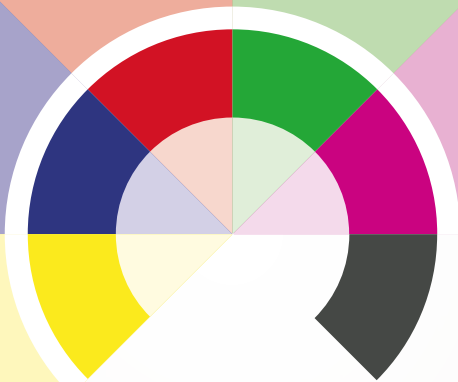


Halton Children & Young People's Plan 2014-17



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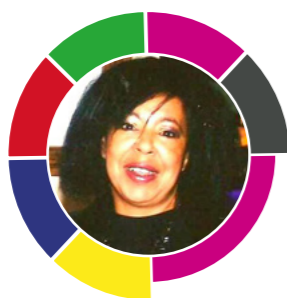
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Forewords

This Plan sets out the priorities for children and young people in Halton, and how Halton Children's Trust will make sure that our families get the help and support that they need in order to do well. The Plan is committed to ensuring our children, young people and their families are aspirational as they grow and develop. Halton Children's Trust supports this in lots of ways and underpins inclusion across Halton and in local communities.

Parents, grandparents, carers and young people can positively contribute to this through involvement with Halton Children's Trust via Halton Family Voice, INVOLVE and various youth activities across Halton. In this way, our voices can be heard and we can help shape future services to be meaningful and effective.

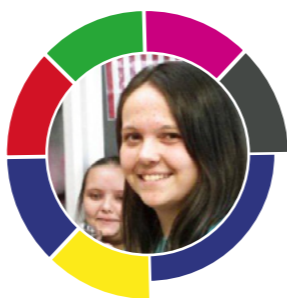


Cleo Pollard

Halton Family Voice Chair and Representative on Halton Children's Trust Board

The Halton Children and Young People's Plan shows some of the priorities in Halton and how the different agencies involved hope to work together in their commitment to improving the lives of children and young people across the borough. It turns statistics into understandable, meaningful actions and allows us to celebrate our achievements so far as well as make plans for the future.

As a young person and a member of the Involve committee which actively promotes participation, I am encouraged by how many opportunities there are for members of the community be involved in shaping the services in their area. By working in partnership, we can all make a difference and this plan is just one of many testaments to that.



Leanne Gould

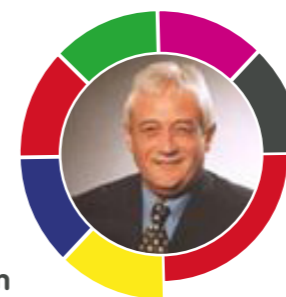
Halton Involve Board Representative

LOOK OUT FOR OUR Children & Young People's Plan Promises 2014-17
They appear throughout this document alongside our promise icon



On behalf of Halton Children's Trust I am pleased to present the Halton Children and Young People's Plan. We have made great progress recently, but we still have much to do. This Plan is for all children and young people in Halton, and focuses our thoughts and actions in areas where all Halton Children's Trust partners collectively believe we need to accelerate progress. This does not mean that those areas and services not directly identified in this plan are not equally important; on the contrary, in these areas we expect it to be 'business as usual' in continuing to improve outcomes in Halton.

This plan captures changes that are taking place nationally as well as locally and will ensure that all partners within the Children's Trust can continue to work together to ensure that all children and young people in Halton can reach their full potential.



Councillor Ged Philbin

**Lead Member for Children's Services
Chair, Halton Children's Trust Board**

As Strategic Director for Children & Enterprise in Halton, I am personally accountable for the successful implementation of the Halton Children and Young People's Plan and its commissioning priorities. Its contents reflect both the significant progress we as a Children's Trust have made to date; along with the areas we must improve further. It is optimistic, but challenging.

The Plan comes at a time when we are moving into a greater maturity and integration in the planning and delivery of services. Halton Children's Trust must continue working as one 'organisation' to deliver the Children and Young People's Plan's intended outcomes. Virtual as that organisation may be, its impact must be real, substantial and enduring, within the context of a changing national and local policy framework.

Our focus is about improving outcomes for children, young people and their families locally. We have therefore developed and designed the Plan with them; and is yet another example of how we can work together to common purpose. The partnership we have with the people we serve and the many services that support them is an inclusive one. Together we can meet the challenges the Children and Young People's Plan sets out for us.



Gerald Meehan

**Strategic Director Children and Enterprise,
Halton**



Background

What is a children and young people plan?

Halton's Children & Young People's Plan 2014-17 is the main plan for all partners within Halton Children's Trust and the services they provide for children and young people in Halton. It sets out what we are going to do together to make things better for our children and young people.

What is the purpose of this plan?

This document describes what we will do together in Halton to ensure that regardless of their circumstances, every child and young person has access to the best services.

What is Halton Children's Trust?

Halton Children's Trust was established in 2008 and is a partnership of all the different people that work with children and young people and their families.

We are the Doctors and Nurses, Teachers, Police Officers, Youth and Social Workers, voluntary agencies and all other staff children and young people may come across working together to meet the needs of and to make things better for all children, young people and families in Halton.



"Halton's ambition is to build stronger,

safer communities which are able to

support the development and learning

of children and young people so they

grow up feeling safe, secure, happy and

healthy, and ready to be Halton's present

and Halton's future"



Equality & Diversity - We will recognise and celebrate the diversity of our children and young people as well as aspects of commonality.



Our priorities for 2014-2017 at a glance

Halton Children's Trust has 3 main areas for improvement over the next 3 years. Our priorities are:



Working together to deliver services in a joined up way to make sure children and their families get the right help at the right time - *Early Help & Support*



Working together to plan and fund outcome focused services for children and families, that deliver high quality services that are value for money - *Integrated Commissioning*



Working together to focus services towards the needs of our most vulnerable children, young people and families to 'close the gap' by improving health, education, social and cultural outcomes.



How we developed this plan - National and Local Context

National Context

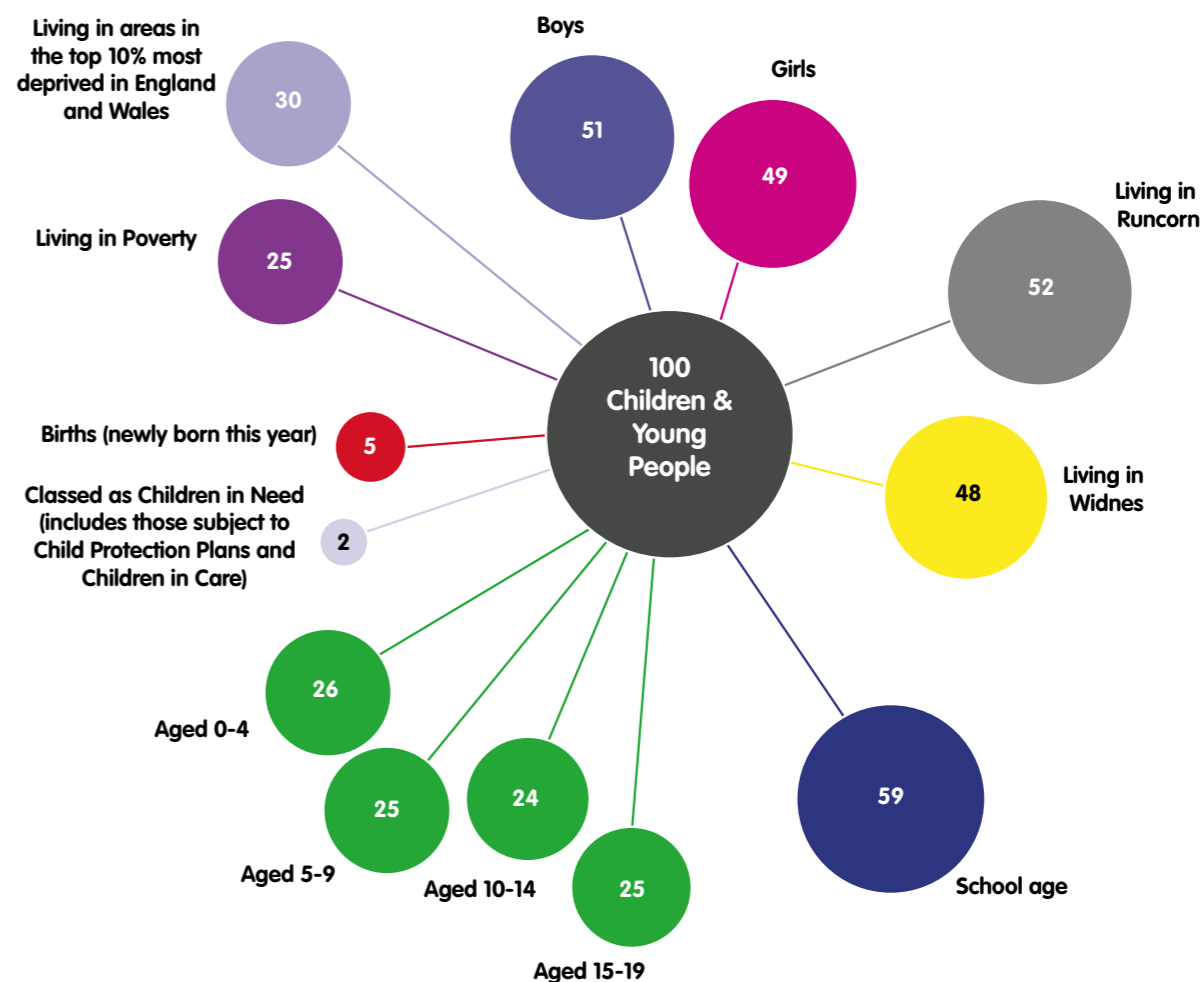
Over the last 3 years we have experienced major changes affecting all Halton Children's Trust partners whilst responding to reduced budgets and increased demand in services. For example:

- NHS re-organisation, including the development of GP Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) responsible for commissioning local health provision, supported by Health and Wellbeing Boards and the move of public health to local authority control. The changes across Health are explained in this video from The King's Fund <http://vimeo.com/69224754>
- Changes outlined in legislation such as the Children and Families Act 2014, which is transforming support for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/landmark-children-and-families-act-2014-gains-royal-assent>
- Education developments, such as greater school independence with creation of academies and free schools and the introduction of Pupil Premium which offers schools additional resources to help close the attainment gap.
- Policy focus on Early Intervention through initiatives, such as Trouble Families (known as Inspiring Families in Halton) and free childcare for vulnerable 2 year olds. <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-troubled-families-turn-their-lives-around>
- Review of and changes to inspection frameworks and reporting responsibilities of all partners. <http://www.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/index.php/halton-inspection-planning/>

By working together we will strive to make the most of our available resources and provide services that meet local need.

