



ISLINGTON

**Islington Children's Board
Programme Team
Children & Young People's Partnership**

Islington Children and Young People's Plan 2006/07 – 2008/09

Appendix C: Issues and Challenges – National Developments

Islington Children and Young People's Plan 2006-09

Building on a background of joint working and innovative projects, Islington Council, Islington Primary Care Trust, CEA@Islington and the community and voluntary sector, together with other partners, will be working, during the lifetime of this Plan, to achieve more integrated services for children and young people. The Children Act 2004 and its companion suite of guidance form an important backdrop to this goal. Local implementation will be adapted to Islington's needs and form part of our Change Programme. In addition, the government is introducing legislation and guidance addressing the specific topics, of health, education, childcare and young people, all of which is designed to be complementary to the Children Act 2004.

Children Act 2004

The Children Act 2004 is the legal framework for implementing Every Child Matters: Change for Children, the national programme for transforming services for children, young people and their families.

The purpose of the Children Act 2004 and its supporting guidance is to improve the wellbeing of children and young people. 'Wellbeing' has a legal definition based on the following five outcomes, which aim to ensure that children and young people:

- are healthy
- are safe
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution
- have economic wellbeing

The Act aims to improve and integrate all services for children, young people and their families, bringing together the range of professionals from different services that deliver children's services, supported by strong leadership in the community, and promoting early intervention and prevention to support children and their families.

To deliver these aims of the Children Act 2004, all children's services authorities have to:

- improve strategic partnerships with all stakeholders, including children and young people, to plan, review and commission better services for children, young people and their families (inter-agency governance)
- improve services designed around the needs of children and young people, not around the needs of different services, supported by a cohesive children's services workforce (front-line delivery)
- have better processes and an infrastructure to support improved front-line delivery (integrated processes)
- carry out joint planning, commissioning and reviewing of services for children and young people (integrated strategy)
- have transparent, clear and strong leadership of services for children and young people

The Children Act 2004 is supported by a suite of guidance to assist local areas with implementing the duties and requirements set out in the Act, which are as follows

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Interagency co-operation to improve the wellbeing of children: children's trusts describes the framework, function and relationship between the local authority and key partners such as the Primary Care Trust, police and schools, with the key aim of working together to improve the lives of children and young people in the local area.

Guidance on the Children and Young People's Plan sets out the scope, function and expected content of the Plan. It must bring together, in a single strategic overarching document, arrangements for local services to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Role of the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services outlines the role, function and remit of these two key people. The establishment of these positions aims to give a clear line of accountability for services for children.

Making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children sets out what must be in place for safeguarding. This applies to all key persons and bodies named in Section 11 of the Children Act 2004.

*Working Together to Safeguard Children*¹ will outline how agencies and professionals should work together, both individually and jointly, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It will also set out the role and functions of Local Safeguarding Children Boards, which must be in place by 1 April 2006. This version of *Working Together to Safeguard Children* will replace its predecessor, which was published in 1999.

Under the framework of the Children Act 2004, local authorities must:

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| • Have children's trust arrangements in place | by 2008 |
| • Have a Children and Young People's Plan in place | by 2006 |
| • Appoint a Director of Children's Services | by 2008 |
| • Designate a Lead Member for Children's Services | by 2008 |
| • Have a Local Safeguarding Children's Board in place | by 2006 |
| • Begin arrangements for private fostering measures | from 2005 |
| • Implement the duty to promote educational achievement of looked after children | from 2005 |
| • Implement the duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people | from 2005 |
| • Be assessed under the new inspection arrangements for children's services | from 2005 |

Childcare Bill 2004

Choice for Parents, The Best Start for Children: A Ten Year Strategy for Childcare outlines the Government's Strategy to give every child the best start in life, provide choice for families to balance work and family life and enable parents to take up employment and training opportunities.

The Childcare Bill 2004 provides the legislative spine for the Government's Childcare Strategy. When the Bill becomes law, there will be new duties for local authorities in England to improve the wellbeing of under fives and to deliver improved outcomes through integrated early childhood services. There will be a 'reciprocal' duty to facilitate joint working between the local authority, NHS partners and Jobcentre Plus.

Local authorities will also be required to secure sufficient childcare, based on a needs assessment, for children aged up to 14, or 16 if disabled, to enable parents to take up

¹ Will be published in early 2006

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education, training or work opportunities, and a certain amount of childcare must be free of charge.

There will also be a duty to provide accessible information, advice and assistance to parents and information, advice and training to childcare providers.

Improving outcomes, providing sufficient childcare and information will be added to the responsibilities of the Director of Children Services and subject to Joint Area Reviews.

Choosing Health

Choosing Health, the government White Paper for improving public health, sets out a vision to help people make informed choices about their health, to focus services to better meet the needs of deprived communities and groups in order to reduce inequalities, and to promote better health through effective partnerships between communities and agencies. There is special recognition of the extra responsibilities towards children who are too young to make informed choices themselves.

