

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO DECISION SCHEDULE



Tuesday, 10 November 2009

at 10.00 am

in Committee Room C, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Councillor C Hill, Cabinet Member responsible for Children's Services will consider the following items.

1. KEY DECISIONS

No items

2. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 2.1 Adoption Service Statement Of Purpose – *Director of Child & Adult Services*
- 2.2 Fostering Service Statement Of Purpose – *Director of Child & Adult Services*

3. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 3.1 Arrangements For Gathering Information On The Educational Achievements And Opportunities Available To Disabled Pupils - *Director Of Child & Adult Services*
- 3.2 Children's Services Departmental Plan Quarter 2 Progress Report – *Director of Child & Adult Services*
- 3.3 Hartlepool's Parenting Strategy – Parenting Support – *Director of Child & Adult Services*
- 3.4 Space To Learn Project – St Hild's School - *Director of Child and Adult Services and Assistant Director (Procurement and Asset Management)*
- 3.5 The Development And Achievement Of The Team Around The Primary School (TA PS) Project – *Director of Child & Adult Services*

4. REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW OF SCRUTINY FORUMS

No items.

5. LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) (VARIATION) ORDER 2006

EXEMPT ITEMS

Under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the paragraphs referred to below of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006

6. KEY DECISION

No items.

7. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

No items

8. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 8.1 Children's Homes: Regulation 33/34 Reports – *Director of Child & Adult Services* (para 1)

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
10 November 2009



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: ADOPTION SERVICE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval for the Statement of Purpose for the Adoption Service.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

Attached to this report is the proposed Statement of Purpose required by the National Adoption Standards for England 2001.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The regulations require that the Statement of Purpose is approved by the Portfolio holder on behalf of the Council.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Child and Adult Services Portfolio meeting on 10 November 2009.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

To agree the Statement of Purpose for the Adoption Service.

Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: ADOPTION SERVICE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval for the Statement of Purpose for the Adoption Service.

2. BACKGROUND

The National Adoption Standards require each Local Authority to have a Statement of Purpose for the Adoption Service. The Statement should set out the details of how the service will be operated by the authority and will be examined as part of the regular inspections by Ofsted.

3. PROPOSALS

The Statement of Purpose for the Adoption Service should be considered by the Portfolio Holder with a view to confirming that the service proposed meets the legal requirements and best meets the interests of the children for whom the department has responsibility.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Portfolio holder approves the Statement of Purpose as set out in the Appendix to this report.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed Statement of Purpose permits the Local Authority to operate fully as an Adoption Agency.

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

National Adoption Standards 2001.

8. CONTACT OFFICER

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Family Placement Team Manager
Resources and Specialist Services,
Hartlepool Borough Council
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Email address jacky.yeaman@hartlepool.gov.uk



Hartlepool Borough Council

Child and Adult Services

Adoption Service

Statement of Purpose

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

ADOPTION SERVICE

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Elected Members of Hartlepool Borough Council approved this Statement of Purpose on 29 September 2003.

The Portfolio Holder for Children's Service's signed this document on behalf of the Elected Members.

This Statement of Purpose was reviewed and updated in 2009 and is to be submitted for approval by Elected Members in November 2009 .

This Statement of Purpose will be reviewed and revised as appropriate by the Team Manager of the Adoption Services no later than September 2010.

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Values, Aims and Objectives

Value Statements

The value statements listed below underpin the provision of Adoption Services in Hartlepool.

- Children are entitled to grow up as part of a loving family which can meet their needs during childhood and beyond.
- It is best for children where possible to be brought up by their own birth family.
- The child's welfare, safety and needs will be at the centre of the adoption process.
- The child's wishes and feelings will be actively sought and fully taken into account at all stages.
- Delays in adoption can have a severe impact on the health and development of children and should be avoided wherever possible.
- Children's ethnic origin, cultural background, religion and language will be fully recognised and positively promoted when decisions are made.
- The particular needs of disabled children will be fully recognised and taken into account when decisions are made.
- The role of adoptive parents in offering a permanent family to a child who cannot live with their birth family will be valued and respected.
- Adoption has lifelong implications for all involved and requires lifelong commitment from many different organisations, professions and individuals who have to work together to meet the need for services of those affected by adoption.
- Government will work in partnership with local government, other statutory agencies and voluntary adoption agencies to ensure that these standards are delivered.

Aims and objectives of the adoption service

Adoption means an Adoption Order under the 1976 Act or preceding legislation and vests parental responsibility in the adopters. The Order extinguishes the rights and duties of birth parents including any parental responsibility any person had before the Order (up dated in 2002 Act).

Adoption affects the following groups of children;

- Babies whose parents cannot or do not wish to care for them.
- Children who are in the care of the Local Authority.
- Children cared for by relatives.
- Children in a step-parenting family.
- Children privately fostered.
- Children brought into the country from abroad.

Hartlepool Borough Council Adoption Service aims to provide a range of adoptive placements for those children requiring permanent substitute families.

2.1 APPENDIX 1

The Adoption Service aims to ensure that prospective adopters are provided with the skills, knowledge and support to enable them to meet the assessed needs of children placed and to provide a safe and secure home environment.

The following guiding principles underpin the services provided by the Adoption Service:

- Adoption is a process with life long implications for adopted people, adoptive parents and birth parents.
- There is a commitment to providing adoption services to all sectors of Hartlepool's population and to seek to provide sensitive needs led services to children, parents and adopters.
- There is a duty to establish and maintain services designed to meet the needs of adopted children, adopters and birth parents.
- There is a recognition of the importance of incorporating research and user feedback into the formulation of policies, procedures and practice. Constructive feedback from service users is welcomed and should be directed to the Adoption Service Team Manager.
- The provision of after adoption services to adopted adults, birth relatives, adopted children and their families, intermediary services to birth relatives and support and advice to birth parents where the plan for adoption has been made and the parents are contesting the plan.

Objectives

- To conduct recruitment activities and employ strategies in order to attract the range of adopters identified for children and young people.
- To undertake effective assessments of prospective adopters within timescales specified in National Guidance.
- To establish and support a permanence panel to consider assessments and make recommendations for approval to the agency decision maker.
- To provide pre-approval training for prospective adopters equipping them to meet the needs of children referred for adoption and developing their awareness of adoption issues.
- To protect children from abuse and neglect.
- To create stability for children and young people who require permanent substitute families.
- To maintain and promote contact with family members where appropriate.
- To create lifelong attachments with adoptive parents in order that children and young people continue to be supported into adulthood.
- To work in partnership with children and young people, prospective adopters, birth parents and social workers.
- To provide an environment where each child and young person is helped to make the best of his/her abilities emotionally, physically, educationally and socially.
- To provide or contract to provide after adoption services to provide support to people who have been adopted, their birth families and adoptive parents.

Services provided by the adoption agency

The Adoption Service provides the following services and facilities:

- Recruitment, assessment and preparation of prospective adopters.
- Family finding for children awaiting adoptive placements.
- Support to adoptive placements.
- Adoption panel training.
- Consultation and advice to social workers considering adoption as an option for a child/children.
- Post adoption support service.
- Post Box Service.

More detail on each of these areas of service provision can be found in the departmental Adoption Procedures.

In April 2003, Hartlepool Borough Council entered into a formal contract with “*After Adoption*” an agency specialising in post adoption support to provide services to the following groups in the form of individual work or group support:

- Adopted adults
- Birth parents and relatives with children under 18 who have been adopted or where the plan is adoption
- Adopted children and their families
- Special guardians
- Birth relatives where the children that were adopted are now adults

Staffing information

Name and Job Title	Date of Appointment	Qualifications	Experience
Jacky Yeaman-Vass Placement Team Manager	February 2009	MSW Social Work CQSW DMS CSM	Qualified in 1992. Experienced in Children and Families work
Kathryn Ling Principal Practitioner	February 2009	CQSW CCA	Qualified in 1993 Experience in Children and Families, Mental Health, Disability team and Family Placement work

2.1

APPENDIX 1

Name and Job Title	Date of Appointment	Qualifications	Experience
Clare Frankland Social Worker	April 1989	CQSW PQCCA DiPSW	Qualified in 1981 Generic social work before specialising in Family Placement since 1988. Vast experience of adoption work
Pauline Kewley Job role?	April 1998	CQSW Dip Therapeutic Counselling Dip Hypnotherapy	Worked in social work since 1975, qualifying in 1981. Worked generically then in a Children and Families Team before moving to Adoption and Fostering work in 1997
Social Worker vacancy – half time post			
Patricia Adams Administrative staff – shared with Fostering Service	11.1.07		C&AS Admin Children and Families

Adoption agency - organisation and control of operations

The Placement Team Manager who is ultimately responsible to an Assistant Director within the Child and Adult Services Department manages the Adoption Service. The Agency Decision Maker is currently the Assistant Director of Safeguarding and Specialist Services within the Child and Adult Services Department.