Local Context

If Halton was a village of 100 Children & Young People...





Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)

What is the JSNA?

The JSNA is a way of using local and national data and other information to assess the health, well-being and care needs of the local population. It does not look at the needs of individuals. Instead, it looks for patterns where particular conditions or issues cluster. For instance, it looks at all the hospital admissions that have occurred in a year for the types of illnesses people had and details about how became ill – was it mostly males or females, particular age groups or people living in a certain parts of the borough.

Why is this type of information important to know?

Knowing the types and patterns of both good health and ill health helps those commissioning and delivering services to make sure they have the right services in the right places. These might be services to help people to stay healthy as well as making sure when they do become ill or have additional support needs we have the right mix of services available to help.

It is important that we listen to local views on health and understand what people think about the services they receive. There has been an on-going series of events and consultations and these will continue. Some of them have asked people about their views of health and what helps to keep people healthy. At others, commissioners, service providers and local people have come together to look at what the best way to deliver specific services should be, looked at particular service and at health generally. This kind of information complements the data in the JSNA to give us a full picture of local needs.

What does the JSNA look like?

The new Children's JSNA (<http://www.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/index.php/jsna/>) has used an important national review of health inequalities called the Marmot Review. Health inequalities describe the type and level of gaps that exist between those in good health and those with poorer health. The

PIQ9 - We will support all children and young people to be able to participate in and enjoy the physical and mental benefits of play within their local communities.



review emphasised the importance of ensuring children get a good start in life to give them the best chances of a happy and healthy life during childhood and into adulthood. There are key stages in life that we have used to look at health & wellbeing:

- Maternity care
- Early years (0-5)
- The school years
- The needs of children with additional support needs

What are the key findings of the JSNA?

Our JSNA tells us that:

- The majority of children & young people are happy and healthy with good relationships with family and friends.
- Of those that do develop problems the most common ones are around mental health and accidental injuries.
- The level of emergency hospital admissions is quite high in Halton, higher than for the North West and England as a whole. As well as injuries, long-term conditions such as asthma, epilepsy and diabetes are also important issues.
- Children can be at risk of developing problems in later life if they start smoking, drink alcohol or take drugs.

These are still important issues for us to work with children, their families and through schools on. However, the good news is that less children than in the past are now affected by these issues.

- Being a healthy weight is also important as being overweight can lead to diabetes and other conditions in later life. Children at Reception year and Year 6 are weighed and measured so we can assess how many children are underweight, how many are a healthy weight and how many are overweight. The proportion of children who are overweight had been rising but has now levelled off and is even showing signs of reducing.
- Most women access antenatal care by 12 weeks which ensures we can fully support them, offering support to quit smoking, healthy eating and picking up on any early signs of women needing additional support.
- There are some things that can affect a child's health and development even before they are born or shortly afterwards. More women in Halton continue to smoking during pregnancy than seen elsewhere in the country and less breastfeed.
- Most children receive their immunisations which protect them against the major infectious diseases. However, some children are still missing out and it is important that as many as possible do receive them, even if they are late.
- A significant number of children have

delays in their early development. This means they are behind where they should be with reading, writing as well as their speech, language and communication skills when they start school. This puts them at a disadvantage from the start.

- Fortunately, through the efforts of the local authority, support services and schools, Halton school children now get very good GCSE results. In fact, overall Halton now performs better than the North West and England averages.
- However, children who have special educational needs, who are in care and are in receipt of free school meals, on average, tend to do much worse than the Halton average at all key stages. This gap is a challenge across the country and Halton is working hard to close this gap.

Celebrating Success - Emily Miller's Story – Dry January

My volunteer work

I volunteer for Young Addaction Halton, working with and helping fellow staff in many ways. These include outreach and streetbased work in Halton promoting the Young Addaction service and the work that surrounds it and working with young people with any issues they may have. I also help with sessions in schools on relevant topics (for example 'Dry January and the effects of alcohol'). I am enrolled on the Teens and Toddlers project and have assisted with many events in community centres and at CRMZ. I really enjoy the work I do and am always happy to see the changes and support the service produces. I also volunteer every Tuesday with my local 7th Runcorn Brownies in which I help with games, arts and crafts, excursions and badgework.

Why get involved in the Dry January Campaign?

I got involved in Dry January as I enjoy a challenge and the fundraising element was fun. Being a 22 year old university graduate I thought it was a good idea to start reducing and regulating my drinking. I also chose to participate to promote a healthy lifestyle and be a good role model to young people in Halton. I know the effects alcoholism can have having losing a family member also.

What I did

I created a fundraising page and had family sponsor me to get the ball rolling. I then, with the help of social media began to promote my page and the work I was doing to friends and colleagues. After tweeting the Council and local newspapers about the tea party I was arranging to raise more money, I began to have an influx of emails asking to promote my work further. Due to my efforts and stories in the two local newspapers, Council magazine and on webpages I held a fantastic tea room with the help of my Addaction team and West Bank Community centre at the end of January I raised over £600 overall.

Trip to London

I received an invite to parliament from the charity Alcohol Concern (Dry January creators) after my fanatical tweeting and tagging of the Charity in all of my promotion posts. I had emails and a letter saying how well I had done. I found out after meeting a lot of the Charity members at the House of Commons that because they were such a small office, they had watched my events unfold quite closely and were impressed. The House of Commons was a fantastic and memorable event, I met Alistair Campbell and I would recommend everyone to try Dry January next year!

The Future

I hope to work more closely with the community of Halton and help the young people of Halton to lead happier lives. I shall take up a new fundraising challenge in the near future. For now, I have recently signed up to finish my Duke of Edinburgh and receive my Gold award.



Our new priorities in detail

1. Early Help & Support

What do we mean by early help and support?

The overall aim is to identify problems

early and provide the right support to help

prevent needs from escalating.

All Halton Children's Trust agencies are committed to helping children and families as soon as any additional needs are identified. This is achieved by working closely with partners from both Children and Adult Services to meet the best interests of the whole family. It builds on the capacity and strengths within a family with a focus on the family identifying their own problems and finding solutions.

We will ensure that children, young people and their families can access the additional and specialist services they require through the same initial point of access.

A key aspect of the model is advising and supporting professionals around the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) process which is used to assess a family's identified needs and co-ordinate the right package of support to improve outcomes.

The **Halton Levels of Need Framework** has been agreed by all agencies within Halton Children's Trust to guide and support agencies to meet families needs at the lowest possible level using a common language and approach.

For more details please visit:

<http://www.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/index.php/halton-levels-of-need/>

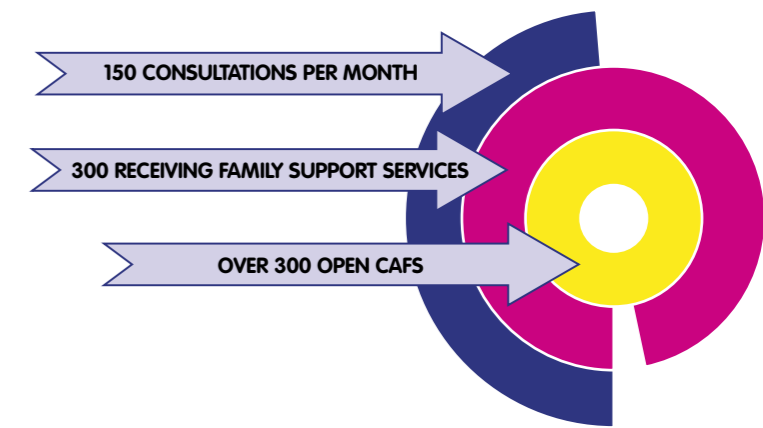
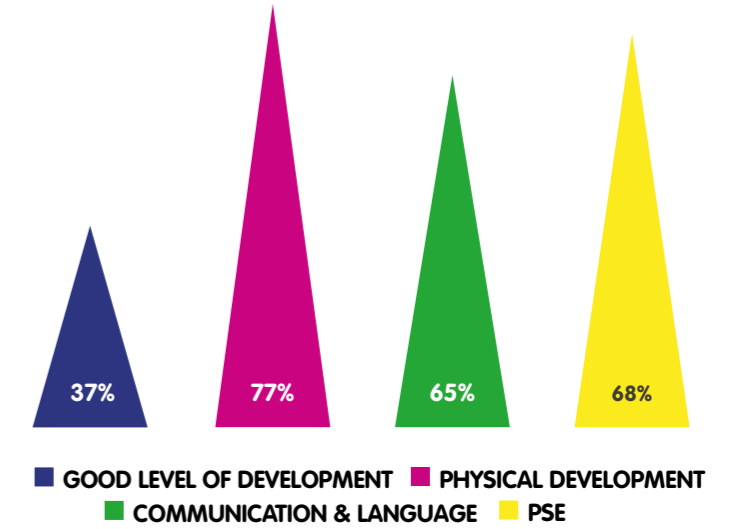


Early Help and Support - We will meet the needs of children, young people and their families as early as possible and ensure smooth access where necessary to additional and specialist services through the same initial point of access.

