

Welcome to the first newsletter from Darlington Children's Trust.

Our newsletters will be one of the ways we will keep all of our partners informed and updated about current issues and the progress of the Children's Trust.



Councillor Jenny Chapman,
Chair of Darlington Children's Trust



Darlington Children and Young People's Plan review 2008-2009

The first annual review of Darlington's Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2008-2011 has been carried out.

The purpose of the review was to:

- Recognise the progress achieved in 2008/09 in relation to the priority commitments made in the CYPP.
- Identify changes in children's needs
- Identify the key areas we need to improve

The key achievements outlined from the review are:

- Access to Genito-urinary Medicine (GUM) services within 48 hours has improved
- Darlington has successfully increased long-term stability of placements for Looked After Children (LAC)
- In the past twelve months we have reduced the number of children aged 0 -15 killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents.
- Darlington is the most improved Local Authority against 2007 performance for secondary absence, and secondary persistent absentees
- Darlington's 2008 5+ A*-C performance ranks 27th when compared to the other 149 Local Authorities (LAs), and is the 6th most improved score out of all 149 LAs when compared to their 2007 results.

- The number of school exclusions has fallen significantly in both primary and secondary phases since 2006-07.
- Darlington has increased the number of children, young people and their families and carers involved in the design and delivery of services.
- The number of anti-social behaviour incidents has reduced in 2008-2009.
- Health Visitors perform well with postnatal, 6-12 month and 4-8 week contacts

The main areas for improvement that were outlined by the review are:

- Although under-18 conception rates are still showing a slight reduction work will continue to sustain this downward trend.
- Darlington will continue reducing the proportion of children living in poverty, especially in the current economic climate.
- Although obesity rates for reception and year 6 aged children have reduced work will continue to tackle childhood obesity.
- Darlington will continue to reduce the number of school exclusions.
- Darlington will continue to improve provision for disabled children, their families and carers.

The full review is available on-line at www.darlington.gov.uk/children/childrenstrust

One Children's Workforce Framework

The One Children's Workforce Self Assessment tool was used between December 2008 and June 2009 to measure our progress in developing a Core Children's Workforce that is reformed, integrated and making the best possible contribution to our local Every Child Matters outcomes and Children and Young People's Plan.

A number of key themes emerged through the self-assessment process:

- There is confidence in the capacity of strategic leaders to articulate the vision and purpose of the Children's Trust and these are clearly set out in the Children and Young People's Plan. However the CYPP is not a familiar document to many practitioners, and shared identity, vision and purpose is not widespread across the Children's Trust.
- There was a consensus that communication within and across Children's Trust partners should be improved.
- There is recognition of the importance of developing common values and language, and a glossary of terms is included in the CYPP.
- Integrated working practices are beginning to develop and practitioners have been able to articulate how processes such as Common Assessment and the Team around the Child will improve outcomes for children, young people and their families. However, there are elements of the workforce that continue to be "hard to reach", including the children's workforce in schools; volunteers and direct payment carers.
- Access to learning and development opportunities is not equitable across the One Children's Workforce. Some practitioners have good access and feel supported in ensuring their practice is relevant and responsive to emerging priorities, and some have clearly defined professional development pathways. There is an integrated Children's Services Learning and Development Directory, which is based on the common core of knowledge and skills for the Children's Workforce and CYPP Priorities, but this is difficult to use for those without access to the internet or intranet.
- There are a number of sector specific initiatives for social work, the integrated youth service and the children's workforce in school, which are intended to improve recruitment and retention in key roles.

An analysis of the evidence obtained through the self-assessment has identified a number of high-level actions that will inform our Children and Young People's Workforce Development Strategy.

- A Common Induction Framework for the Children's Trust has been developed and approved by the Children's Trust Board. This will provide a vehicle for ensuring that the children's workforce in Darlington has an opportunity to develop a shared understanding of the values and principles of the Children's Trust, the common processes for effective integrated working and access to a range of development opportunities relevant to their role.
- A Communications Group has been established and will implement a number of measures including a structured communication plan, use of newsletters and briefing sessions
- A core set of values, principles and behaviours expected of the children's workforce has been developed by the national Children's Workforce Network and it is proposed that these should be incorporated into recruitment and retention processes.
- A six-month development programme for integrated children's services has been commissioned through the National College of Leadership for Schools and Children's Services and is planned to start in November.
- The second phase of the Leadership Development Programme is under development and will be targeted at appropriate leadership levels. Sector specific initiatives for strengthening leadership in the integrated youth service; social work and schools are already underway. Middle leaders across the Children's Trust will have an opportunity to take part in a regional leadership development programme funded by the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) and Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership (RIEP) in 2010.
- The participation of children, young people and their families in developing the workforce will be taken forward through the Consultation and Engagement strategy.

Darlington Children's Trust logo

Darlington Children's Trust has now adopted a new logo. The logo was designed by students from Darlington College, and it will replace any logos that have previously been used. It was agreed by the Children's Trust Board in September 2009 that all new publicity materials for children and young people's services must include the new logo. The logo (file size 12KB) is available from Samantha Pattison at samantha.pattison@darlington.gov.uk



