



**Central Bedfordshire
Children's Trust**

Annual Report:

Children and Young People's Plan

June 2013 – March 2015

June 2015

Welcome to the Annual Report of the Central Bedfordshire Children and Young People's Plan (June 2013 – March 2015)



The Annual Report provides details as to the progress made against the four priorities within the Children and Young People's Plan:

- Improved educational attainment
- Protecting vulnerable children
- Early help and improving life chances
- Being healthy and positive

It is the last Annual Report in respect of the June 2013 – March 2015 Plan.

The importance of ensuring that the voices of children and young people are listened to and taken into account with service development is key and I am pleased that a 'Children and Young People's Voice' report also forms part of the Annual Report.

2014/15 has seen the Board engage on a wide range of topics across all four priorities, with challenge and performance monitoring resulting in a number of areas of focus including making sure every child has the best start in life and is ready for school.

2015 will see us continuing to work together to improve outcomes and respond to challenges - particularly for those children and young people who are vulnerable and not doing so well. This is reflected in the refreshed Children and Young People's Plan.

The new year also brings with it a new Children's Trust Board Chairman (Sue Harrison – Director of Children's Services) and Vice Chairman (Councillor Carole Hegley – Executive Member for Social Care and Housing and Lead Member for Children's Services). I look forward to continuing to work with them as a Member of the Board and all our partners to improve outcomes for all our children and young people.

Cllr Mark Versallion
Chairman, June 2011 – June 2015
Central Bedfordshire Children's Trust Board

Introduction

This is the Annual Report of the Central Bedfordshire Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) June 2013 – March 2015. Progress against key priorities is set out in the pages that follow – with more detailed performance information available within the Trust Board's Quarter Four 2014/15 Performance Monitoring Report.

The Children's Trust Board recognises that listening to children and young people's voices plays an essential part in determining the progress made in delivering the priorities with the Children and Young People's Plan. An update on key 'children and young people's voice' initiatives is included as Appendix B and forms part of Children's Trust Board Annual Report.

Improved educational attainment

Outcomes

Improved achievement and progress

The right skills to be work ready

Excellent behaviour

Well led and managed schools

Outstanding teaching and learning

**Cross Cutting: Early help for all who need it
Put children at the centre of everything we do**

Multi-agency learning and shadowing opportunities to promote shared understanding of work

What difference have we made?

- More than 90 per cent of children starting school across Central Bedfordshire in September 15 have been granted their first preference.
- The new School Places Programme has created over an additional 3320 school places (in 'Good' or 'Outstanding' schools) in Central Bedfordshire to meet the increasing need for school places since 2011. Between 2014-15 over 2700 places were created.
- Performance of Central Bedfordshire schools judged by Ofsted to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding' is good and remains above the National and Statistical Neighbour Average (84% as at 31 December 2014 – above the Statistical Neighbour average 81%, and the National average 81%).
- Performance in respect of children achieving 5 or more A* - C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths has improved as Central Bedfordshire is now in the 2nd Quartile having moved up 42 places in the ranking of English local authorities (from 114/151 in 2013 to 72/151 in 2014).
- The proportion of 16 and 17 year olds recorded as participating in apprenticeships has increased from (4.8%) December 2013 to (6.4%) December 2014 - higher than East of England (4.7%) and England (4.2%) December 2014.
- The percentage of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) remains low and Central Bedfordshire continues to perform well at 3.7% - better than the national average 4.7% and the regional average 4.5%.
- Run exciting library events for youngsters such as Harry Potter themed events and a number of Go Wild workshops where children get to meet a range of different animals including lizards, rabbits and tortoises.
- Delivered a successful Summer Reading Challenge in partnership with local schools reaching 5,151 children who read over 60,000 books.
- In October 2014 the Central Bedfordshire Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)/Sex and Relationships education (SRE) Partnership Network was launched. The network was developed by Public Health in collaboration with The Teaching School, service providers and commissioners to offer support and information to all CBC schools in the delivery of their PSHE and SRE curriculum.

Challenges

- Making sure every child has the best start and is 'ready for school'.
- Early Years Foundation Stage (good level of development) and attainment at Key Stages 2, 4 and 5.
- Narrowing the gap and improving the achievement of vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people.
- Introduction of Progress 8 and Attainment 8 measures, and assessments without levels at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Commission good quality school places in Central Bedfordshire to ensure sufficient places are provided in the areas where they are most needed.
- School exclusions (there has been some improvement but Central Bedfordshire is below the National and Statistical Neighbour average for 2012/13 – latest published data).
- School attendance (the latest published data for 2013/14 shows improvement but authorised absence needs to remain an area of focus).

Protecting vulnerable children

Outcomes

Children are happier and safer as a result of help received

Children in care have safe and stable homes

Young people are diverted from offending and anti-social behaviour

Cross Cutting: Early help for all who need it
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What difference have we made?

- The Access and Referral Hub was launched in April 2014 - offering support and advice to anyone worried about a child. Providing a 'one front door' approach is proving a success and supports more joined up service provision for families.
- For the three-year period ending 31 March 2014, the council took an average of 542 days to place a child with an adoptive family after they entered the care of the local authority. That is 86 days less than the national average and ranks Central Bedfordshire in the top quarter of authorities nationwide.
- Central Bedfordshire Council has joined forces with Luton Borough Council and Hertfordshire County Council to encourage individuals and couples from the LGBT community to consider adopting or fostering a child.
- Improved information sharing through the new Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board website which contains up to date information and guidance in one place for professionals, parents and carers, children and young people and the voluntary sector.
- Helped to keep children safe on line by supporting the NSPCC's Share Aware, to give parents of 8 to 12 year olds simple, no-nonsense advice about internet safety.
- Worked together to make children and their parents alert to the signs of child sexual exploitation – e.g. by launching a local campaign to coincide with National Child Sexual Exploitation Awareness Day.
- The National Working Group completed a Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) review.
- The launch of the Academy of Social Work and Early Intervention (The Academy) provides a programme for all newly qualified social workers who have to be assessed and supported through their first year in order to become fully fledged social workers. This has supported the reduction in social worker vacancies from 54% January 14 to 29% April 15. The programme has been endorsed by the College of Social Work. The Academy has also achieved the national matrix standard for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) service. The matrix is an international quality standard for organisations that deliver IAG.
- A small number of Looked after Children have been supported by a CBC Workforce initiative offering a trial of traineeships.