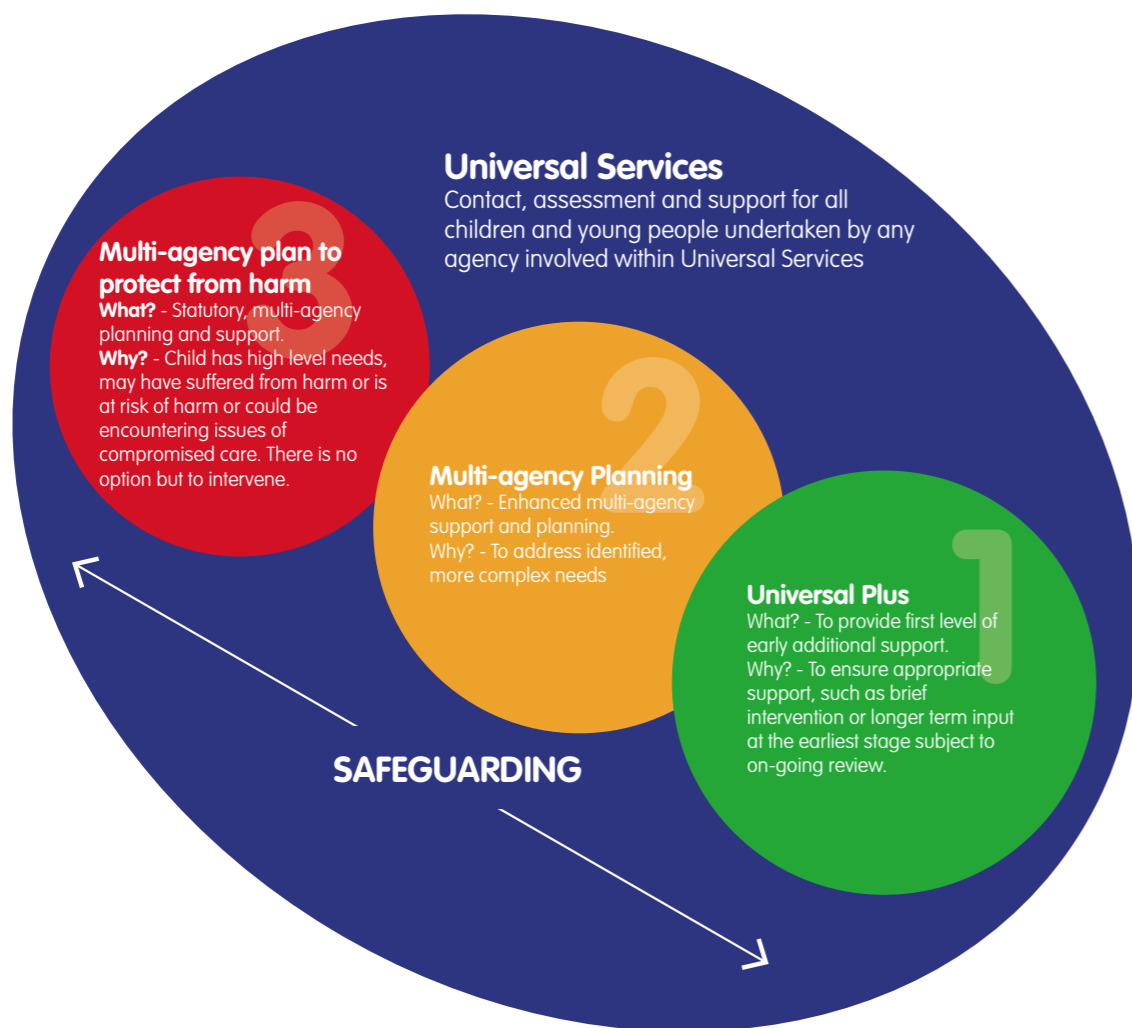


Headlines

- About a fifth of mothers (21%) are recorded as smoking in pregnancy, this is slightly higher than the North West and England rates.
- Around 22% of mothers breastfeed at 6-8 weeks, which is about half the rate for England.
- 37% of children achieved a good level of development in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFS), which is lower than the North West and England figures.
- There has been a reduction of first-time Halton entrants into the Youth Justice System by over 70% since 2006-07.



Metric	Halton	Northwest	England
Breastfeeding at 6-8 weeks (% of mothers)	22	34.1	47.2
Breastfeeding initiation (% of mothers)	51.1	62	74
Smoking in pregnancy (% of mothers)	21.1	17.1	13.2
Low birthweight (% of mothers)	8.5	7.4	7.4



Celebrating Success - Early Help in action

C is a 35 year old single parent to two children. Child A is 12 years old and Child B is 1 year old. C has a long history of substance misuse (street drugs) and has accessed programmes on several occasions.

After a successful rehabilitation programme, C returned to live in Halton. It was agreed that she would be supported by a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) Level 2 assessment to help her with her reintegration into the locality and support her positive parenting.

Following the birth of Child B, C accessed support to help her refrain from any type of illegal drug activity. Her needs were identified as requiring a further support programme but this time with additional rehabilitation. Funding was secured for her to attend this for 6 months in out of borough provision. Parenting of her first child had been heavily supported by the maternal grandmother and she continued to be supported with her baby by family and health services.

The CAF was co-ordinated by her Health Visitor, with support from a range of services including housing, schools, Family Work Service and Citizens Advice Bureau. The CAF progressed well, C has not had any relapses and aims to become a recovery champion.

The **Halton Levels of Need Framework** has been developed in line with Working Together 2013 guidance and is the agreed 'thresholds document' for Halton.

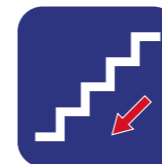
The framework identifies three levels of additional needs over and above the Universal Services such as Education and Health that are provided for all families.

It supports agencies to meet the needs of children, young people and their families to ensure the best possible outcomes.

Early Help focuses on Level 1 and in particular Level 2 within this Framework and supports a smooth transition across all levels.



When needs increase and statutory interventions become necessary (**Step Up**), there has to be a smooth transition to specialist services.



Equally, where needs reduce, Early Help plays a key role in ensuring a seamless transition down (**Step Down**) the continuum of need to ensure a successful move from statutory to preventative services.



Contact And Referral Team (CART)

CART is the single front door for access to all Children's Social Care services and advice. CART ensures all requests for a child receives a timely decision from a qualified social worker. For safeguarding concerns or immediate safeguarding risks to a child, information is recorded and a same working day response provided by a social worker. For all other contacts, CART completes enquiries within 48 hours (2 working days). Each contact with CART to ask for support or advice is recorded.

Enquiries could be from or may include speaking to families and professional agencies such as Education, Health, Police, Probation, Housing and other Local Authorities.

All information is considered by CART alongside the Halton Levels of Need Framework and guidance is offered in line with the level of the Framework that the case meets.

- **At Level 3** – For cases found to be open to a named social worker or team, CART will direct the case appropriately. If the child/family are not known, or are known but there is no current involvement, this will be recorded and an appropriate Social Worker identified to take forward.
- **At Level 2** - CART will refer the case to the appropriate multi-agency support that can be co-ordinated through the Integrated Working Support Team and multi-agency assessments such as the Common Assessment Framework.
- **At Level 1** - CART will refer to appropriate service(s) to meet the lower level additional needs.

The multi-agency Contact & Referral Form can be accessed here <http://www.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/index.php/halton-levels-of-need/>



Celebrating Success - Castlefields Health Centre

Background

- A young mum (age 19) transferred into the Health Centre from Liverpool. At her first clinic a private consultation was arranged and full history obtained.
- She was very vulnerable and socially isolated. She had no family in the area and her connections with her family were sporadic and volatile.
- The partner she was living with was a user of cannabis, they frequently argued and he had been violent towards her.
- Despite her difficult beginnings, mum was a good carer and there was a lovely bond between her and her child and the child was parented to a good standard.

What we did

- Conducted a full assessment and we worked hard to build her trust.
- Obtained background information from Liverpool, following which we referred into the Public Protection Unit.

- Provided a place of safety for mum to talk to the Independent Domestic Violence Adviser.
- Provided counselling but mum was not ready to access this so an open ended appointment was created.

Impact

- Mum has split from the partner, they are living separately and she is happy about this and feels able to move on.
- Mum is engaging with the children's centre and has attended the soft play sessions.
- Mum is considering her options to attend college.
- Mum feels able to contact us to discuss her child and any concerns she has.
- Mum continues to parent well and has a happy smiling confident child.

2. Integrated Commissioning

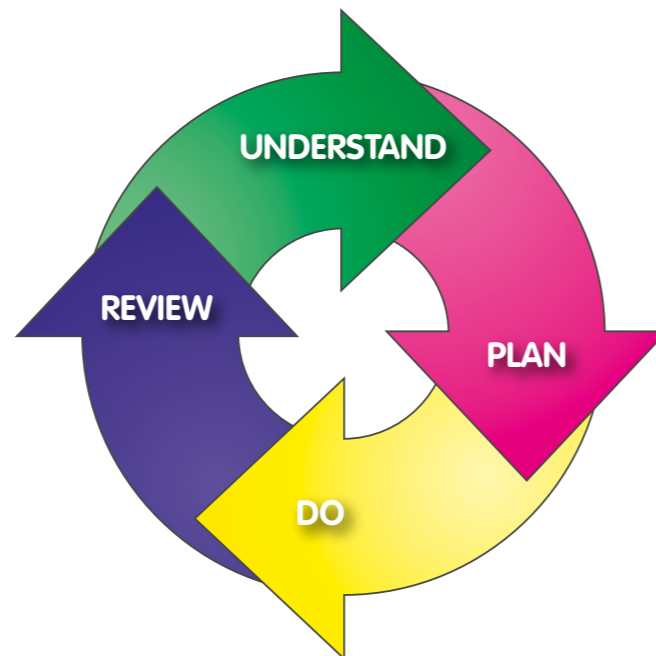
What do we mean by commissioning?

Commissioning in Halton is about working together to understand needs, prioritise resources, develop and review services to make things better for Halton's children and young people and their families.



The cycle of commissioning can be described

by this four-point process:



integrated commissioning - We will ensure that our Children's Trust priorities and the wishes of our communities are at the heart of all integrated commissioning decisions.



Headlines

- Hospital admissions in Halton due to substance misuse (15-24 year olds) and due to alcohol-specific conditions (0-17 year olds) are more than twice the North West rate.
- The rate of A&E attendances in Halton for 0-4 year olds is higher than the regional rate, but slightly less than the national average.
- Teenage conception rate in Halton has fallen but is higher than the North West and England rates.
- There are over 20 young leaders and volunteers within our youth provision.

346 Disabled Children receiving short breaks

550 Missing from home

46 Domestic Violence incidents

91 ASB incidents per 1,000 people

37% achieving a good level of development aged 5

20% Pupils have a SEN Statement

	HALTON	NORTHWEST	ENGLAND
Teenage conception rate (rate per 1,000 females 15-17 years)	41.5	30.7	35.3
Infant mortality (rate per 1,000 live births)	4.8	4.7	4.4
A&E attendances (rate per 1,000 0-4 years)	535	566.2	483.9
Hospital admissions - self-harm (rate per 100,000 0-17 years)	208.7	145.1	115.5
Hospital admissions - mental health conditions (rate per 100,000 0-17 years)	145.1	99.7	91.3
Hospital admissions - due to injury (rate per 100,000 0-17 years)	152.5	150.6	122.6
Hospital admissions - due to substance misuse (rate per 100,000 15-24 years)	149.4	101.9	69.4
Hospital admissions - due to alcohol specific conditions (rate per 100,000 15-24 years)	122.9	93.7	55.8

Here in Halton, integrated commissioning ensures we work together to improve things across health, education and social care. The common aims include:



The commissioning priorities for Halton Children's Trust are as follows:

1. **Pre-conception, Pregnancy, Birth and 0 – 5 Development**

Pregnancy, birth and the weeks and months beyond are a key time of change and development for parents, as well as for their baby. This is an extraordinary and life-defining time and also a demanding time, and while most parents do well, some may struggle to cope with the changes, to adjust to their new roles and to provide their child with the care he or she needs.