The Placement Team Manager supervises the Principal Practitioner who in turn takes responsibility for supervising the two adoption social workers and allocates their workload. The Placement Team Manager is also the Agency Panel Advisor.

As with any Adoption Agency, the Adoption and Permanence Panel is critical to the monitoring and quality assurance of the work of the agency and enables the agency to meet its statutory obligations.

Statutory Requirements

1. Specific requirements govern the composition and terms of reference of Adoption Panels. These are set out in the Adoption Agencies Regulations 1983 and the Adoption Agencies and Children (Arrangements for Placement and Reviews) (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 1997. Department of Health Circulars LAC (84) 3 and (97) 13 provide further guidance on panels.
2. Statutory guidance makes reference to the cases that must be considered at Adoption Panel and includes;
 - Approval of children for whom adoption has been identified as the permanence plan.
 - Approval of prospective adopters.
 - Adoption matches.
 - Whether a child qualifies for an adoption allowance.
 - Whether a Placement Order should be sought in respect of a particular child.

The Regulations seek to ensure that the Adoption Panel has a separate identity from the agency with an important independent element. The National Minimum Standards 2000, and the Adoption and Children Act 2002 further endorse this level of independence.

Panel Composition

1. To operate as a legal panel, the Adoption Panel must be quorate. Quoracy is achieved when at least five panel members are present. This must include the Chairperson or Vice Chairperson and a Social Worker in the employment of the Adoption Agency.
2. Regulations state that Panels must be comprised of:
 - No more than ten people including at least one man and one woman.
 - A Chairperson having "such experience in adoption work as the agency considers appropriate."
 - Two social workers in the employment of the adoption agency (this can include Social Work Managers).
 - A member of the Social Services Committee (or equivalent).
 - A Medical Advisor.
 - At least three other people-"independent persons"- not members or employees of the Adoption Agency and where practicable, including an adoptive parent and an adopted person.

In addition to the members of the Panel, the Adoption Panel should also include:

2.1 APPENDIX 1

Professional (Agency) Advisor: This is the Placement Team Manager who attends the Panel in an advisory capacity. They advise the Chairperson and panel members on matters of agency policy, practice and procedure. The Advisor takes back any issues raised by Panel members to the Adoption Social Workers or the agency as a whole.

The professional advisor is not a panel member and does not take part in reaching a recommendation.

Legal Advisor: *This person advises the Panel on any relevant legal issues. The Legal Advisor is not a Panel Member and does not take part in reaching a recommendation.*
If they are unable to attend Panel in person legal advice is given in writing.

Membership of Hartlepool Adoption Panel

- Chairperson – Independent Person
- Agency Social Work Representative – Team Manager, Family Support Services (Vice Chairperson)
- Agency Social Work Representative – Social Worker, Young Persons Service
- Elected Member Representative
- Adopter-Independent/User Representative (3)
- Independent Representative
- Adopted Person-Independent/User Representative
- Medical Advisor – Independent Representative

Advisors to Panel

- Professional Advisor
- Legal Advisor
- Medical Advisor

Formal voting is not a requirement of the Adoption & Permanence Panel and the Chairperson must try to encourage a consensus view amongst Panel Members. The Panel Chairperson can ask for further information to be made available for Panel Members where a clear consensus is not possible. Any serious reservations expressed by Panel Members must be minuted for consideration by the Agency Decision Maker. The Agency Decision Maker in Hartlepool is the Assistant Director of Child and Adult Services.

New members of the Panel attend a Panel as an observer prior to attending as a full member.

The Adoption & Permanence Panel meets monthly and is instrumental in monitoring and evaluating the provision of services to ensure that the quality and effectiveness of the adoption service are of an appropriate standard.

Complaints Procedure

Complaints can be made about any aspect of service provided by the Children's Services Department. Complaints will be acknowledged within 3 working days. There are up to three stages to the complaints system but the aim is to resolve complaints quickly and informally at Stage One wherever possible.

The complaints system can be used by; users of services, carers of those using services, potential service users, foster carers or adopters. The system can also be used to appeal about a decision made about a service provided by the department.

Complaints are dealt with in three stages:

- Stage One: The informal resolution stage. A complaint will be acknowledged and a Social Work Team manager will look in to the complaint and try to resolve it. The complainant will be notified of the outcome within 10 working days or 20 working days if the complaint is complex.
- Stage Two: The complaint will be considered by an Independent Person who will check that the investigation is fair and complete
- Stage Three: The Review Panel Stage. If a complainant remains dissatisfied with any part of the written response at Stage 2 it is possible for the complainant to go to a review panel.

As well as the corporate complaints system detailed above, prospective adopters who have not been approved by Panel have two main options:

Prospective adopters who have not been approved by Panel are entitled to make further representations to Hartlepool Borough Council, as the Adoption Agency;

OR

From 30 April 2004, prospective adopters have the right to refer their case to an Independent Review panel for a review of the agency's determination. The independent panel do not have the power to overturn the original decision but will make a recommendation to the agency on the suitability of the applicants to be adoptive parents.

These options cannot be run simultaneously; prospective adopters who have not been approved by panel must decide whether to make further representations to the agency or seek an independent review of the decision.

Useful Contact Numbers and Addresses

Placement Team
85 Station Lane
Hartlepool
TS25 1DX

Tel: 01429 275144

After Adoption
Unit 112
The Design Works
William Street
Felling
Gateshead
NE10 OJP

Tel: 0191 4788396

Action Line: 0800 056 8578
Website: www.afteradoption.org.uk
E-mail – helpline@talkadoption.org.uk

British Association for Adoption and Fostering (BAAF)
Head Office
Saffron House
6-10 Kirby Street
London
EC1N 8TS

Tel: 0207 7421 2601

BAAF Northern England Tel: 0113 289 1101

Website: www.baaf.org.uk
E-mail: mail@baaf.org.uk

Rodger Morgan
Children's Rights Director
St. Nicholas Building
St. Nicholas Street
Newcastle Upon Tyne
NE1 1NB

Tel: 0191 233 3556

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
10 November 2009



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: FOSTERING SERVICE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval for the Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

Attached to this report is the proposed Statement of Purpose required by the Fostering Services Regulations and the National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2002.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The regulations require that the Statement of Purpose is approved by the Portfolio holder on behalf of the Council.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non-key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Child and Adult Services Portfolio meeting on 10 November 2009.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

To agree the Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service.

Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: FOSTERING SERVICE STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval for the Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service.

2. BACKGROUND

The Fostering Services Regulations 2002 require each Local Authority to have a Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service. The Statement should set out the details of how the service will be operated by the authority and will be examined as part of the regular inspections by Ofsted.

3. PROPOSALS

The Statement of Purpose for the Fostering Service should be considered by the Portfolio Holder with a view to confirming that the service proposed meets the legal requirements and best meets the interests of the children for whom the department has responsibility.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Portfolio holder approves the Statement of Purpose as set out in the Appendix to this report.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The proposed Statement of Purpose permits the Local Authority to operate fully as a Fostering Agency.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Fostering Services Regulations 2002
National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services 2002

7. CONTACT OFFICER

Jacky Yeaman-Vass
Family Placement Team Manager
Resources and Specialist Services,
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Hartlepool Borough Council

Child and Adult Services

Fostering Service

Statement of Purpose

June 2009

HARTLEPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL FOSTERING SERVICE

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

This Statement of Purpose was initially approved by the Elected Members of Hartlepool Borough Council on 29th September 2003.

It was signed on behalf of the Elected Members by the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services.

This Statement of Purpose was reviewed and updated in 2009 and is to be approved by the Elected Members of Hartlepool Borough Council in November 2009.

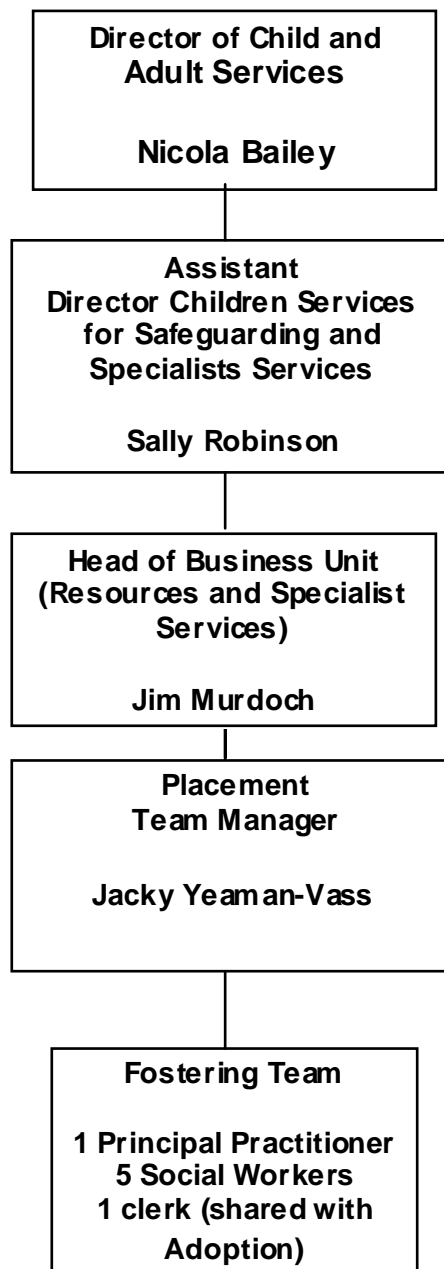
The Statement of Purpose will be reviewed and revised as appropriate by the Team Manager of the Fostering Service no later than September 2010.