Choosing Health particularly highlights the following important areas for action to improve the population's health:

- tackling smoking, and exposure to second hand smoke
- reducing obesity, by improving diet and nutrition, and promoting increased physical activity
- encouraging and supporting sensible drinking
- improving sexual health
- improving mental health

Many of these behaviours and health problems have their early roots in childhood and youth. Schools, alongside communities and workplaces, are identified as key focal points for activities to promote better health. There will be particular action taken to restrict food promotion aimed at children, and to develop a voluntary social responsibility scheme with alcohol producers and retailers to help protect young people.

Education Act 2005

The Education Act 2005 revises the law on school inspection, and makes changes to school organisation arrangements and the local authority's role, including changes to school funding as well as to the remit of the Teacher Training Agency. Admission arrangements are now required to give preference to looked after children.

White Paper on Schools: Higher Standards, Better Schools for All

This White Paper on Schools outlines the Government's vision for reforms to the school system with the intention to place parents and children at the centre by enabling parents to be more involved in shaping schools in the local area. The White Paper sees the role of local authorities shifting from providers to commissioners and champions of education.

The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services

The *National Service Framework (NSF) for Children, Young People and Maternity Services* sets out mandatory standards of care for a 10 year programme intended to stimulate long term and sustained improvement in children's health, education and social care and supports the delivery of the five outcomes set out in the Children Act 2004.

Primary Care Trusts and local authorities are working together with their partners to deliver services consistent with the NSF standards, through existing planning and operational

management structures. The eleven standards cover the following areas of children's, young people's and families' needs:

1. Promoting health and wellbeing, identifying needs and intervening early
2. Supporting parenting
3. Child, young person and family centred services
4. Growing up into adulthood
5. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people
6. Children and young people who are ill
7. Children in hospital
8. Disabled children, young people and those with complex health needs
9. The mental health and psychological wellbeing of children and young people
10. Medicines for children and young people
11. Maternity services

Youth Matters Green Paper

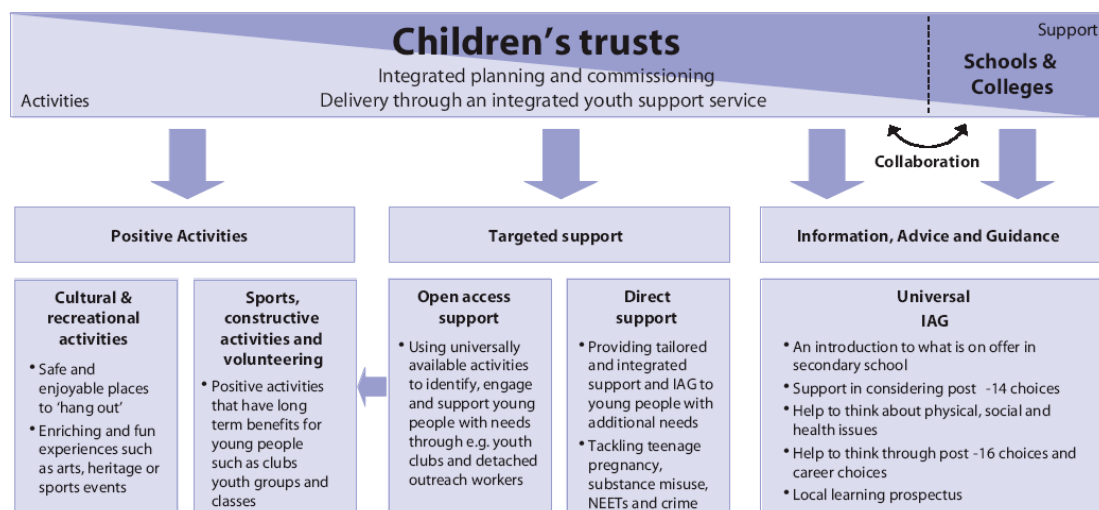
Youth Matters sets out the offer to give young people "things to do and places to go" in the community, improved information, advice and guidance, volunteering opportunities and better integrated support for young people.

The key themes covered by Youth Matters include:

- empowering young people to influence local services and involving young people directly in commissioning services
- improving understanding between young people and the wider community
- local authorities working through children's trusts taking the strategic lead for implementing the Green Paper
- linking extended schools provision into youth support activities
- investing in building the capacity of voluntary and community organisations
- implications for the workforce as the work of Connexions moves to local authorities

The Green Paper covers all services and facilities for young people outside formal education provision, youth justice services and NHS acute and primary care. Figure x set out how and what will be co-ordinated.

Figure 1 Co-ordination arrangements for delivering Youth Matters



Source: DfES (July 2005) Youth Matters, www.dfes.gov.uk/publications

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