We will work together to improve maternal health services, enhance breastfeeding rates and ensure that perinatal (period immediately before and after birth) mental health is a focus of activity.

Child development at aged 5 is a key challenge for Halton, and a priority for the Health and Wellbeing Board and Halton Children's Trust. Action plans are delivered through a partnership approach through health, education and children's centres. This co-ordinated approach aims to ensure the delivery of the Department of Health's 'Healthy child programme'. Areas of work include supporting mums through pregnancy and detecting and treating mothers who suffer from depression early, increasing the number and duration of breastfeeding, support with weaning and nutrition and encouraging a healthy weight, immunisation and speech and language.

We will work with Children's Centres, private nurseries and key service providers to ensure a joined up approach and the best possible results.

2. **Inspiring Families**

In Halton the Inspiring Families approach across the partnership is shaped by four needs:

- The need to improve on making things better for children, young people and families.
- The need to improve performance and make services fit-for-purpose.
- The need to plan ahead for demands on services.
- The need to maintain affordability for required services.

We will work together with an aim to develop new ways of working with families, which focus on lasting change.

3. **Early Help**

Halton's Early Help model covers the full range of services and support provided within and/or linked to children's centres, including commissioned services, with a strong focus upon the integration of service delivery, processes and performance management. This is reflected in the holistic Think Family approach to working with families.

We will work together to make clear links across all areas of work within the Local Authority, Public Health and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), particularly regarding gaps in provision and duplication of services.



Celebrating Success - Advocacy

Robert had had a social worker for a few years and a decision was about to be made as to whether or not he needed one anymore. Robert wanted to be able to contribute to this decision. Robert's social worker contacted National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) to see if an advocate could go and visit Robert to ascertain his wishes and feelings about this before any decisions were made.

Robert is 15, a young carer and lives with his Mum, Dad and his two little sisters. Mum has disabilities so Robert helps out a lot around the house. Dad has a history of substance misuse for which he is accessing support. Robert has previously been supported through a Child Protection Plan and more recently the family were supported via a Child in Need Plan.

Robert was capable of sharing his opinion but needed encouragement to do so as he was shy and reluctant to speak as he was afraid of getting Mum and Dad into trouble. Robert also sometimes felt like he was to blame for the arguments. As a result of this, he hadn't been able to form a trusting relationship with any professional who could support him to be heard.

A home visit was arranged where it was

explained that an advocate was someone that Robert could trust and that information would only be shared with Robert's consent or if the advocate had any safeguarding concerns. They talked about how it was important that Robert felt able to share his views on decisions being made about his life and Robert was happy to have the opportunity to do this. Robert spoke to his advocate about how having a social worker had helped him and about how he felt that his family had made improvements and how he felt happy. With his advocate's support, Robert wrote down his wishes and feelings which were then shared with his consent with his social worker who used the information to contribute to the plan. After considering and listening to Robert's wishes and feelings, it was decided that the case could be closed and managed via a Common Assessment Framework instead.

There have been several positive outcomes for Robert throughout this intervention. There has been an improvement in his emotional wellbeing as he feels settled at home and feels well cared for. He is enjoying a good level of wellbeing and his responsibilities around the house have significantly reduced. He also now has an awareness of appropriate tasks for a young person of his age and knows how to access support if ever he feels that he is doing too much.

Having advocacy support enabled Robert to develop his communication skills and built his confidence to speak up about his feelings.

4. **Risk Taking Behaviour**

Halton Children's Trust is working to increase young people's awareness of the issues surrounding risky behaviours and to ensure that they know where to receive help, advice and support.

We will work together with an aim to reduce the teenage conception rate and the number of young people frequently using illegal drugs, alcohol or other dangerous substances.

5. **Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing / Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)**

Halton Children's Trust recognises the importance of emotional and mental health and wellbeing and is working with elected members to ensure improvements are achieved.

We will work together to develop and improve the emotional health and well-being provision for the children and young people in Halton.

6. **Special Educational Needs (SEN)**

Services will work together with the family to agree a straightforward, single plan that reflects the family's ambitions for their child from early years to adulthood, which is reviewed regularly to reflect their changing needs, and is clear about who is responsible for provision.

We will work together with colleagues from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Special Educational

Needs (SEN) department to ensure that assessments, contracts and the quality assurance of providers are developed together to ensure the best possible results are achieved at value for money.

7. **Children in Care**

It is widely recognised that children in care are one of the most vulnerable groups within society today. Children who have been placed in care are at much higher risk of developing emotional and mental health problems than the average child. Children in Care are also widely recognised to have poorer educational results and other health problems.

We will work together to foster active participation by as many people and agencies as possible and ensure that all commissioning activity seek to find ways to make itself more answerable to communities through events, panels, area forums and clear and open decision making processes.



Celebrating Success - Tier 2 Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Specification

Halton Clinical Commissioning Group and Halton Borough Council have worked together to develop a new integrated Tier 2 CAMHS service specification. As part of this, there has been close work with the INVOLVE Group. Parental and young people's involvement has included:

- Advising on the best ways to involve and engage young people.
- Focus group sessions that have influenced the service specification
- Wider feedback on the service specification.
- Parent and young person representatives now attending CAMHS steering group.
- Young people being invited onto the panel throughout the tendering process.

Celebrating Success - Young Carers

Young Carers have been involved directly in the commissioning of breaks for young carers in Halton for the last two years. They have been involved in setting questions for the requests for quotes documents as well as the interview questions and the presentation subject. Young Carers also interview service providers and have an equal say in the scoring and outcome of the processes. Feedback from providers regarding how the process works has been positive, as it has been from young people. Young people themselves jointly determine how much the providers receive and also spot opportunities for future developments. One example has been the creation of the Halton Young Carers Roadshow.

CLOSING THE GAP - We will intervene at the right time to prevent problems for our vulnerable children and young people from developing and where problems are already present we will deliver timely interventions to prevent these getting worse.



3. Closing the Gap

What do we mean by 'Closing the Gap?'

This priority is about our children and young people who need extra support in order to achieve their full potential. This may involve improving their learning at school or understanding on how to be healthy and where to get help if they need it.



Halton Children's Trust partners work together to support all of our children and young people in Halton. For some however, additional support may be required because without this extra help they may fall further behind due to the barriers and challenges that have an impact on their life.

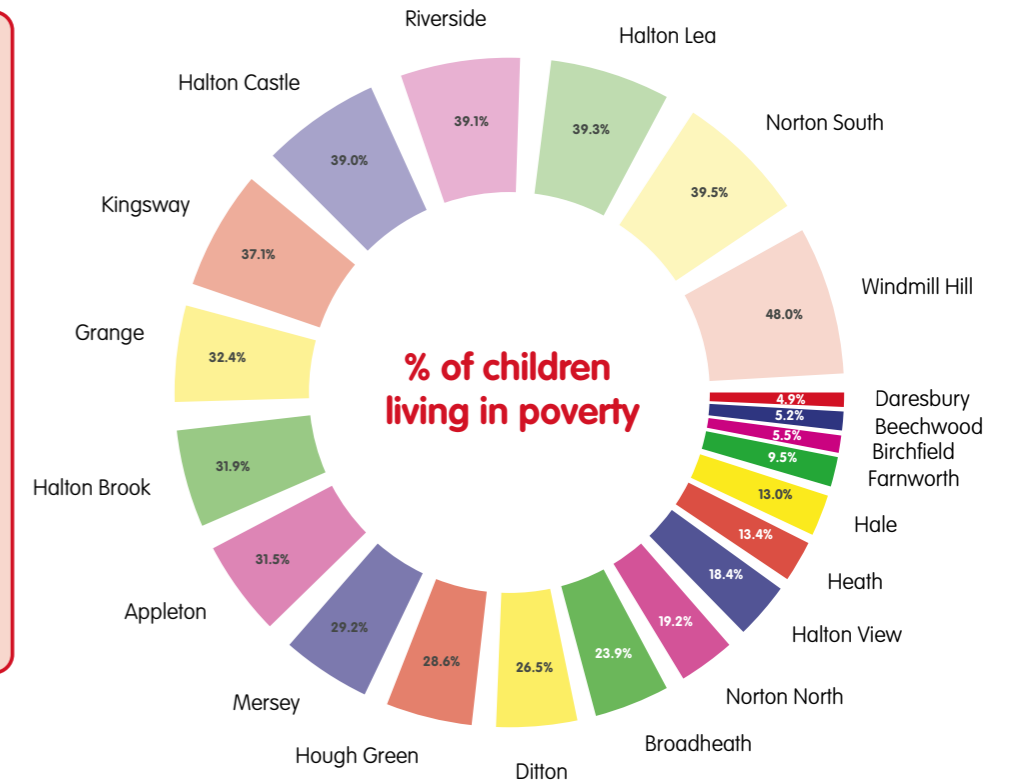
A significant proportion of Halton's children and young people could need more support at any given time. This may be due to particular characteristics or their circumstances. The number of children and young people that receive extra support from across Halton Children's Trust is never static; any child could need extra support, or equally no longer need it as their circumstances change.

There are many different factors that could act as a barrier to a child or young person reaching their potential. The common feature is that each is a barrier in its own way. By supporting young people who face these barriers at the earliest stage, we will give all children and young people the best possible opportunity to succeed, regardless of background or the barriers they face.