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MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The Fostering Service of Hartlepool Borough Council is provided by designated workers from the Family Placement Team who are based within the Children and Families area of the Child and Adult Services Department.



AIMS AND OBJECTIVES, PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS OF CARE

AIMS

Hartlepool Borough Council Fostering Service will provide a range of foster placements for those children looked after by the Council requiring a family placement.

The Fostering Service will ensure that foster carers are provided with the skills, knowledge and support to enable them to meet the assessed needs of children placed and provide a safe and secure home environment.

The Fostering Service will recruit a range of foster carers to provide placements for children of different ages, abilities, backgrounds and assessed needs.

The Fostering Service will prepare, assess, train, supervise and support a range of foster carers to look after those children and young people who are cared for in a family placement setting.

The Fostering Service will in its delivery support Hartlepool Child and Adult Services in meeting the five Every Child Matters outcomes:

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy & achieve
- Make a positive contribution
- Achieve economic well being

OBJECTIVES

- To plan and implement effective recruitment campaigns and strategies in order to attract the range of carers identified to meet the needs of the looked after population.
- To undertake effective assessments of prospective carers within specified timescales.
- To maintain and support a Fostering Panel to consider assessments and make recommendations for approval to the agency decision maker.
- To provide pre and post approval training for applicants and carers, equipping them to meet the needs of this group of children and young people.

- To provide regular recorded supervision and support contacts with carers by suitably qualified and experienced staff.
- To ensure that additional support is available to carers to underpin placement stability and improve outcomes for children in placement.
- To protect children and young people from abuse and neglect.
- To create stability for children and young people in foster care.
- To achieve better life chances for looked after children particularly in relation to health, education and employment and leisure activities.
- To maintain and promote contact with family members where appropriate.
- Prepare young people adequately for when they eventually leave their foster placement.
- Create lifelong attachments with carers in order that children and young people continue to be supported into adulthood.
- Work in partnership with children and young people, their parents and carers and social workers.
- Provide an environment where each child and young person is helped to make the best of his or her abilities emotionally, physically, educationally and socially.

PRINCIPLES

The work of Hartlepool Fostering Service is based on the following principles:

1. Child focussed – the child's welfare and needs are at the centre of the fostering process.
2. Partnership – the Fostering Service will work in partnership with parents and children, foster carers and their families, and social work staff and other professionals when delivering the service.
3. Anti-discriminatory practice – the Fostering Service will respect human rights and will ensure that there is fair and equal access to all its services. The services it provides will be free from discrimination, prejudice and racism. The service will value diversity and promote equality.

STANDARDS OF CARE

The work of Hartlepool Fostering Service is delivered in accordance with the following standards:

- UK National Standards for Foster Care 1999

- The Code of Practice on the recruitment, assessment, approval, training, management and support of foster carers 1999
- The National Minimum Standards for Fostering Services from the Fostering Service Regulations 2002

In addition to the national standards, Hartlepool Fostering Service has adopted local standards which underpin its approach to service delivery. These include:

- Responding to enquiries from potential foster carers in a welcoming manner and sending them an information pack within 1 working day of receiving the enquiry;
- A requirement of social workers who join the team to be appropriately qualified with a minimum of 2 years experience of children and families work.

THE SERVICES PROVIDED

The services provided fall into two main areas:

- 1) those provided to registered foster carers and potential foster carers
 - initial visits to people expressing an interest in becoming foster carers
 - preparation training for applicants
 - competency based assessments of applicants
 - support systems for approved foster carers
 - post-approval training for foster carers
 - consultation with carers over development of service
- 2) those provided to social work staff who need a placement for a child
 - a duty social worker available during office hours Monday to Friday
 - provision of a range of foster care placements for children looked after by Hartlepool Borough Council
 - liaison with other agencies to identify suitable placements where none are available within our own resources
 - provision of carers for use by the Emergency Duty Team for placements at evenings, weekends and bank holidays.

NUMBERS OF FOSTER CARERS

The number of Foster Carers approved by Hartlepool Borough Council on 31st March 2009 was 80. This number includes 7 approved as Sharing the Caring, 2 as Remand Carers and 7 as friends and family or Kinship Carers.

NUMBERS OF CHILDREN PLACED

The number of children placed in foster care placements provided by Hartlepool Borough Council Fostering Service on 31st March 2009 was 112.

DESIGNATION OF CARERS

The majority of carers are mainstream offering either short or longer term care to children and young people up to the age of 18 years.

A banded scheme under 'Payment for Skills' is in place ranging from band 1 to band 5. Progression is based on experience, competencies and training.

Of the 80 carers approved, the Fostering Service had, as of 31 March 2009, 15 foster carers who were designated as Band 5 carers

7 of the carers approved are designated as 'Sharing the Caring' carers. They provide short term breaks for children and young people with disabilities to provide them and their carers with some respite.

Hartlepool also has 2 remand carers who specifically look after young people who have been remanded in care by the Courts.

NUMBERS OF COMPLAINTS AND THEIR OUTCOMES

In the year 1 April 2008 to 31ST March 2009 there were 3 complaints made against foster carers:

One of the complaints has led to the Foster Carers being recommended for de-registration.

Following the investigation of one complaint it was decided to present issues to Panel for their recommendations regarding the continued approval of the Foster Carer but this was rendered unnecessary due to the resignation of the Carer.

The third complaint led to a recommendation that the Foster Carer concerned undertake further training and this is on-going.

THE PROCEDURES AND PROCESSES FOR RECRUITING, APPROVING, TRAINING, SUPPORTING AND REVIEWING CARERS.

1. RECRUITMENT

- 1.1 Hartlepool's recruitment strategy is reviewed annually. All enquirers are asked where they obtained the contact details of service and this information will be analysed in order to target specific campaigns. Methods currently used include leaflets being displayed in all council and public buildings in the town, local advertising in the Hartlepool Mail including the Mail website and the Hartlepool and Peterlee Star. Advertisements are also regularly placed in 'Hartbeat' and occasionally in 'Prevue' magazines. It has also been arranged to advertise in car parking tickets locally for a two week period. An advertisement appears annually in the Yellow Pages and Yell.com. Advertisements for carers for specific children are also placed in the local media. It is intended to seek a permanent display site for a banner or something similar but this has yet to be identified.

- 1.2 The department has recently entered into a partnership arrangement with NFA (National Fostering Association) a national independent fostering agency and they are now the preferred provider for Hartlepool. A joint recruitment event has recently been reported in the Hartlepool Mail and it is anticipated that there will be further joint recruitment opportunities in the future.
- 1.3 Enquiries regarding fostering are responded to quickly. An Information pack is normally sent out within one day of the enquiry being received. Once the return slip is received from the enquirer a home visit is normally made within five working days. Information about the assessment process is given and information about the family is gathered, including their motivation to foster. They are given a period of approximately 2 weeks to consider whether they want to proceed with a formal application.

2. ASSESSMENT

- 2.1 The process for assessment leading to presentation to the Fostering Panel for approval is clearly explained and keeping applicants informed of the progress of statutory checks etc, is considered important. All applicants are normally required to attend a 4 day preparation course. There is an evaluation at the end of the course. Medical examinations are carried out by the applicant's doctor using the BAAF medical form and returned to the Hartlepool Medical Adviser for comments and a recommendation.
- 2.2 The allocated workers undertaking the home study make an agreement with the applicants for the completion of the assessment including agreeing dates, times etc. of visits and the target for completion of the home study. The applicants are able to view the assessment report and comment as appropriate prior to the Panel presentation.

3 APPROVAL

- 3.1 The applicants will be invited to attend the Fostering Panel that is held every fourth Thursday in the month. They will be given the opportunity to answer questions put by the Panel members and to make any additional comments they may wish to make. Applicants are normally informed of the Panel's recommendation immediately and the decision is confirmed in writing within 24 hours of the Agency Decision Maker's decision.
- 3.2 Applicants who are not approved may access the review procedure or seek an independent review through the Independent Review Mechanism.

4. SUPPORT

- 4.1 Once a foster carer has been approved by Panel they complete a foster care agreement and are provided with the Foster Carer Handbook. All foster carers are allocated a supervising social worker from the Fostering Service.

This person will visit the foster carers, provide formal supervision and provide directly, or facilitate access to, any practical, emotional or professional support required. Foster carers are normally visited monthly and provided with formal supervision.