New Darlington Children's Trust Strategies

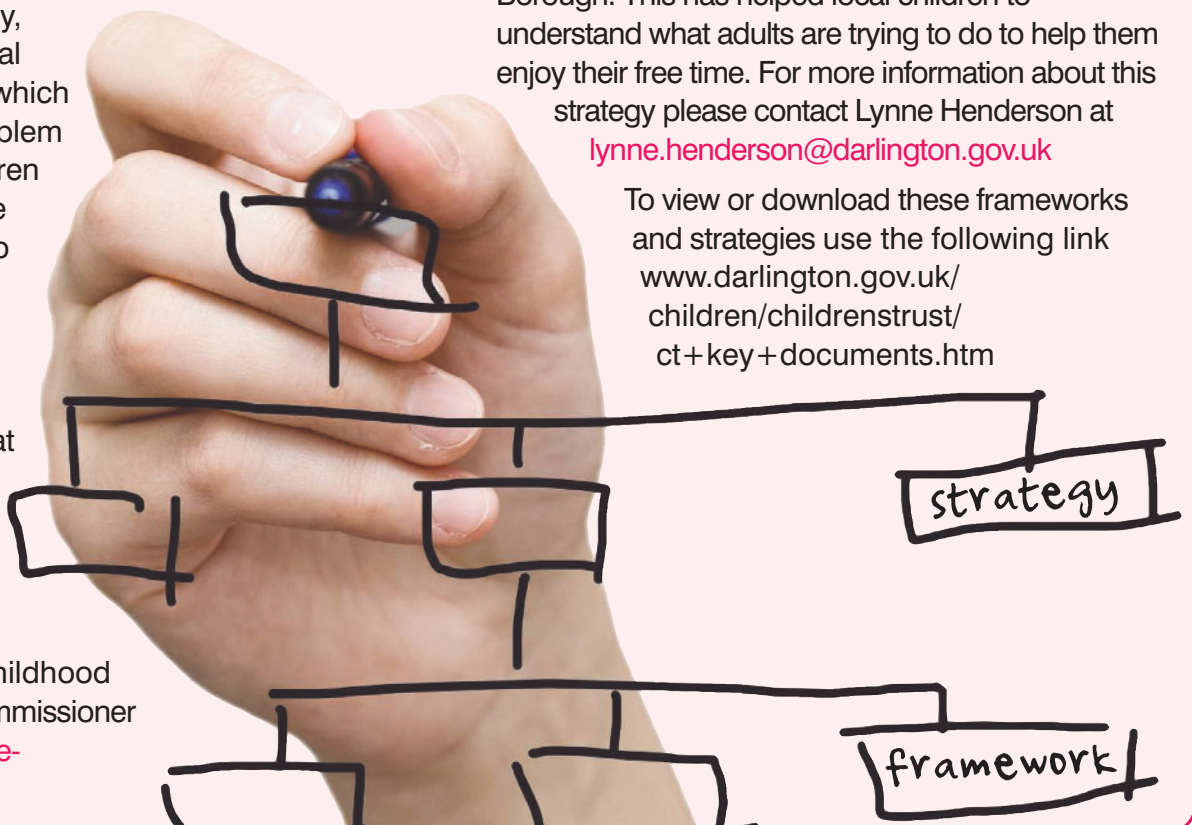
Darlington Children's Trust has recently adopted four new or updated strategies and frameworks. These are as follows:

- Darlington Children's Trust Communications Strategy, which sets out the rationale and means of effective communication for Darlington Children's Trust- for more information about this please contact Melanie Brown, Children's Trust Partnership Manager
melanie.brown@darlington.gov.uk
- The Emotional Well-Being Framework, this provides a reference framework for everyone working with children, young people and their families in Darlington. For more information about this please contact Charmian Hobbs, Principal Educational Psychologist by email:
charmian.hobbs@darlington.gov.uk
- Preventing Obesity, Promoting Physical Activity Strategy, which highlights the problem of obesity in children and young people and what needs to be done locally in Darlington to prevent obesity and to develop services to combat obesity. For more information about this strategy please contact Sue Hoare-Leather, Childhood Obesity Lead Commissioner by email: sue.hoare-leather@nhs.net

- The updated Play and Free Time Strategy reflects what the Play Partnership considers to be the core offer of play in Darlington and includes:
 - play opportunities for children and their families in Children's Centres;
 - registered childcare provision for 0 - 14 year olds in playgroups, out of school care and clubs;
 - play schemes not requiring registration;
 - supported outdoor play;
 - free play and access to play spaces;
 - easy access to positive youth activities (13 - 19 year olds); and
 - easy access to sport and physical activities (all ages).

The Play Partnership has also produced a children's version of this strategy with the help of children in the Borough. This has helped local children to understand what adults are trying to do to help them enjoy their free time. For more information about this strategy please contact Lynne Henderson at lynne.henderson@darlington.gov.uk

To view or download these frameworks and strategies use the following link www.darlington.gov.uk/children/childrenstrust/ct+key+documents.htm



Darlington Children's Trust Annual Conference

This year's **free** annual Children's Trust Conference will take place on November 25th, 2009 at Darlington Football Club. Registration starts at 8.30 am.

The theme for the conference is 'Integrated Children's Services'. Guest speakers at the conference include:

- Murray Rose: Director of Children's Services
- David Colin-Thomé: National Clinical Director for Primary Care
- Peter Grady: Integrated Working Cluster Manager, Children's Workforce Development Council
- TBC: Independent Safeguarding Authority Board

The following workshops will also take place at the conference;

- Joint Commissioning
- Schools Commissioning
- Integrated tools and processes to support integrated working
- Over the rainbow...from assessment to action, developing an integrated workforce
- Young people as stakeholders: making and evidencing change

We will be launching Darlington's Integration arrangements at the Children's Trust conference. A short guide will be produced detailing the new arrangements at the event. More information about Darlington's Integration Children's Services will be available in the next edition of the Partner Newsletter.

If you would like any more information about the Conference please email helen.taylor@darlington.gov.uk



Darlington Children's Trust Website access

Darlington Children's Trust has published the Darlington Children and Young People's Plan, the CYPP Review, Darlington Children's Trust board minutes, membership of all Children's Trust groups and key strategies and documents on its web pages. The website will be regularly updated and to find out more information about Darlington Children's Trust please visit www.darlington.gov.uk/Children/childrenstrust