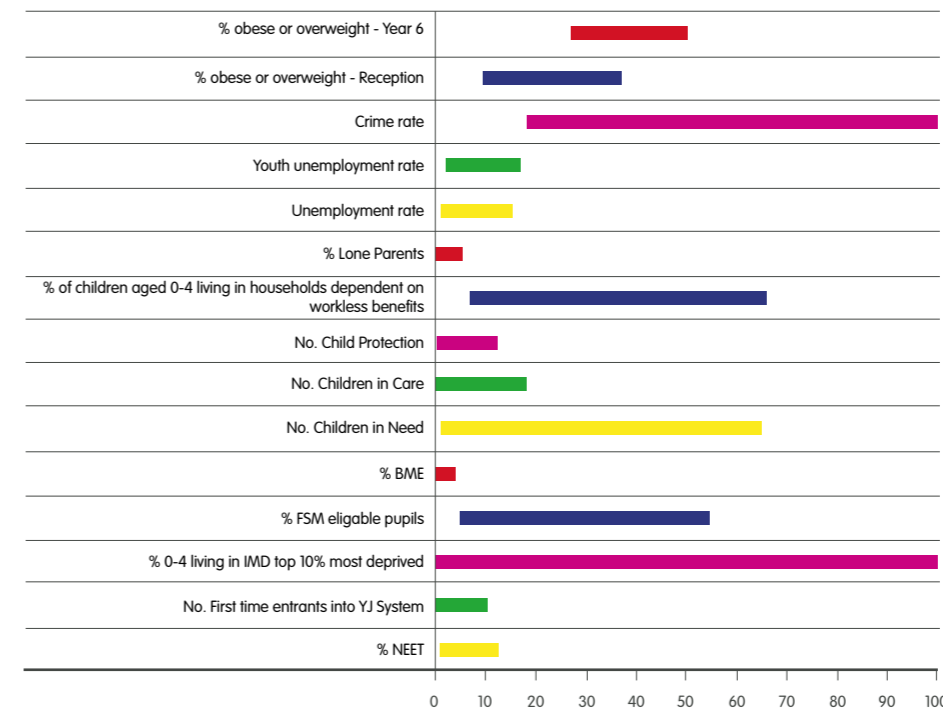
This support will engage families where appropriate to ensure that they benefit from utilising all of our services in Halton, such as Health and Education, as well as becoming more connected with their community.

Headlines

- Within Halton, the % of children living in poverty ranges from 5% in Daresbury to 48% in Windmill Hill.
- The indicator with the largest gap in Halton is 0-4 year olds living in the IMD top 10% most deprived areas. 9 wards in Halton have 0% living in these areas, while Windmill Hill has 100% living in these areas.
- The indicator with the smallest gap in Halton is the % BME pupils. In Halton, this ranges from 0.4% in Windmill Hill to 3.9% in Farnworth.
- 300 Halton young people engaged in the National Citizen Service each year.
- 86% of young people aged 11-19 regularly engage in participation initiatives.



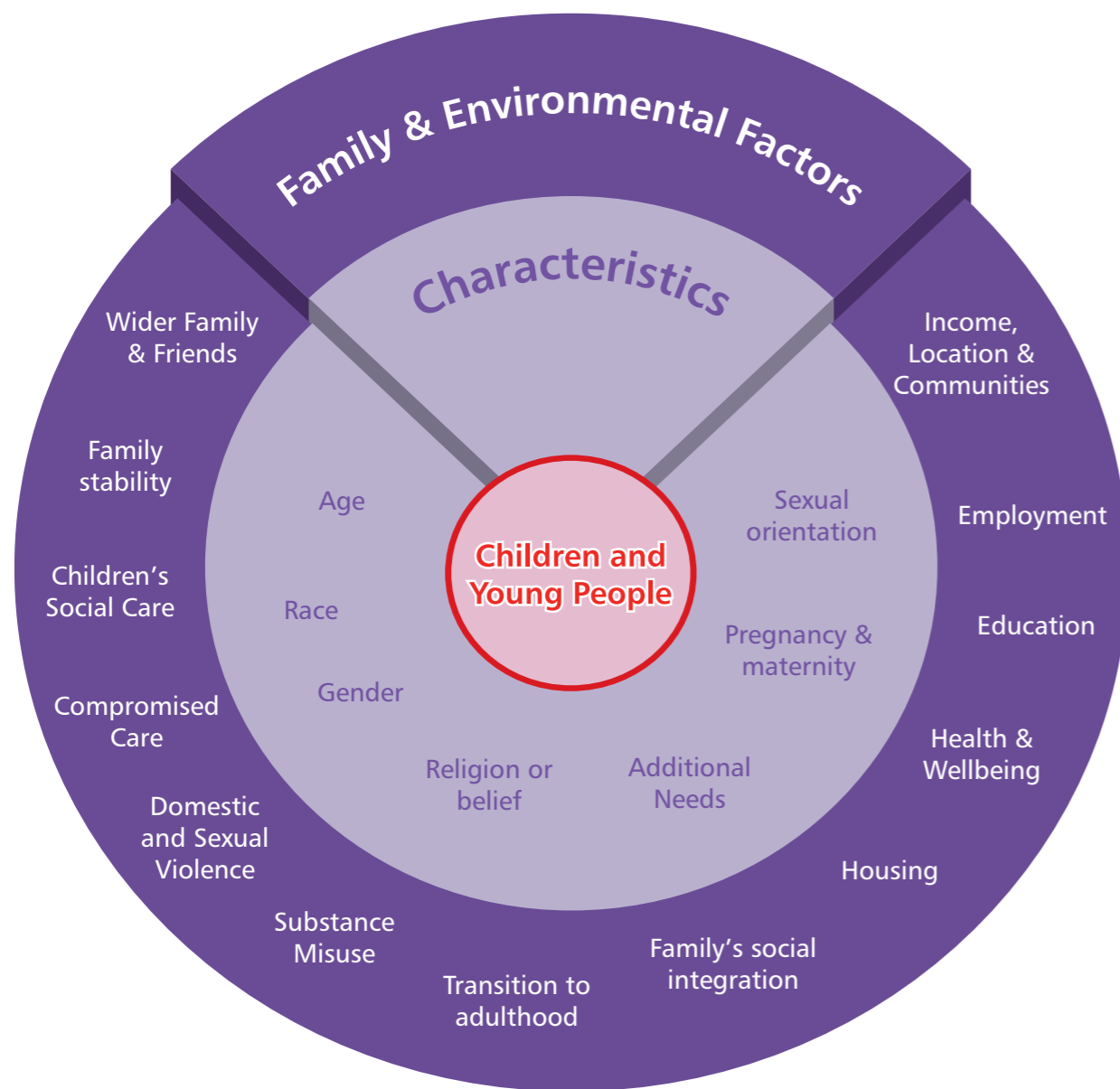
Closing the gap - highest and lowest wards in Halton



62% pass rate (5+ GCSE's A*-C inc. English and Maths) Ranging from 39% to 91% at ward level

52% of under 19's achieving L3

The chart to the left shows the gap between the best and worst performing wards in Halton across the range of indicators.



The characteristics that might make a young person require more support could include:

- (a) Age
- (b) Additional needs
- (c) Gender
- (d) Race
- (e) Religion or belief
- (f) Sexual orientation
- (g) Pregnancy & Maternity

Halton Children's Trust works to ensure that all children and young people have equality of opportunity regardless of any characteristic.

Equally, for some children and young people in Halton, the opportunity to reach their full potential can be affected by circumstances. These circumstances are often beyond their control and could be short-term or more permanent. Often, they can be a broad range of interrelated factors that all need support from a range of children's services across Halton Children's Trust. These include:

- **Education**

Many children do well in our schools but a significant minority of children do not. There is a clear gap between the attainment and achievement of the majority of children and those from particular groups that are more prone to underachievement. It is therefore essential to narrow the gaps in educational achievement if we are to break cycles of disadvantage and ensure that all children make appropriate levels of progress. Extra support is given to children who are not

doing as well as they could do. This will help improve their results at school, so they are similar to those of other pupils.

The groups that we will focus on include for example those eligible for free school meals (FSM), those who have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including those with language or learning difficulties, and any groups whose attainment and progress is below expectation.

- **Health & Wellbeing**

Children, young people and families in Halton can suffer poorer health outcomes due to a broad range of factors. There have been long-standing inequalities in overall health between the most affluent and disadvantaged areas of the borough. These issues could involve health conditions or health-related behaviours. Although there has been a long-term gap, more recently there have been some improvements to child health in Halton but there is still more to do.

Halton Children's Trust supports children, young people and families to increase their understanding of how to be healthy and where to get help and support if they need it through the services that are commissioned. The groups that the Trust focuses on include children with disabilities, children with mental health needs, obese and overweight children, children of adults with mental health needs and parents not engaging with health services on behalf of their children.



- **Children’s Social Care**

Children and young people who have social care needs and children who are in care or within the child protection system are more likely to need more additional help and so we work as a Trust partnership to ensure the appropriate, integrated packages of support and care are in place.

Where integrated packages of support and care are required to meet a young person’s needs, Halton Children’s Trust’s multi-agency partnership arrangements will ensure the right providers with the relevant expertise to work together.

- **Income, Location and Communities**

Children from low income families are more likely to need additional support in order to achieve their full potential. This includes families in receipt of the higher level child tax benefits, families in receipt of free school meals for their children and those living in deprived areas. Families living in areas of high deprivation are more likely to have poor health and educational outcomes and require additional support.

The needs of localities are affected by a large number of factors such as deprivation, demography, community cohesion, crime and services available. Generally, children and young people from the most affluent areas of Halton are more likely to reach their potential without additional support. Children

and young people who live in less affluent areas can have reduced opportunities simply as a result of their locality and it is these families that Halton Children’s Trust will look to offer additional support to. This can include becoming more involved in the design and delivery of their local services, by drawing upon their local knowledge and expertise.

- **Family Stability**

Issues within families could be personal to a particular child or young person, or could be caused by other family members that, for example, compromise parenting capability. Equally, changes to family structures or settings can make a child or young person in need of extra support. The issues within the family could be due to offending or antisocial behaviour, for example. This could be young people who themselves have offended, siblings of children and young people known to be offending or children whose parents are known to police or in prison.

Circumstances can make a significant difference to our children and young people and so Halton Children’s Trust partners are working together to reduce the effects caused by these circumstances.

The sharing of any of these characteristics or circumstances will not automatically affect a young person, but they are statistically more likely to. For Halton Children’s Trust, supporting

children and young people who may require additional support because of these characteristics or circumstance is a key priority. Halton’s Children’s Trust partners are working together to try to ensure that we close the gap for all children and young people in Halton to ensure they enjoy the same outcomes.



Celebrating Success - Halton Mayor’s Award Scheme

The Halton Mayor’s Award is a personal development programme for 10-13 year olds that has been piloted at West Runcorn Youth Centre and with Year 7 Pupils at The Grange School in Runcorn. Those who take part in the Award get involved in a series of challenges and activities to fulfil the various sections of the Award which include skills, sport, volunteering and an overnight camp.

Natalie Slonecki, aged 10, member of West Runcorn Youth Centre and taking part in the Award said, ‘I love coming to the Youth Centre every week and taking part in the team challenges and activities. We also have a food challenge each week and do exciting things in the holidays like walks in Wales, zip wires and visiting places like the Chill Factor.’