- 4.2 Foster carers are provided with equipment to enable them to care for a child in placement.
- 4.3 Foster carers will be invited to attend a monthly support group that is facilitated by two members of staff from the team. The group is an opportunity to build networks of support amongst other carers, exchange ideas about fostering and have the opportunity to hear guest speakers from time to time.
- 4.4 The Fostering Service operates a duty system within office hours which is staffed by a fostering service worker. Foster carers can access support and advice from this worker if their allocated worker is not available. An out of hours telephone support service is also provided.
- 4.5 The Star Centre is a Child and Adult Services resource comprising premises and support staff who can offer support to the Looked After children from Hartlepool and their carers to prevent placement breakdown and thereby achieve continuity and stability of care.
- 4.6 All foster carers receive full membership of Fostering Network and access to an independent advice and mediation service should an allegation be made against them.

5. TRAINING

- 5.1 All foster carers will attend the Choose to Foster course during their preparation and assessment.
- 5.2 An induction programme involving the completion of the Children's Workforce Development Council workbook has been recently developed and all new foster carers will be required to undertake this training. The foster carers will have the opportunity to be supported on an individual basis to complete the workbooks by their Link Workers or will be able to access group sessions which are currently taking place over a six week period. The group sessions will be repeated on a six monthly basis dependent upon the numbers of newly approved carers and their requirements.
- 5.3 Foster carers are given support and encouragement to attend all training events that are relevant to their role. Any places available on relevant staff training events are offered to foster carers to increase their sense of working in partnership with the professional team to ensure the best care is offered to children and young people.
- 5.4 Where possible foster carer representatives are supported to attend specialist training events by external providers such as BAAF and they are then supported to cascade the information to the other carers.

- 5.5 A rolling programme of National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) training is in place and is open to any foster carer, although intake is targeted and aimed to provide a balance of carers in each group.
- 5.6 Foster carer training needs are identified in their annual review and both carers and their supervising social worker are responsible for ensuring that the training is taken up.

6 REVIEW

- 6.1 The registration of all foster carers is reviewed annually. The views of the foster carer are sought, together with the views of social workers and children via end of placement reports. The supervising social worker is responsible for collating the information and adding their own views based on the placements that have taken place and their observations of the carer during visits and supervision.
- 6.2 The first review is held after six months and then annually. Reviews are chaired by Independent Reviewing Officers who are independent of the Fostering Service. The review report is presented to the Fostering Panel by the supervising social worker for consideration.
- 6.3 The registration of foster carers may be reviewed by Panel at any time if there are changes of circumstances or events indicate that foster carers are no longer suitable to care for children.

7. DE-REGISTRATION

- 7.1 Most foster carers voluntarily withdraw from the fostering task. The details of their withdrawal are placed before the Fostering Panel and their de-registration is formally recorded.
- 7.2 There are occasions when the registration of a foster carer is reviewed with a view to considering the options available, i.e. changes to approval or de-registration. Foster carers are offered the opportunity to attend the Fostering Panel in these circumstances.

8. THE FOSTERING PANEL

- 8.1 The fostering agency is required by the Fostering Services Regulations to establish a Fostering Panel. The membership, role and functions of the panel are prescribed within the Regulations.
- 8.2 Hartlepool's Fostering Panel currently meets every fourth Thursday in the month and considers assessments of prospective foster carers, annual reviews of carers, de-registrations and issues in relation to foster carers. The business of the Panel is formally recorded.
- 8.3 The Fostering Panel makes recommendations that are presented to the Agency Decision Maker to endorse or reject. These decisions are recorded

and notified in writing to the prospective/existing foster carers.

- 8.4 Foster carers who disagree with the Panel decision regarding their approval, de-registration or category of approval will now have the opportunity to request a review of the decisions made by the Fostering Panel through the Independent Review Mechanism which is provided by BAAF.

This Statement of Purpose is given to all foster carers and staff working within the Safeguarding and Specialist Services division of Hartlepool Child and Adult Services. It is also made available to other partner agencies and parents of children who do or may use the service.

A separate Children's Guide to the Fostering Service is given to all young people who are to be placed with foster carers.

APPENDIX 1

Relevant Legislation, Regulation and Standard

- 1.1 There is a clear statement of the aims and objectives of the fostering service and of what facilities and services they provide.**
- 1.2 A statement of purpose clearly sets out what services are provided for children who are placed by the fostering service. If education or health services, including therapeutic services are provided, these are covered in the statement of purpose.
- 1.3 The registered provider [in the case of a local authority, the elected members] formally approves the statement of purpose of the fostering service, and reviews, updates and modifies it where necessary at least annually.
- 1.4 The statement includes details in respect of the fostering services of:
- its status and constitution (for agencies)
 - its management structure
 - the services it provides
 - its aims and objectives, principles and standards of care
 - numbers, relevant qualifications and experience of staff
 - numbers of foster carers
 - numbers of children placed
 - numbers of complaints and their outcomes
 - the procedures and processes for recruiting, approving, training, supporting and reviewing carers.
- 1.5 The children's guide to the fostering service is suitable for all children fostered through the service, includes a summary of what the service sets out to do for children, and is provided to children as soon as they are fostered, and to all foster carers. (If necessary, the guide is produced in different formats to meet the needs of different groups of children.) The children's guide contains information on how a child can secure access to an independent advocate and about how to complain.
- 1.6 The fostering service's policies, procedures and any written guidance to staff and carers accurately reflect the statement of purpose.

[Regulation: Statement of purpose and children's guide, Review of statement of purpose and children's guide]

APPENDIX 2

NUMBERS, RELEVANT QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE OF STAFF as at 1st June 2009

The staff of Hartlepool Borough Council's Fostering Service consists of:

NAME & STATUS	DATE OF APPOINTMENT			QUALIFICATIONS	RELEVANT EXPERIENCE
Jacky Yeaman-Vass Team Manager	02	02	09	MSW Social work CQSW CSM DMS GSCC registered	Children & Families Fostering & Adoption Panel member
Glynis Howe Principal Practitioner	04	11	02	CQSW 1984 PQ1 CCA GSCC Registered	Children & Families Family Placement Training
Christine Croft Social Worker	02	02	09	Dip SW 1997 PQ1 CCA GSCC Registered	Children and Families Independent Fostering Agency
Julie Ford Social Worker	02	02	07	BSc Childhood Studies Dip SW 1997 GSCC Registered	Children and Families Leaving Care Family Placement
Janet McGreevy Social Worker	10	01	05	Dip SW 1992 BA (Hons) Social Work Studies PQ1 GSCC Registered	Residential Social Work Family Support Child Protection Nominated Worker
Lesley Turnbull Agency Social worker covering Social Worker vacancy	09	02	09	Dip Sw 1997 CMS 2002 GSCC Registered	Adult Social Worker Learning Disability Family Placement
Social Worker vacancy					
Patricia Adams Administrative Staff – shared with Adoption Services	01	11	07		C&AS Admin Children & Families

There are currently two vacant Social Worker posts in the Fostering Team which are in the recruitment process at present.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
10 November 2009



Report of: DIRECTOR OF CHILD & ADULT SERVICES

Subject: ARRANGEMENTS FOR GATHERING
INFORMATION ON THE EDUCATIONAL
ACHIEVEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES
AVAILABLE TO DISABLED PUPILS.

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Portfolio Holder of the Child and Adult Services' arrangements for gathering information on the effect of its policies and practices on the educational opportunities available to disabled pupils, and on their achievements in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 1.2 The report provides a summary of our duty to report on our arrangements for gathering information on the effect of our policies and practices on the achievements and educational opportunities of disabled pupils, examples of the types of data that can be reported and areas for development.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

- 3.1 The Portfolio Holder is responsible for matters relating to children.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

- 4.1 Non-key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

- 5.1 Children's Services Portfolio Holder 10th November 2009

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- 6.1 To note.

Report of: DIRECTOR OF CHILD & ADULT SERVICES

Subject: ARRANGEMENTS FOR GATHERING
INFORMATION ON THE EDUCATIONAL
ACHIEVEMENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES
AVAILABLE TO DISABLED PUPILS.

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Portfolio Holder of the Child and Adult Services' arrangements for gathering information on the effect of its policies and practices on the educational opportunities available to disabled pupils, and on their achievements in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, examples of the types of data that can be reported and areas for development.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 builds on and extends earlier disability discrimination legislation and introduced the Disability Equality Duty. This duty requires all public authorities to be proactive in ensuring that disabled people are treated fairly.
- 2.2 To meet the Duty, Local Authorities must report annually on their arrangements for gathering information on the effect of their policies and practices on the educational opportunities available to disabled pupils, and on their achievements.
- 2.3 Whilst an increasing number of schools are improving outcomes for disabled children, national figures show that there are still significant challenges to overcome. For example 21% of disabled people aged 16-24 have no qualifications whatsoever, compared to 9% of non-disabled people. Disabled 16 year olds are twice as likely to be out of employment, education or training as their non-disabled peers (15% compared to 7%). This is why Ofsted have recently made equality and diversity a limiting judgement.
- 2.4 In December 2009, all Local Authorities and schools must review their Disability Equality Schemes. The Child and Adult Services Department are also currently rolling out Single Equality Schemes with schools, which incorporate the duties for Race, Gender and Disability and school Accessibility Plans, through a programme of successful Continuing Professional Development sessions. Therefore, it is a good time to review the current arrangements for gathering information on educational opportunities and the attainment of pupils in Hartlepool.

