow up and that good parenting is the key to this;

- children should have a right to live with their parents unless it is bad for them, and to be protected from violence, abuse or neglect by their parents or anyone else who looks after them;
- children, young people and families should have access to support if it is needed so that all children have the best possible start to life and can grow up to be fulfilled and successful adults;
- it is better to identify and prevent problems as early as possible instead of reacting to situations once they have arisen;
- parents and carers should be supported in becoming good role models and in taking responsibility for helping their children develop the confidence and resilience they will need to be effective citizens;
- children, young people and families should support each other;
- families should be supported to help each other.

If we do this, children and young people of Worcestershire today will be proud that they grew up in Worcestershire. They will also be equipped to become successful adults.