Celebrating Success - Duke of Edinburgh Award

The Duke of Edinburgh Award gives all young people aged 14-24 the chance to develop skills for life and work, fulfil their potential and have a brighter future. In Halton, the programme is coordinated and run through Catch 22.

Both young people and schools have found the opportunity of being able to participate in the Award programme invaluable and the feedback from partner agencies involved has been extremely positive.

- 'As a relatively small school we rely on your services in order to offer the award. Our small numbers would make it impossible for us to run the award independently. Thank you on behalf of myself and all of the students who you have enabled to achieve their awards. We truly could not do it without you, long may it continue.' (Cavendish School).
- 'The ongoing encouragement, assistance and advice the young people (and we) have been given has been invaluable.' (Joan and John Mullen).

- 'We are delighted our pupils have achieved their Bronze award and very much look forward to working with you in future on Silver and Gold awards.' (Ashley School)
- 'My daughter has just gained excellent GCSEs and progressed to college and managed to get a part time job. The employer stated that her involvement with Duke of Edinburgh helped secure her the job.' (Sally Myatt)
- 'My son has high functioning autism, dyslexia and dyspraxia. He has no real friendships and has always found social interactions difficult. Before starting Duke of Edinburgh approximately three years ago he had no interests outside of school. I can remember in his first week being told they were going on a walk at Wigg Island and I was mortified. He has no sense of direction as he finds it difficult to look at his surroundings and I was terrified he'd wander off or get lost. Now he's completed his Bronze, Silver and Gold and he's been on many walks and camped out and he's enjoyed it all and it would be possible without the help and support from the group leaders.'

Celebrating Success - Canal Boat Adventure Project

The Canal Boat Adventure Project is a Halton social inclusion project and charity that provides opportunities, in partnership with adults, for residential or day projects. The project works with young people aged 7-21 years old, giving opportunities for young people to develop skills, confidence and experience in Halton, the UK and abroad. The Project has helped many young people from all backgrounds to move on to careers, University and other successful avenues for their adult life.

- 'I just want to thank the Canal Boat Project for all they do for my daughter. She has grown so much in confidence and her ability to talk to and communicate with people has increased ten fold. Before, she was struggling so much with her dad's alcoholism, she kept everything inside through fear of upsetting me, she wasn't having the childhood I desperately wanted for her, and had become withdrawn and unable to express how she felt.'

The Project has given her childhood back, she is now the bubbly young girl she used to be, full of life and the class joker, her dad went through rehab which affected her, but the support she has been given by all the staff at the project has helped so much. She is now a very outgoing and happy girl again which in my opinion is thanks to every one at the Project, without their support I dread to think how she would have coped with all she has been through so far. As a parent I will never be able to thank the project enough for helping my daughter enjoy her life again.'



Safeguarding

What do we mean by safeguarding?

Safeguarding is:

- *protecting children from maltreatment;*
- *preventing impairment of children's health or development;*
- *ensuring children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and*
- *taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances.*

Safeguarding is a continuum (<http://www.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/index.php/halton-levels-of-need/>), from identifying early help, supporting needs by providing services, to preventing harm and protecting children at risk of emotional, physical or sexual abuse and neglect.

Effective multi-agency working is essential as part of wider work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The safeguarding of all children and young people in Halton is everyone's business across Halton Children's Trust and so safeguarding is key to all of the Children's Trust's priorities.

Safeguarding children and young people, and supporting and preparing them through to adulthood, is central to the planning and provision of services in Halton.

safeguarding - We will provide scrutiny and challenge to Halton Children's Trust to ensure all agencies work together to safeguard children in Halton.



Halton Safeguarding Children Board (<http://halton safeguarding.co.uk/>) is responsible for coordinating the work of partners to safeguard children and ensuring the effectiveness of local arrangements. Its Annual Report provides the rationale for the Board's priorities. The priorities are:

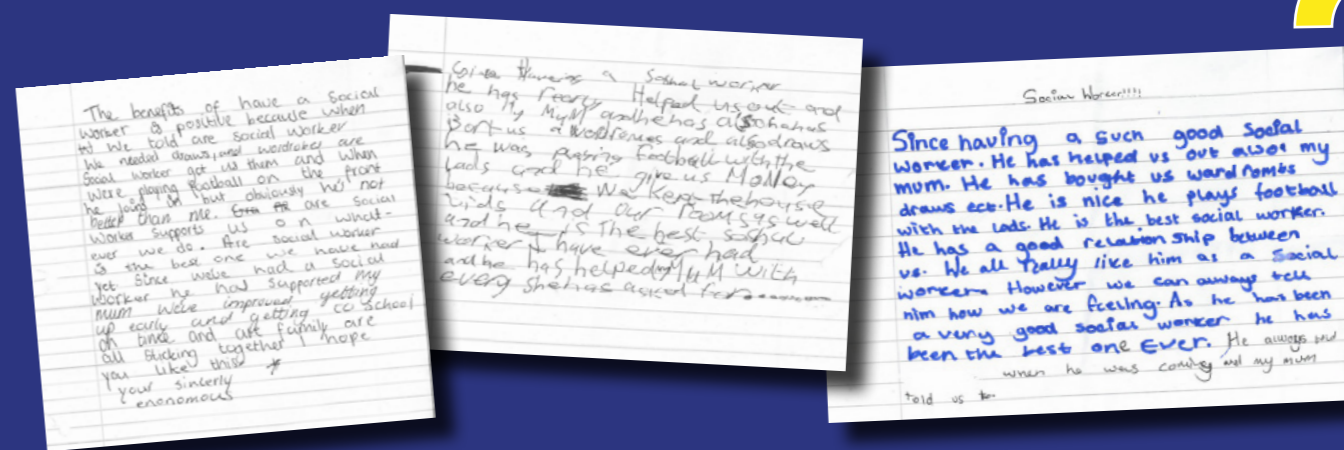
1. *Identify and prevent children suffering harm.*
2. *Protect children who are suffering or at risk of suffering harm.*
3. *Ensure that children are receiving effective early help and support.*
4. *Support the development of a safe and informed workforce, including volunteers.*
5. *Engage with children and young people, their families and communities in developing and raising awareness of safeguarding.*

Embedded across all of these priorities is a focus on particularly vulnerable groups of children and young people. This includes: children at risk of sexual exploitation; missing children; children with disabilities; young carers; children in care and care leavers.

Halton Safeguarding Children Board provides effective strategic leadership on safeguarding for all children and young people in Halton. Its relationship with Halton Children's Trust and Halton Health & Wellbeing Board and how they interact with each other has been formalised through a joint protocol (<http://www.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/index.php/documents/>), informed by the latest 'Working Together' guidance (www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk). This has supported closer working and ensured that cross-challenge and commitment is entrenched within all work. Senior representatives from key agencies work across these partnerships and this strengthens their working relationship, ensuring safeguarding is a key consideration in both the commissioning and delivery of services.

Celebrating Success

Comments from young people supported by Halton Children's Trust



Participation

What do we mean by participation?

This priority is about involving and ways to involve children, young people and parents in decision making.



INVOLVING:

Meaningful participation not only means listening to and consulting with young people, but also creating opportunities to participate in decision making. Effective participation should enable and actively encourage children and adults to collaborate as equal partners in the process from the planning stage through to evaluation. Participation is more than simply taking part in an activity; it's about involvement to help identify needs, explore solutions, make decisions and plan action.

Participation or involvement in decision making can happen at a number of levels. This could be from a school council deciding what their uniform should look like to a child being involved in the decisions made in their own Common Assessment Framework.

In Halton we believe in the importance of involvement of children, young people and their families in policy changes and commissioning decisions. This involvement ensures decisions made are more relevant, effective and sustainable. In Halton, meaningful involvement is achieved through a variety of coordinated pathways.

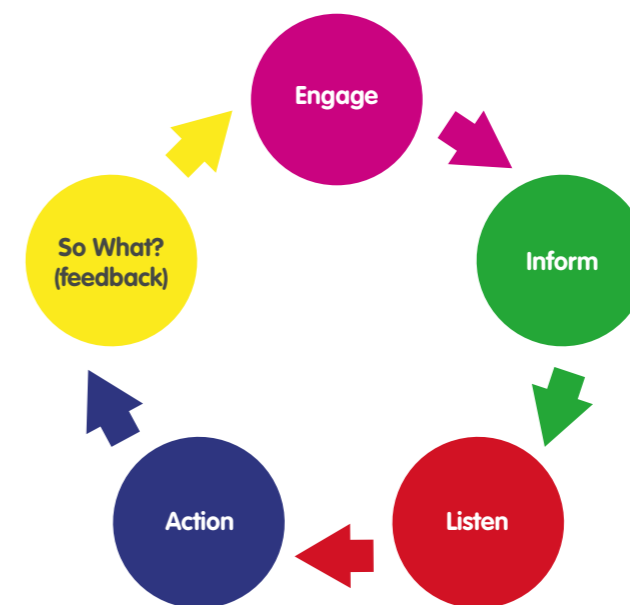
Participation - We will actively seek to engage and involve children, young people and families in all issues that affect them. We will achieve this through offering various ways to be involved that suit their needs and ensure their views are heard. We will ensure that participants receive communication on how their involvement has been acted upon.



Halton Family Voice	INVOLVE	Children and Young People's Voluntary Sector Forum
This Forum represents Halton parent's 'VOICE' on a wide range of topics across Halton Children's Trust. The Group itself meets once a month and welcomes voluntary members from all parents or care givers within Halton. The membership consists of representatives from many of the local parent or carer groups creating a structured approach for two-way communication and gain a true representation of Halton parents.	This is a 'participation advisory group' that acts as a critical friend to Halton Children's Trust partners on participation. The group also advises on how best to involve parents, children and young people in decision making processes. INVOLVE is made up of lead engagement and participation professionals, parents/carers and young people from a wide range of agencies.	This Forum promotes the involvement of the Voluntary and Community Sector in the development of local and national policy affecting Halton's children and young people. It is an open and inclusive forum that represents and supports voluntary and community sector organisations that deliver services to children and young people.

CYCLE OF INVOLVEMENT

For this cycle to work there needs to be a genuine desire to involve children, young people and families in decision-making, rather than something that has to be done.



INVOLVE through:

There many ways that parents, carers, children and young people can be involved in designing and shaping our work at different stages of a project or piece of work, as well as being part of making decisions that affect them. The ideas listed are just some of the ways young people and their families can get involved. For more information on these visit <http://www.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/index.php/participation-group/> to access Halton Children's Trust's Participation Strategy.