3. PROCESS FOR GATHERING INFORMATION

3.1 Current Reporting Processes

3.1.1 Child and Adult Services carry out Impact Needs Requirements Assessments on the effect its policies or practices have on diverse groups including disabled children and young people on an annual basis. The information collected is used to inform service planning and is reported in the Annual Diversity Report, in accordance with the Corporate Equality and Diversity Scheme which is currently presented to the Performance Portfolio Holder.

3.1.2 To strengthen the current processes for collecting information on educational opportunities available to, and the achievements of, disabled pupils, it is proposed that the following information will be collected and reported in the Annual Diversity Report.

3.2 Processes for Collecting information on Educational Opportunities

3.2.1 Educational opportunities include positions of responsibility, access to school trips, work experience placements, careers advice and other pupil welfare indicators as appropriate.

3.2.2 Access to School Trips

In academic year 2008/09, all school trips were accessible to disabled pupils. Where ever possible, individual schools will make adjustments or provide additional support for disabled pupils to ensure they can access school trips and educational visits

3.2.3 Careers advice

Data held by Connexions for 2009 includes:

- 100% of all statemented young people received a Section 140 assessment.
- 4% of young people aged 13-16 and in compulsory education had learning difficulties and disabilities.
- In August 2009, of the 149 one-to-one interventions carried out with this age group, 19 were carried out with young people with learning difficulties and disabilities, which equates to 13%.
- In the post-compulsory age group, (16-19 years old and in further education or training) 4% of young people have learning difficulties or disabilities.
- Of the 181 one-to-one interventions carried out with this age group in August 2008, 18 were carried out with young people with learning difficulties and disabilities, which equates to 10%

3.2.4 It is possible to identify from this data that proportionately more young people with learning difficulties and disabilities receive one-to-one careers support on a month by month basis.

3.2.5 Complaints

In 2008/09 there were no complaints referred to the Special Educational Needs Tribunal.

3.2.6 Future Developments

At the moment, information regarding access to work experience placements is not available. We will work with individual schools in order to collect this information.

3.3 Processes for Collecting information on Pupil Attainment3.3.1 Attainment Data

The following data shows the GCSE results for academic year 2008/09.

	% Any Passes	% A* - G	% A* - C	% A* - C inc. English & Maths
All Pupils	98	92	72	48
Pupils with SEN	92	57	36	14

3.3.2 The data shows that there are significant differences in achievement for pupils with Special Educational Needs compared to the whole pupil cohort. This trend is visible from the Foundation Stage Profile up to Key Stage 4.

3.3.3 Actions to address this issue have been identified and included in the Learning Difficulties/Disabilities Plan for 2009-2012.

3.3.2 Connexions now also have the ability to report on the educational attainments of young people in post-compulsory education. This is a new development and as yet it is not possible for Connexions to provide a fully reflective report, however, they will be building up an increasingly comprehensive picture year on year.

4. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Gathering information on the educational achievements and opportunities available to disabled pupils will help the Local Authority meet its duties under the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001 and the Disability Discrimination Act 2005.

5. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 Reporting on this information will help us identify areas of good practice in the provision of educational opportunities for, and in the achievements of, disabled pupils and action plan for any areas in need of improvement.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommended that the Portfolio Holder note the arrangement for collecting and analysing information on educational opportunities and achievements.

8. CONTACT OFFICER

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
10 November 2009



Report of: Director of Child & Adult Services

Subject: CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPARTMENTAL
PLAN QUARTER 2 PROGRESS REPORT

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress made towards achieving Departmental Plan actions and performance indicators (PIs) for the period to 30th September 2009.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report summarises progress over the fourth quarter of 2008/09 on the actions and performance indicators within the Children's Services Departmental Plan 2009/10.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The Portfolio Holder is responsible for children's and young people's issues.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key decision.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Children's Services Portfolio Holder meeting 10 November 2009.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

The Portfolio Holder is requested to note the performance made in completing actions and achieving performance indicators for the Children Services Department during 2008/09.

Report of: Director of Child & Adult Services

Subject: CHILDREN'S SERVICES DEPARTMENTAL
PLAN QUARTER 4 PROGRESS REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress made towards achieving Children's Service Departmental Plan actions and performance indicators (PIs) for the period to 30th September 2009.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Children's Services Departmental Plan 2009/10 – 2010/11 was formally approved by the Portfolio Holder on 26th July 2009.
- 2.2 The plan was produced in line with the corporate planning process. The plan and the four divisional plans that sit beneath it demonstrate the links to the Corporate Plan and to the themes of the Local Strategic Partnership. The activities from the Corporate Plan which are included in the departmental and divisional plans are those for which children's services have direct responsibilities for delivery.
- 2.3 The Children's Services departmental plan was produced prior to Council re-structuring and the creation of the new Child and Adult Services department. However, the actions within the plan remain entirely appropriate to children's issues within the new department.
- 2.4 This report provides a summary on progress towards meeting the milestones associated with the actions and PIs within the current plan. Depending on the area of activity being measured, PIs are reported on at different times during the year e.g. some PIs reflect the financial year whereas others reflect the academic year. A number of PIs are reported annually and data is only collected once (e.g. school examination results) so quarterly reporting is unable to demonstrate progress towards a target.

3. SUMMARY, PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESS ON ACTIONS AND PIs IN THE DEPARTMENTAL PLAN

- 3.1 Progress is reported by a traffic light system as outlined below:

- Red = not expected to achieve target or target not achieved.
- Amber = acceptable progress towards target.

- Green = action on track or action completed.

3.2 The Children's Services Plan identifies 30 actions and progress against these at quarter 2 is given in the table below.

Table 1 Children's Services Actions

	Number	%
Green	30	100
Amber		
Red		
Annual		
Total	30	100

3.3 All the actions are assessed as being on target, none are identified as yet achieved.

3.4 The Children's Services Plan identifies 44 performance indicators, the majority of which are part of the national indicator set. Progress against these PIs at quarter 2 is given below.

Table 2 Children's Services PIs

	Number	%
Green	8	18
Amber	3	7
Red	10	23
Annual	23	52
Total	44	100

3.5 As has been brought to the Portfolio Holder's attention in previous years PIs for school attainment are problematic. Historically, highly aspirational targets were set. School attainment levels have risen very significantly so that from a position well below average, Hartlepool levels of achievement are now in line with national expectations in many areas. This represents excellent progress. However the original aspirational targets remain in place with the result that despite this upward trend, targets have not been achieved. Details of the 10 PIs which are currently reported as red are given below.

Table 3

National Indicator	PI Title	Commentary
NI 53a	Prevalence of breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks from birth – percentage of infants being breastfed at 6-8 weeks	The latest outturn was 18.7% against a target of 21%. Vigorous activity is in place with the recruitment of a breastfeeding co-ordinator expected by 31.12.09. A robust breastfeeding data recording and collection system is being put in place using health visitor data.
NI70	Reduce emergency hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people.	Current performance is above the target for reduction. This is a new indicator for which establishing a valid benchmark is complex, particularly as the small numbers in Hartlepool will make the measure volatile.
NI73	Attainment at level 4 or above at both English and maths at key stage 2.	The latest outturn is 75.7% against the target of 82%. Hartlepool has achieved above national levels even though the target has not been met. This is a provisional figure and may be subject to change following appeals.
NI75	Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and maths.	48.7% was achieved against a target of 52%. Hartlepool was identified alongside one London borough as the most improved local authority on this indicator nationally. This illustrates the good progress being made in schools and the difficulty of attaining the highly aspirational targets that were set in the past.
NI92	Narrowing the gap between the lowest 20% in the early years foundation stage profile and the rest.	The gap has reduced significantly from 44% to 39.7%, narrowly missing the target of 39.06%.
NI93	Progression by 2 levels in English between key stage 1 and key stage 2.	84.1% achieved against the target of 97%. The historic target that has been set is significantly above national average and so exceptionally high and unrealistic. Current level of achievement represents very good achievement for most young children in Hartlepool.

NI94	Progression by 2 levels in maths between key stage 1 and key stage 2.	86.7% was achieved against a target of 97% again representing a target significantly above national averages and very unrealistic.
NI99	Looked after children reaching level 4 in English at key stage 2.	Data is still provisional and further checking is underway in relation to this very small cohort of children.
NI100	Looked after children reaching level 4 in maths at key stage 2.	Data is still provisional and further checking is underway in relation to this very small cohort of children.
NI101	Looked after children achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and maths.	9% was achieved against a target of 14%. This was a very small cohort which reduced from 12 when the target was set to only 11 young people, one of whom was disapplied as he had a statement of special needs and a further 2 of the young people had special needs but were entered for examinations.