Challenges

- Tackling the challenges of domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental health for children and families.
- Engaging vulnerable young people within education, employment and training including children with special educational needs and disabilities, looked after children, care leavers and young offenders.

Early help and improving life chances

Outcomes

High quality early years and child care

Positive, confident parents and carers

Young carers identified and supported

High aspirations for young people and their families

Children and young people with disabilities are supported to achieve their aspirations

More families in work and fewer children living in poverty

Troubled families are supported

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What difference have we made?

- The Access and Referral Hub was launched in April 2014 - offering support and advice to anyone worried about a child. Providing a 'one front door' approach is proving a success and is supporting more joined up service provision for families. (1445 Early Help Assessments were completed 2014/15.)
- Increased take up of the free offer for disadvantaged two year olds early years places.
- Expanded a nursery school to help provide nursery places for those children eligible for two-year-old funding – entitling them to 15 hours of free childcare and early education each week.
- Continued good performance for early years and childcare settings judged by Ofsted to be Outstanding as at 31 December 2014 - Non Domestic Childcare: Central Bedfordshire (94%), National (86%). Childminders: Central Bedfordshire (88%), National (81%).
- Continued good performance for under 5 year olds from most deprived areas registered with children's centres (84% Quarter 4 2014/15).
- Views and experiences of young people with SEND and parent carers have helped to inform the development of the Central Bedfordshire Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Preparing for Adulthood Strategy (14-25) - to improve consistency to the planning process so that young people and their families are aware of care and support options, and choices available to them.
- Central Bedfordshire Council has employed a Young Carers Support Worker to deliver one to one support to young carers and a Children's Worker to work with families where there is a parental mental illness.
- There are 32 young carers actively taking part in delivering peer mentoring.
- Improved outcomes for troubled families – the Supporting Families Programme has met the target set by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) for identifying and turning around 305 families during Phase 1 of the programme.

Challenges

- Strengthen and improve on the integrated approach to provide better health services across health visiting, family nurses, children's centres, education and social care.

Being healthy and positive

Outcomes

Children have the best start in life

Improved mental health for children and their parents

Better health outcomes for looked after children

Fewer young people engaging in risky behaviours

Children and families developing lifelong healthy lifestyles

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What difference have we made?

- Teenage pregnancy rates per 1000 have fallen from 26.7 in 2012 to 19.9 in 2013 (latest available data), and rates have stabilised or fallen in 4 out of 5 teenage pregnancy 'hotspot' wards*. This demonstrates that the local teenage pregnancy strategy in Central Bedfordshire is being delivered effectively within a partnership approach, although targeted work within the 'hotspot wards needs to continue to be a priority.
 - Increased the percentage of Looked After Children who have had their Annual Health Assessments from 74.8% as at 31 March 13 to 94.7% as at 31 March 2014.
 - The Central Bedfordshire 'Smokefree Baby and Me' Programme is having a positive impact on reducing the percentage of mothers who are smoking at the time of delivery. The programme provides targeted, 1:1 support for pregnant smokers from a specialist Smoking in Pregnancy Adviser screening all pregnant women for carbon monoxide and providing them with positive health messages and information, and support to quit before the birth of their baby.
 - Rates for overweight, 'very overweight' and 'excess weight' in children in Reception Year and Year 6 in Central Bedfordshire in 2013/14 are all below the England average (Academic Year 2013/14). Downward trends need to be sustained through a strengthened, whole systems approach to tackling excess weight and physical inactivity.
 - A new sexual health website for Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough has been launched - www.safesexinbeds.co.uk - which includes up-to-date information on all sexual health services via a clinic-finder function, and provides information and signposting on all sexual health related issues.
 - Through the Bike It Programme*:
 - increased cycling levels by 13.6% in 12 schools in the Dunstable and Houghton Regis area over a 2 year period (2012-2014) with the numbers of pupils who report regularly being driven to school decreasing by 12.0% as more pupils choose the more active options for the journey to school.
 - Run activities such as biker's breakfasts, bike maintenance sessions, the loan of balance bikes to younger children.
 - Coordinated participation in Sustrans' Big Pedal initiative (a giant inter-school cycling competition). Across the 11 schools taking part in the Big Pedal in March 15 a total of 9,580 journeys were made, of which 4,782 were by bike and 4,053 by scooter - a 66% improvement over the previous year.
- * part of CBC's Travel Choices programme - in partnership with Sustrans. Funded through the government's Local Sustainable Transport Fund

Challenges

- Improve young people's self-esteem and emotional health and wellbeing in Central Bedfordshire, identified as an emerging issue in the Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU) Health Related Behaviour and Perceptions Survey Report (2014).
- *Reduce teenage pregnancy rates in the Manshead Ward (the 'hot spot' ward where the latest data suggests rates have increased).
- Increase the breastfeeding rates at 6-8 weeks through strengthened, integrated working between Midwifery Services, Health Visitors and Children's Centres.