- 1. Surveys** – can be completed through paper or online questionnaires, cool walls, comments boxes, social media and community events. Questions should be designed by young people and families or edited by so that the language is accessible.
- 2. Focus Groups** – a form of collective discussion involving a particular group of children, young people or parents either targeted or representative.
- 3. Representatives** – involving key people who speak on behalf of a collective group.
- 4. Peer Researchers** - Research by young people is a relatively recent concept, which has the potential to offer young people a voice. This can be utilised to get an understanding of key themes or areas.
- 5. Peer analysts** – looking at data and understanding what it means.
- 6. Young/parent interviewers** – young people and parents can be an equal part of an interview panel.
- 7. Young/parent inspectors/ kite markers/mystery shoppers** - Young people or parents trained to inspect facilities, services and venues to assess how fun, inclusive and user-friendly they are. From this, reports can be produced by the inspectors to influence future service design or changes.
- 8. Peer educators** - young people and parents to run training aimed at professionals or to peers on key subjects and/or priorities.
- 9. Creative methods** – DVD's, videos, art work, stories, poems, photographs.
- 10. Youth/parent conference/event** – a conference/event where participants are informed on an issue and can give their views. This could be attending events or organising events on behalf of others.
- 11. Youth budget** – an amount of money given to a young people's panel who decide how to spend it.
- 12. Hand the project over** – let parents/ carers or young people undertake their own project with a brief of what the aim is.
- 13. Listening through play** – creative ways of listening to children through art and games.
- 14. Young Commissioners** – young people trained to work with commissioners on contracts and service specifications.
- 15. Speed/circuit meeting** – question and answer session on a circuit with key decision makers to put forward their views and suggestions.

Celebrating Success - Our healthy Halton

Our Healthy Halton was a parent-led initiative aimed at engaging children, young people and parents/carers to find out their views of health in Halton. Parents felt that awareness needed to be raised around healthy lifestyles for families and wanted to organise an event that would involve parents and children. Through discussions with professionals and families it was agreed that to raise awareness of health in Halton it was important to establish what families perception of health in Halton was. Parents were also keen to raise awareness through a family fun activity.

Children and young people of all ages were invited to enter a competition, in which they could use art, poems, short stories or phrases to show what 'healthy Halton' was for them. To support children and parents/carers, two creative workshops were organised, open to all, as part of the competition. At these, attendees were asked to think about what they thought being healthy in Halton meant to them. They then produced a picture, poem, short story or phrase to show their ideas. These were brought together and published as a booklet collating the views of health in Halton across all ages.



Celebrating Success - Bambino's Parent Group

Through Halton Family Voice parents at 'Bambino's' in Halebank raised issues around baby weighing being inaccessible due to poor transport from the area. This information was used by multi-agency commissioners and Bridgewater NHS Trust and after discussions and visits to the group and venue it was decided to hold baby weighing once a month at Halebank Community Centre, coinciding with the parents coffee morning. Feedback on this approach has been really positive:

- 'We are really pleased with the new weigh in clinic at Halebank youth club .. nice to have one nearby and also suits my days off from work, thank you'.
- 'I think it is really good that the clinic has started in Halebank as it was really difficult for me to travel to other clinics.'
- 'The baby weighing clinic in Halebank is a great addition to the community. It is ideal for all the parents who haven't got access to transport to come to the local youth club and seek the advice and help that you need. Long may it continue.'



Celebrating Success - HRMZ Runcorn Youth Club and Weston Point Group

Feedback from a parent

'I would like to take this opportunity to say a massive thank you to all the staff at HRMZ Runcorn Youth Club and the Weston Point Group.'

Both of my boys have benefited greatly over these last few months. They have had a very difficult few years, having been through a very difficult family break up. But having attended the Catch 22 youth scheme, both of them are now becoming more confident and rounded individuals, all thanks to the dedication and support of you all.

During the summer months, my younger son went on numerous trips with the youth scheme and he thoroughly enjoyed them. Camping in Tattenhall, swimming in Abersoch Falls, high ropes in Wales, to name but a few, really did

bring out my son's confidence. As a single mother, I do find it difficult to fund trips out with my children, so to see the smile after each trip meant a great deal to me.

My older son is now part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. He has also been on numerous trips with yourselves and each time he comes home he just beams with happiness. This means so much to me, as my son has really struggled with our family break up and suffers with low self-esteem and anxiety.

You really are making a difference to my children. Words really cannot describe, how much you are helping us as a family.'

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities

What do we mean by 'Special Educational Needs and Disabilities'?

A child and/or young person has Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) if their needs or disabilities affect their ability to learn. For example:

- *reading, writing and maths*
- *Social, emotional or mental health needs*
- *sensory needs*
- *understanding things*
- *concentrating*
- *physical needs or impairments*
- *understanding and communication*

Halton is making good progress in establishing an ethos of inclusive learning for children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD). We want children and young people to lead the lives that they want and there are many different types of support and provision in Halton that can make this happen.

It is important that we continue to help "close the gap" in achievement and attainment, so that children and young people can make good progress and have positive choices as they grow up. To do this, we use the principles of early help, to ensure that everyone concerned is aware of what the needs are and how best to help.

In education, we use "the graduated approach" to make sure that the needs of a young person in education are recognised and supported. Schools and settings can use different approaches to help and guide a young person, so that they make good progress and feel happy to learn. There are wide-ranging resources and teaching expertise that can make the difference to how an individual child or young person accesses their learning; in some cases the Local Authority will provide additional support or agree that there should be an integrated assessment that could potentially lead to an Education, Health & Care Plan.

There are also different specialists that school and families can access for additional information, advice and guidance. These can include; for example, an Educational Psychologist, a Speech & Language Therapist, Community Nurses, Health Professionals and Social Workers.

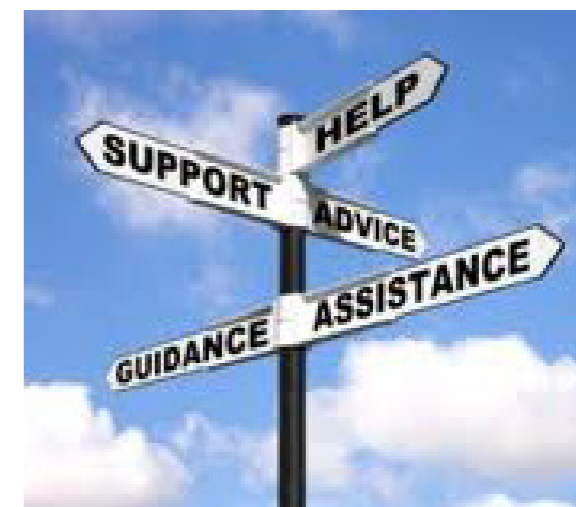
There are lots of changes that Halton Children's Trust are implementing by September 2014. These changes will have a real impact on how SEND is managed in the future.

What are some of these changes?

- To replace the Statement of Special Educational Needs with a person-centred Education, Health and Social Care Plan.
- To provide SEND support from 0-25 and ensure that needs are met within a range of educational settings.
- To enhance ways for parents/carers, children & young people to get involved in decision-making and have their views listened to.
- To make sure that key services, such as Education, Health and Social Care work together.
- To make information about what is available to help families clear and accessible through a "Local Offer".
- To provide greater levels of support for transition, especially for Post 16.

What is Halton doing about this?

We are working together to make sure that the young person is at the heart of everything we do and that different services come together to make sure that decisions and actions are joined-up. As well as the knowledge of professionals we are making sure that the voice of families and young people are included in all work to help us achieve our targets.



Celebrating Success

– Shane’s experience of Halton’s transitional services

Hello everyone, my name is Shane. I’m 18. I live in Widnes. I have used several of the transitional services in Halton and I wanted to let you know about my experiences and how they have affected my life.

I had a harsh time in school thanks to bullying which increased my condition of social anxiety. After a short time in high school my condition became too much and I was forced to leave. I went to a couple of therapists who helped me to control my anxiety partially but I still encountered many problems stemming from my condition.

Around the age of 16 I managed to get a placement that was intended to help with my employability but while I was there I felt that the staff did not fully understand my condition and often left me to my own devices.

My next placement was with Mako as part of the Photo Voices project, there were fewer people but I was still nervous about being there. Fortunately the staff were very supportive

and made me feel welcome, I felt extremely comfortable and for the most part relaxed. Over the weeks that I was involved in the project my confidence working with others grew, which led me to taking on more tasks and responsibility in the sessions. I enjoyed these sessions so much that I asked if I could be involved in other projects. Through this I volunteered to help with their weekend provision, during these sessions I helped teach animation and film making to children, this gave me a sense of responsibility and helped me to build more confidence in my own work and communication with others.

While working with Mako, I decided to join the Prince’s Trust to further help myself. When I first joined I felt extremely nervous and panicked because I was in a new place with 14 strangers but it helped me to become more confident so I decided to give my work my best shot. Two weeks into the Prince’s Trust we went on a one week residential. During this I became more comfortable around the other members of the programme. Throughout the twelve week

course I built up more of my self-confidence and was able to relax when around people I didn’t know. At the end of the programme I earned my certificate of completion. I felt proud and despite my condition and with the help of two of my new found friends, I was able to talk about my time at the Prince’s Trust. I found my time with Mako and the Prince’s Trust to be overall enjoyable and memorable.

In summary, the transition services in Halton have helped me build self-confidence and helped me to gain more control of my social anxiety. I would definitely recommend these services to other young people in a similar position to me.



Performance - We will scrutinise and challenge all agencies working with children, young people and their families to improve outcomes using robust performance management.



Performance

What do we mean by Performance?

Measuring performance information across a series of measures is the way in which we monitor achievement against our priorities.



How do we know we are achieving what we set out to do?

Halton Children's Trust uses a variety of ways to ensure that the priorities for the Children and Young People's Plan are being addressed. The Trust uses performance indicators, scrutiny of action plans and feedback from children, young people and families to monitor progress and target areas for development.

A key document to underpin the performance management is the Halton Children's Trust report card (<http://www.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk/index.php/documents/>). This is organised on a life course approach (by age). The sub-groups all have access to the performance data and are responsible for the scrutiny of their performance. This includes providing appropriate updates and additional information which enables the Trust to understand the progress being made, the impact on outcomes for children and young people, and where further action is required to improve performance.

Actions for each of the sub-groups are documented through action plans that are updated at each meeting to ensure that key areas of work are progressing and shows the interaction between the action and outcomes. These action plans, alongside the report card are monitored by Halton Children's Trust Executive Board to ensure full strategic oversight and scrutiny. In turn, the Halton Children's Trust Board monitors the overall performance of the Executive Board.