4. OTHER AREAS OF ACTIVITY

- 4.1 Much of the work in relation to services for children is driven by the Children and Young People's Plan 2009 – 2020, which is the overarching plan for all agencies in Hartlepool in relation to services for children. A review of the first year of this plan has been initiated. Work on the review will be monitored via Children's Trust arrangements.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 Within the corporate performance database, risks are identified to achieving the department's aims for children and young people. Risks are not necessarily related to each specific activity but reflect an area of work e.g. 'Failure to implement the 10 year Children Care Strategy'.
- 5.2 Risks are assessed on a green/amber/red matrix depending on the likelihood that they might happen and the impact were they to do so. Twenty six risks are identified in relation to children's services activities (there is a separate detailed risk register for Building Schools for the Future Project Management). Of these risks, two are identified as red. These are as follows:

Table 4

Risk	Action to reduce risk/comment
Failure to secure Government funding for Building Schools for the Future.	Hartlepool's BSF project is currently on track but there is a risk of adverse impact of current national economic climate and outcome of the next comprehensive spending review.
Failure to plan future needs and be able to respond to market pressures on placement in social care and SEN.	Public/private partnership in place for independent foster care which will deliver savings over the next 3 years from 2009/10 onwards. Review of placements being undertaken to identify potential savings.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 The Portfolio Holder is requested to note the progress made towards completing actions and performance indicator targets during the second quarter of 2009/10. The Portfolio Holder is also requested to note actions taken in relation to areas of delivery which are seen to be high risk at present. Further reports on annual progress will be given quarterly in line with corporate requirements.

7. CONTACT OFFICER

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

10 November 2009



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: HARTLEPOOL'S PARENTAL STRATEGY –
PARENTING SUPPORT

SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Portfolio Holder of the progress being made in providing parental support and to understand its contribution to early intervention, prevention and targeted family support.
- 1.2 To highlight the achievements of the Hartlepool Parenting Programme at engaging and supporting families at risk.
- 1.3 To give an understanding of some of the programmes and strategies used in family support.

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

- 2.1 The Hartlepool Parenting Service is made up of the Parenting Co-ordinator, Parenting Expert and Parenting Buddy; together with a virtual team of 38 parent-trainers from both statutory and non-statutory services they provide comprehensive parenting support to families in Hartlepool. The Parenting Co-ordinator also works closely with the Parenting Commissioner to improve the co-ordination and targeting of existing parenting support activity. This is ensuring that parents of families at greatest risk of poor outcomes have the opportunity to achieve better outcomes for their children. This will help to break the cycle of disadvantage that is present in a disproportionate number of families who live in Hartlepool. The service is given direction and guidance by the Hartlepool Parenting Strategy Group that meets every six weeks. This Strategy Group is made up of managers from key family services across all sectors. Hartlepool Local Authority

commissions this service and both the Parenting Expert and Parenting Co-ordinator are employed by Barnardos.

RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

3. The Portfolio Holder has responsibility for Child & Adult Services issues.

TYPE OF DECISION

4. Non Key

DECISION MAKING ROUTE

5. Children's Services Portfolio Holder meeting 10 November 2009.

DECISION(S) REQUIRED

6. That the Portfolio Holder notes the progress being made in Parent Support and Parent training.
- 6.1 That the Portfolio Holder notes that funding for these services are provided by a grant from Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) that will terminate in March 2010.

Report of: Director of Child & Adult Services

Subject: HARTLEPOOL'S PARENTING STRATEGY –
PARENTING SUPPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To raise awareness of the importance in providing parental support and to understand its contribution to early intervention, prevention and targeted family support.
- 1.2 To highlight the Hartlepool Parenting Programme achievements at engaging and supporting families at risk.
- 1.3 To understand some of the programmes and strategies used in family support.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Parenting Programmes have been developing and growing in Hartlepool since April 2008. In December 2007 the Children's Plan announced funding for Parenting Experts as part of the action to reduce anti-social behaviour. Hartlepool now receives funding to employ two Parenting Experts and has just been successful in gaining PEIP (Parenting Early Intervention Programme) funding which aims to increase the availability of evidenced based parenting programmes for parents experiencing problems with their children's behaviour. We have used this additional funding to increase the long term sustainability of our service by ensuring we have an abundance of parent-trainers ready to deliver future programmes. We are also investing in Train the Trainer programmes to enable us to deliver training locally using existing staff.

3. OPERATIONAL PROGRESS

- 3.1 The Parenting Service provides support for parents experiencing difficulties through supporting and encouraging parents to attend evidence based parenting programmes. What we mean by evidence based is programmes that have been rigorously researched over many years and that are known to produce good outcomes for families who attend. The programmes are usually delivered over a 10 week period and involves parents attending one session per week, which each

session lasting for 2/3 hours. We offer several of these evidenced based programmes, each targeting different problems and providing support at different levels of need (**see attached booklet**). The programmes we offer are delivered by skilled practitioners who are supported and organised by the Parenting Co-ordinator. Referrals are made to the service by Social Workers, Children's Centre, Youth Offending Services, Secondary Schools, Team Around the Primary School, CAMHS, Health Visitors, Midwives and self-referrals. Parents will then attend an appropriate programme or receive 1 to 1 support as required. Programmes run throughout the year and parents do not have to wait very long before they can access support.

- 3.2 At present we have 61 families accessing group programmes and 26 parents accessing 1 to 1 support. This will increase over the next few months when we anticipate we will have had nearly 100 parents receiving support during the period September – December 2009.
- 3.3 These figures show that there is a need locally for this support and that it is possible to engage with hard to reach parents if the right approach is used. It is difficult for parents that are experiencing difficulties to access support and we have done everything possible to ensure our services is accessible to these parents, and that there are no barriers that may stop them attending a programme. A key to this accessibility is the fact we have employed a part-time Parenting Buddy (unique to Hartlepool). The Parenting Buddy meets every parent referred to our agency unless there are complex needs, and then the Parenting Expert will engage with this section of parents. The Buddy will make sure parents feel supported and at ease with the whole process of accessing a programme, will arrange a crèche, if required, and transport if needed. The Buddy will also support parents into other services such as debt advice, training/employment or specialist services such as counselling. The Buddy has been invaluable in engaging with hard to reach parents. She will support a parent into a programme and even stay if required, and it should be noted that for some parents just walking into a centre is beyond their capabilities due to their lack of confidence.
- 3.4 It is very challenging trying to put strategies together to help all families experiencing stress or difficulties, many parents feel that it is stigmatising to be targeted for support and is likely to alienate them. Because of this potential stigmatisation a fundamental principle of our service is that of *Progressive Universalism* or **support for all families and more support for those who need it most**. This is what underpins our work with parents and will ultimately help us to achieve

our future aim of a service that is accessed by all parents. To be truly preventative we must be supporting families before they come to the attention of agencies when patterns of behaviour are already firmly established, and with the support of schools and children's centres in the early identification of families this is now becoming achievable in Hartlepool.

- 3.5 Problems we should look at are the study of costs of antisocial behaviour carried out by Dr Stephen Scott from the Institute of Psychiatry (Scott, Knapp, Henderson & Maughan 2001a). By age 28 the data showed that the mean costs of children with "no problems" were £7,423; the costs of children with "conduct problems" were £24,324 and the costs of children with "conduct disorders" were £70,019. This suggest strongly that we should do all that we can to prevent these difficulties from occurring in the first place.
- 3.6 Parents are achieving good outcomes on the programmes we deliver and their evaluations have been very positive. A recent parent who has had difficulties with her teenage daughter and attended our Strengthening Families Programme said "since attending the programme our relationship has got much better, so much better that we have managed to go shopping to ASDA together for the first time in years". A small step on paper, but a massive step for a parent and a young person on the brink of becoming excluded from school and disengaged from family life. The potential cost to the young person, school and local authority would have been significant if this kind of support was not in place.
- 3.7 Although we work in partnership with the Team Around the Primary School (TAPS) and other preventative services. The parenting service also strengthens and supports other interventions, and is not an alternative provision to existing services. Our specialist support helps build relationships between parents and their children, which research is now suggesting is the single key factor if family interventions are to break the cycle of disadvantage and poor outcomes for young people. We also support other workers including Social Workers and Teachers by providing the specialist knowledge around key areas like managing behaviour, setting boundaries, developing good routines and positive reinforcement. With research evidence linking early disruptive behaviour to criminal records later in life, it is essential to support families at the earliest stage possible and that is precisely what this service is achieving.

- 3.8 For parents with complex needs we also provide intensive intervention helping these parents understand their children's development and needs, looking at attachment issues and helping parents reflect on their own childhoods on how this has impacted on the way they parent their own children. We are also developing support for families facing issues around substance misuse and will be helping parents understand the impact their substance misuse is having on the lives of their children. This work will be developed in partnership with the Principle Practitioner for Hidden Harm and we hope to have a significant impact on children where substance misuse impacts on their well-being.

4.0 FUTURE TARGETS

- 4.1 Our focus for the future is to continue working with families that need us most but in addition we will be:
- Developing a universal programme for parents of children aged six months.
 - Developing a continuous pathway of provision for parents of children between 0 – 19 years.
 - Developing new strategies for implementing early intervention.
 - Engaging with parents from our ethnic minority community.
 - Establish long term funding sustainability.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 That the Portfolio Holder notes the progress being made in Parent Support and Parent training.
- 5.2 That the Portfolio Holder notes that funding for these services are provided by a grant from DCSF that will terminate in March 2011.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Prevention services are a key priority for the department and the impact of parenting support is vital if we are to make long term changes to the outcomes for children.

CONTACT OFFICER

John Robinson
Parent Commissioner
01429 523348

CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder

10th November 2009



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services and
Assistant Director (Procurement and Asset
Management)

Subject: SPACE TO LEARN PROJECT – ST HILD'S
SCHOOL

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update the Portfolio Holder on the progress of the 'Space to Learn' Project at St Hild's School and to inform the Portfolio Holder of the sponsorship commitments which have been offered by external organisations.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The report details the current position in the development of the Space to Learn project. It outlines the variety of sponsorship offers from external organisations that have been received following the launch of the project on 23rd April 2009.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO MEMBER

The Portfolio Holder is responsible for the development of a key educational asset.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non key

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

Children's Services Portfolio Holder meeting 10th November 2009

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- i) That the Portfolio Holder notes the progress on the Space to Learn Project.
- ii) That the Portfolio Holder notes the sponsorship offers outlined in Section 3 of the report.

Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services and
Assistant Director (Procurement and Asset
Management)

Subject: SPACE TO LEARN PROJECT – ST HILD'S
SCHOOL

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Portfolio Holder on the progress of the 'Space to Learn' Project at St Hild's School and to inform the Portfolio Holder of the sponsorship commitments which have been offered by external organisations.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Space to Learn is intended to be a purpose built learning environment which will enable all schools throughout the town to test out new ideas in teaching and learning ahead of our Primary Capital Programme (PCP) and Building Schools for the Future (BSF) investment.
- 2.2 This innovative and ambitious project will help us to change how teaching and learning takes place in our schools by providing space that can be flexibly divided into different sizes. Space to Learn will become a test-bed for the very latest in Information and Communications Technology (ICT), furniture, construction techniques and environmental sustainability.
- 2.3 The Space to Learn project was formally launched on 23rd April 2009 by holding an event at the Borough Hall. The event was attended by Council officers, local businesses and those companies who had expressed an interest in sponsoring the project through the supplying of materials, equipment, technology and other goods and services.

3. SPONSORSHIP COMMITMENTS

- 3.1 Following the success of the launch a number of companies completed an 'Expression of Interest' form, outlining their offer of sponsorship commitment in line with the sponsorship arrangements approved by the Portfolio Holder on 23rd March 2009. Details of these sponsorship offers are provided in the table below.

Company Name	Type of equipment, product or service offered	Value
Bridgman IBC Ltd	Doorsets, screens and cubicles	c.£5,000
Duracryl Flooring	Supply and install of a resin flooring system (Durapur)	£5,005
Cleveland Police	Support the delivery of learning programmes for young people	c.50 staff hours per calendar year
DRS Data Services Ltd	Biometric e-Registration solution	c.£25,200
Nedap	To be confirmed	TBC
John Porter Doors Ltd	Supply of timber door package	c.£5,000
KS Entrance Systems Ltd	One roll of entrance matting	£1,722
Sangwin Education Furniture Ltd	Wall storage units and furniture	c.£10,000 - £15,000
ESA McIntosh	Fitted and loose furniture	c.£10,000
Hunter Plastics Ltd/Aaztec Cubicles	Toilets, cubicles, plumbing	c.£10,000 - £15,000

- 3.2 Each of the above offers of sponsorship have been assessed by officers to ensure that the equipment, materials and services are appropriate for use within the Space to Learn project and complement and support the vision for the sharing and development of innovative teaching and learning practices through the creative use of space and Information and Communications Technology (ICT).
- 3.3 In addition, key consideration has been given to how sponsorship offers can be incorporated into the design for the building to ensure its sustainability and buildability.
- 3.4 It is important to ensure that the offers of sponsorship are recorded and adhered to. To this end 'Form of Agreements' are currently being drawn up in conjunction with the Chief Solicitor, following a similar format to those agreements used in the Tall Ships project.

4. RISK AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Offers of sponsorship have been approved, they need to be integrated into the construction phase, both operationally and contractually. The selection of the construction partner has included this in the process so as to reduce any potential risk.
- 4.2 Funding for the project comes from a number of sources and a cost envelope has now been agreed after a lengthy period of feasibility and design iterations. The construction partner has confirmed that the project can be delivered within the estimated budget cost envelope of £1.2m.

5. PROGRESS UPDATE OF SPACE TO LEARN

- 5.1 The procurement of a construction partner has now been completed via a 3 stage tender process taking into account price and quality (including interview).
- 5.2 As a result SURGO has been appointed as the construction partner for the project tender process. It is anticipated that the construction partner will be starting on site mid November.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The project continues to attract local and national interest from a variety of organisations. This has provided excellent opportunities for the Council to share its educational visioning and aspirations for the young people of Hartlepool which in turn has been influential in assisting the town in achieving 'Innovation Zone' status.
- 6.2 Subject to the agreement of the Children's Services Portfolio Holder, the information included in this report will be reported to the Finance and Efficiency Portfolio Holder.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 That the Portfolio Holder notes the progress on the Space to Learn Project.
- 7.2 That the Portfolio Holder notes the sponsorship offers outlined in Section 3 of the report.

8. CONTACT OFFICERS

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CHILDREN'S SERVICES PORTFOLIO

Report to Portfolio Holder
10 November 2009



Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: THE DEVELOPMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT OF
THE TEAM AROUND THE PRIMARY SCHOOL
(TAPS) PROJECT

SUMMARY

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To notify the Portfolio Holder of the development and progress of the Team Around the Primary School project and options for the future commissioning arrangements.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS

The Team Around the Primary School project has been operational for nine months and has made positive achievements and links with Primary Schools in Hartlepool. This report will give an update to the Portfolio Holder including some current case load examples.

3. RELEVANCE TO PORTFOLIO HOLDER

This report relates to a Cabinet Report on 8th December 2008 which gave a description of the planned project and requested a short term exception to the Team Around the Primary School project to facilitate an early start for the service. The decision making route is back through Portfolio.

4. TYPE OF DECISION

Non Key.

5. DECISION MAKING ROUTE

- 5.1 Portfolio Holder meeting 10th November 2009.

6. DECISION(S) REQUIRED

- 6.1 The Portfolio Holder is asked to note the issues around commissioning of this project.
- 6.2 The Portfolio Holder is asked to note the progress made by the project in its work with families.
- 6.3 The Portfolio Holder is asked to note that the Team Around the Primary School project is in part funded by Grants that are due to terminate in March 2011.

Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: THE DEVELOPMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT OF
THE TEAM AROUND THE PRIMARY SCHOOL
(TAPS) PROJECT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To notify the Portfolio Holder of the development and progress of the Team Around the Primary School Project.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 In December 2008 a report that set out the plans to develop the Team Around the Primary School project was presented to Cabinet. Although Cabinet members were supportive of the project there was concern regarding the proposal to provide an exception from a commissioning process for the length of the project. The Cabinet did agree the following:

1. That the proposed project to set up a "Team Around the Primary School" project be approved.
2. That an exception to the Council's Contract Procedure Rules in respect of first six months of the proposed project be approved.
3. That a briefing be provided on progress on the first six months operation of the project.

2.2 It must be noted at the outset of this report that officers have been unable to meet the timescales for commissioning that were set out in the Cabinet agreement and would like to offer an unreserved apology to the Portfolio Holder for this situation. This failure has been due in the main to the heavy pressures on individual officers in managing new commissioning services and operationally putting new systems in place. In addition, the proposed process for the development of this service based on a partnership model with a contribution being made by providers has created a great deal of internal debate. In particular, the idea that the local authority provide a percentage of the core costs required and the remainder is put in by the service provider created a great deal of interest, but in the final analysis it has been agreed that we could not develop a commissioning package to take this into account. Having taken advice officers are however now in a position to move to tender the services required and will progress this within the Hartlepool Borough Council commissioning framework. The

commissioning process has now begun and services will be in place by 15th January 2010 (Appendix 1).