In addition, all commissioned services are subject to their own performance management framework and are reviewed to ensure they are meeting the needs of Halton Children's Trust and delivering against the priorities set out in their contracts. This makes certain that all services delivered are working towards the same goals and improving outcomes for the children and young people of Halton. Within this, feedback from the children, young people and families using the services is monitored and evaluated to ensure that it is meeting their needs and services are redesigned and developed in response.

Celebrating Success - Halton Speak Out

Members of Halton Speak Out have undertaken kitemark visits using a mystery shopper approach and this has led to a wide variety of service changes, including how staff across services engage with young people as well as how services are now structured.





Review of Promises 2011-14

Promise	What we achieved?
<p>Consultation – We will engage with our children, young people and families around all issues that affect them, in ways that meet their needs and ensure their views are heard and communicate back how their involvement has been acted upon.</p>	<p>Halton Children’s Trust has continued to improve levels and ways of engaging with children, young people and families. Examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased involvement of young people in the design and delivery of youth provision, marketing and information. Moving away from just consulting with to now involving children, young people and their families using a number of different participation tools consultations being one of them. Halton Family Voice and Involve have been highly involved in developing a range of projects, including the Halton Levels of Need Framework, Our Healthy Halton and this plan. Parent and young people representatives input themselves and carried out further consultation with other parents/carers and professionals.
<p>Safeguarding – We will look to ensure all aspects of equality and diversity are captured in the reporting processes within the Children’s Trust and Halton Safeguarding Children Board.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly reports on safeguarding activity include additional detail on disability. The Halton Safeguarding Children Board commissioned research analysing referrals to Children’s Social Care that considered aspects of equality and diversity with, for example, vulnerable groups such as children with disabilities and children from the Traveller community. An audit of children with disabilities subject to any plan was undertaken to ensure their needs are being addressed at the correct level on the safeguarding continuum. In response to Ofsted’s thematic report on children with disabilities, the Halton LADO Report includes information on children with disabilities.
<p>Safeguarding – We will seek to further encourage and support children and young people’s participation in informing and challenging the work of the Children’s Trust and Halton Safeguarding Children Board.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 790 children and young people responded to the Board’s E-Safety survey. The responses are being used to inform E-Safety work in the borough. Young people designed the HSCB E-Safety leaflet. The Board coordinated the response of over 50 young people to a government consultation on future inspection arrangements. The Board receives information from children & young people on their experiences of safeguarding services in order to inform future service delivery. The Board consulted with young people via an event at CRMZ on how to engage children & young people in the work of the Board.

workforce development - We will continue to invest in our workforce at every opportunity to help us to achieve a more dynamic, knowledgeable and skilled workforce for the future.



<p>Participation – We will endeavour to support throughout Halton active children, young people and parent / carer action groups in schools and within the community, supported by partners who provide a network of children, young people and parent / carer voice. This will ensure there is effective two way communication to shape services through, for example social networking sites, action groups, inclusive interview and commissioning panels, community events and drama and arts activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> More young people accessing youth provision from CRMZ in Widnes and Grangeway Youth Hub. The redesign of youth provision from 2012 onwards has increased the amount of activities available for young people in Halton. Provision now includes more weekend activities and more activities on the streets or on estates, after feedback from young people, as well as more activities in school holidays and during the day. The minimum age for these activities has also been lowered, from 13 to 10. Again, this was as a direct result of feedback from young people. The appointment of a Lead Engagement Officer has led to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Halton Family Voice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rebranding and increased participation and involvement in projects and training using a range of creative methods. Development of a Halton Family Voice page on the Halton Children’s Trust website Establishment of more ways to get involved, including a Facebook discussion group. Involve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of a new advisory group of young people, parents, carers and engagement officers that advises Halton Children’s Trust on participation in decision-making processes Children & Young People’s Voluntary Sector Forum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Currently working towards more effective partnership working and joint delivery of services and provision for children, young people and their families, ensuring a quality offer from the voluntary and community organisations.
<p>Integrated Commissioning – We will ensure that our Children’s Trust priorities and the wishes of our communities are at the heart of all integrated commissioning decisions</p>	<p>As one of the key strategic priorities for Halton Children’s Trust, all commissioning decisions are taken with the needs of our communities in mind. The Children’s Trust’s joint commissioning priorities have been reviewed annually to ensure the right services are jointly commissioned to meet local needs and priorities. These priorities inform the Trust’s Joint Commissioning Framework. For the agreed key priorities, resources within the Trust are combined to tackle these issues.</p>



<p>Workforce development - We will, in these challenging times, continue to invest in our workforce at every opportunity to help us to achieve a more dynamic, knowledgeable and skilled workforce for the future.</p>	<p>Driving this promise forward has been, and continues to be, the three year Halton Children's Trust Integrated Workforce Strategy.</p> <p>The Strategy revolves around 7 key strategic objectives and has achieved notable successes, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The continued rollout of the Halton Children's Trust Multi-Agency Induction Programme • A detailed and thorough Training Needs Analysis that will inform a Halton Children's Trust Training Plan, one of the first within the region. • Establishing a Halton Children's Trust Leadership & Management Toolbox. • Putting into place a Recruitment & Retention Charter. • Work on a sub-regional basis in relation to a frontline Social Work Leadership & Management Development Programme.
<p>Vulnerable groups – We will intervene at the right time to prevent problems for our vulnerable children and young people from developing and where problems are already present we will deliver timely interventions to prevent these getting worse.</p>	<p>An analysis was undertaken to identify and target specific vulnerable groups to ensure that we intervene at the right time to prevent problems from escalating. Using current and historical analysis of vulnerable groups, a method of mapping and weighting indicators of vulnerability in terms of importance on a case-by-case basis is being developed. The peer challenge process underway with schools will further support this work.</p>
<p>Independent advocacy – We will ensure that independent advocacy is in place for all vulnerable groups, and in particular children in care, children with disabilities and complex needs to ensure full involvement in decision making for all our children and young people.</p>	<p>Halton's Children's Rights, Advocacy and Independent Visitors Service aims to provide independent advocacy support, advice and information to children and young people so their views and wishes are heard, their rights are respected, and that they are assisted if they wish to give feedback or make a complaint. The service is for children and young people aged up to 25 years who are Children in Care, Care Leavers, Children in Need, Children with Complex Needs or on a Child Protection Plan, as well as young people placed out of borough. Continued improvements have been made to the service over the last three years based on evidence, feedback and value for money.</p>

<p>Child & Family Poverty – We will work to improve the life chances of children and families living in poverty by actively supporting the implementation of the Halton Child & Family Poverty Strategy and encourage our partners to contribute towards the delivery of the key objectives in the Child & Family Poverty Action Plan.</p>	<p>The Halton Child & Family Poverty Strategy 2011-13 was in line with the Liverpool City Region and Family Poverty Needs Assessment and was supported by the accompanying Child & Family Poverty Action Plan that supported the work of all agencies within the partnership. A new Strategy and action plan is being launched from 2014 and sits alongside this Halton Children & Young People's Plan.</p>
<p>Equality & Diversity – We will recognise and celebrate the diversity of our children and young people as well as aspects of commonality.</p>	<p>Halton Children's Trust introduced an Equality and Diversity Scheme around the Equality Act 2010 and this was revised for 2013 to 2015. The Scheme clarifies the obligations under the Equality Act and Public Sector Equality Duty, and also includes guidance for schools about compliance.</p> <p>The Trust Equality Group has been involved in a number of task and finish projects, for example the MMU/CHAWREC Schools Stand up 2 Racism project and production of guidance for schools and Children's Services regarding Prejudice Based Bullying. Training for staff is also in place around cultural awareness.</p>
<p>Performance – We will scrutinise and challenge all agencies working with Children, Young People and their families to improve outcomes using robust performance management.</p>	<p>Performance reporting has evolved over the last three years to meet the needs of Halton Children's Trust. The move to a life course approach that follows the principles of the Marmot Review better enables agencies to align their priorities with those of the Trust. The Executive Board provide challenge and scrutiny at a strategic level to ensure that all agencies are supported to improve performance and share good practice led through the work of the sub-groups.</p>
<p>Levels of Need Framework – We will review Halton's Levels of Need Framework utilising the learning from Team around the Family.</p>	<p>The current Halton Levels of Need Framework was launched in April 2013 and focuses on the child and family through the adoption of a common language and ensuring the best outcomes for all. The Framework informs other key work of Halton Children's Trust, such as the Contact, Assessment and Referral Team (CART) and Neglect Graded Care Profile. Work continues to ensure this new framework is clearly understood and embedded in all working practices across all agencies within the Trust.</p>



<p>Early Help and Support – We will endeavour to meet the needs of children, young people and their families as early as possible using local services that are sensitive to all issues.</p>	<p>Halton Children’s Trust’s model of early help and support was established in 2010. All partner agencies are committed to providing support to families in need, as soon as additional needs are identified, and have signed up to a set of values and principles regarding early help. The overall aim is to identify needs early and deploy the right resources to help prevent needs from escalating. This is achieved via close partnership working and using holistic assessments where appropriate, that address the needs of the whole family.</p> <p>A proposed model to take Early Help & Support to the next stage of integration across Halton Children’s Trust agencies was approved at the end of 2013 and once all the implications of the model have been put into place during 2014 this approach will be launched for Level 1 and particularly Level 2 services in Halton.</p>
<p>Early Help and Support – We will ensure that children, young people and their families can access the additional and specialist services they require through the same initial point of access.</p>	<p>The adoption of the CART approach to services through a single front door to services has further supported meeting this promise. In addition, to complement this, Halton was also one of the first areas nationally to introduce the Single Assessment Process in 2013.</p>
<p>Play – We will support all children and young people to be able to participate in and enjoy play in their local area.</p>	<p>In partnership with Halton Play Council, open access play opportunities are available all year round for children and young people aged 5-12 years. For children with additional needs, play opportunities have been sustained and extended, with a range of after school, weekend and school holiday opportunities available all year round for 4-18 year olds. One example of this was a whole group day trip to Chester Zoo including young people with very complex needs – the largest trip ever undertaken. This came as a result of young people’s feedback. In total there were in excess of 100 young people and 50 staff members / adults</p> <p>Further progress has been made in developing facilities, with the development of new indoor and outdoor play facilities.</p>



For more information please contact **Halton Children's Trust** in any of the following ways:



Web: www.haltonchildrenstrust.co.uk



Email: childrenstrust@halton.gov.uk



Twitter: **@HaltonCT**



Tel: 0151 511 7396