- 2.3 The TAPS project has been operational across Hartlepool since January 2009. This followed funding being granted by the DCSF to expand the remit of Hartlepool Anti Social Behaviour Family Intervention Project (ASB FIP), in order to tackle child poverty and youth crime.
- 2.4 Hartlepool Local Authority and partner agencies have been working towards a preventative agenda for a number of years. This has never been a single agency initiative but has been a multi agency approach that has grown stronger over the years and has seen both the statutory and voluntary sectors contribute resources in order to prevent social exclusion, offending and anti social behaviour. Whilst this approach has been successful in Hartlepool it was felt that in order to identify children and families that could be 'at risk' at the earliest opportunity, strong and clear links needed to be made with all of the primary schools in Hartlepool as schools have the most contact with children and families.
- 2.5 It was this link and the need for a Prevention Service that saw the creation of the TAPS approach. This consisted of funding from a variety of sources, being pooled together alongside FIP funding, in order to create one team. The team would link with all primary schools, in order to identify those children that were at risk of not achieving the five key outcomes of Every Child Matters and consequently, ensuring that they received the appropriate support at the earliest opportunity. This would not only reduce risk factors for families, but prevent some families reaching crisis point and therefore, prevent them from needing safeguarding and specialist services.

3 CURRENT PRACTICE

- 3.1 The TAPS team at the present time consists of 14 members of staff who are split in to three locality teams of North, South and Central in order to fit in with the cluster groups which primary schools have formed as part of their strategy for meeting the needs of pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD).
- 3.2 Each team comprises of one social worker and a number of interventions workers that have been seconded in from a number of partner agencies. The project has specialists in:
 - 'dad's work' from Headland Futures
 - a mental health worker from MIND
 - a youth offending worker from the Youth Offending Service
 - a domestic violence worker from Harbour
 - a parenting worker from Belle Vue

- an anti social behaviour worker from Housing Hartlepool and two established ASB FIP workers.
- 3.3 There is also a worker seconded in from Connexions who specialises in diversionary activities for young people at risk of offending and anti social behaviour, who will link closely with the Team Around the Secondary School (TASS) in relation to pupils in their transition year.
- 3.4 Since the start of the project the service initially provided by HYPED for substance misuse issues has ceased as the staff member was successful with another post. This post has not been filled as HYPED were unable to meet the additional funding needs.
- 3.5 In addition to this, the project has access to workers who specialise in emotional literacy and debt advice via funding made available to the Belle Vue Centre from NDC. Also, from the end of October there will be additional workers employed by Families Talking, Harbour, Headland Future and Citizens Advice Bureau to help those families where there are parental separation issues and this service will also be linked in to the TAPS process.
- 3.6 The TAPS approach consists of three tiers of support:
- Tier 1** – Advice and support to staff around available support services and the CAF (common assessment framework) and TAC (team around the child) process. This will also include the Social Worker within the team giving advice and support around any welfare concerns.
- Tier 2** – Low level support to children and families. This could be a case of assisting parents for a short period of time until the relevant service becomes involved or offering advice and support around a specific issue for a small period of time. This could also include 1:1 or group work with a child for a short period of time.
- Tier 3** – Family support. A worker will take on the role of lead practitioner, where appropriate and would co-ordinate the support package for the family.
- 3.7 In addition to the low level support that can be offered to families, assertive and intensive packages can also be implemented by the Family Intervention Project (FIP). FIP families should have a history of being involved in statutory services or failing to engage with services. The FIP is a high level preventative service that is intensive in terms of its approach with families and works with those families where they may be:
- A) At risk of enforcement action due to anti social behaviour.
 - B) At risk in terms of children/young people becoming involved in offending behaviour.

C) At risk in terms of living in impoverished home conditions as a result of substance misuse, domestic violence, mental health and/or intergenerational worklessness.

- 3.8 To date we have made links with all of the 31 primary schools and have had discussions around 100 plus families via the low level TAPS process. Positive achievements have been made with families and it is believed that in some cases, the support offered has prevented escalation of a situation and the need for specialist services to become involved.

4 CASE EXAMPLES

4.1 Case Example 1

One example where support has prevented escalation of problems was a family of nine children, six of whom lived in the home and one who had her own property and was a teenage mother. The family were identified by the primary school due to poor school attendance and poor social presentation. Following home visits by the TAPS worker concerns were raised in relation to home conditions, overcrowding issues, finance and social exclusion from the community. The family had been known to other agencies over the years due to non school attendance and initially it was felt that the family could become active as a child poverty FIP case. However, via multi agency meetings and support put in place to the family by the TAPS support worker, improvements were made. School attendance increased for all of the younger children, the older one of whom has moved in to and settled well in to secondary school, the children have begun to access local community resources on a regular basis, home conditions have improved massively and the oldest child at home is now accessing further training which has helped the families financial situation. Step father is now accessing Dad's United and has been involved in a number of projects which currently involves painting at the children's primary school. The teenage daughter and her child are now spending more time in their own home as opposed to constantly sleeping at the family home which has not only helped alleviate the overcrowding issue in the home but has also helped the young mother and her child settle in to a more suitable routine.

4.2 Case Example 2

A further family, who had self referred to the project due to mother feeling at crisis point has also been supported in ensuring that all the appropriate agencies and support is in place for the full family. This was a single parent family with two children, who was experiencing problems in coping with her younger son's behaviour. Via an assessment the TAPS worker discovered that the mother had a debilitating illness that was life threatening and was receiving no support with either her own health needs or her children. A referral

was made to Adult Social Care who have allocated a support worker and arranged direct payments for a cleaner. A referral was also made to the FAST project who are to link the children into constructive leisure activities. Connexions have become involved with the oldest child and mother also has a befriender from the Parenting Service as well as a family therapist who is to work with the full family around the impact of mother's illness on the family unit and their coping strategies as a family. Mother has also managed to begin voluntary work with a local community resource centre that is helping her obtain an NVQ2 in Youth Work. Appropriate benefits are also now being sought which will have a positive impact for the family.

4.3 **Case Example 3**

One family has been supported through taking the youngest child to nursery on a daily basis and offering 1:1 support to mother. Mother felt unable to do this for a period of time having endured a sexual assault which made her feel unable to go out in the community. Via TAPS support she is now confident in going out alone and has overcome her anxieties.

5. **FAMILY INTERVENTION PROJECT**

- 5.1 The FIP currently has 14 families accessing the service. Six are open to the ASB FIP, two to the Youth Crime FIP and six to the Child Poverty FIP. Since the introduction of the ASB FIP there has been a decrease in anti social behaviour in relation to all families that have been active to the FIP, as well as an increase in school attendance. Anti Social Behaviour Orders have been avoided in some circumstances due to progress made but in other cases the FIP have recommended Anti Social Behaviour Orders. This is seen as a positive as not only is it protecting the community from anti social behaviour, it is also assisting the young people who were the perpetrators of the anti social behaviour. In one case, it has helped one young person, along with the support of his key worker; start to make positive changes to his life resulting in full attendance at his educational provision and no reports of anti social behaviour in four months. Two families have been supported in moving to different locations in the town and as a result of this and the support package implemented there has been no reports of anti social behaviour and the cases have been closed to the Anti Social Behaviour Unit. All parents of the ASB FIP have accessed parenting programmes. Three parents have accessed a basic IT courses and one parent has accessed basic literacy courses. Four parents and one young person who had obtained his own property attended a cookery programme. Whilst the new Youth Crime FIP and Child Poverty FIP are still very much in the early stages with families, it is felt that the progress made in the ASB FIP will be replicated. One family currently active to the Child Poverty FIP is no longer in the child protection arena due to the progress made and has also been closed to

the Anti Social Behaviour Unit due to successful completion of an Acceptable Behaviour Agreement and no further complaints.

6 FEEDBACK FROM SCHOOLS

6.1 Primary Schools have also passed on positive feedback in relation to the TAPS process and have highlighted the following strengths:

- Accessibility for schools and families
- Continuity of regular meetings
- Knowing families are being supported and monitored during school holidays
- Multi agency working and information sharing
- Quick and effective responses
- Effective use of Common Assessment Framework and Team Around the Child process.

7 TEAM STRUCTURES

7.1 The Team Structure for the Team Around the Primary School and preventative services as managed by the Parent Commissioner has been reported previously. Officers are currently managing the consolidation of the services into one local authority division that will provide a clearer management process. The Assistant Director for Safeguarding and Specialist Services will have line management responsibility for the programme.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The Portfolio Holder is asked to note the issues around commissioning of this project.

8.2 The Portfolio Holder is asked to note the progress made by the project in its work with families.

8.3 The Portfolio Holder is asked to note that the Team Around the Primary School project is in part funded by DCSF Grants that are due to terminate in March 2011.

9 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 The agreed commissioning process has been delayed on this project and although now in place the delay needs to be reported formally.

- 9.2 The Team has made good progress and as a grant funded service it is important that the Portfolio Holder is kept informed of progress and learning from the project.

10 CONTACT OFFICER

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APPENDIX 1

Dates for non OJEU tender

The proposed dates for a non OJEU tender are as follows:

Advert	27 October 2009
Pre Qualifying Questionnaire Return	13 November 2009
Issue Invitation to Tender	20 November 2009
ITT Return	4 December 2009 by Noon
Open Tender	7 December 2009
Evaluate Tender	8 December 2009