

COVER PAGE

**HARROW CHILDREN AND YOUNG  
PEOPLE'S PLAN**

2009-2011

**Appendix one of cabinet report  
ONE OR TWO IMAGES**

Foreword by Councillor Christine Bednell

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# The Vision

The true test of this document & all those who work together to deliver services with, to and for young people, will be less in the delivery of the Key performance indicators, but more in the sense of achievement, value, self-worth and respect that young people have for themselves, each other and the rest of society.

The speed of communication change accelerates each year. This provides both opportunity & challenge. Yet in this high speed technologically advanced world, the needs of young people for love, safety & guiding boundaries remains constant. Opportunities & risks present themselves in all aspects of our society. The task of families, carers, professionals and voluntary organisations is to work with young people so they are equipped to take on these challenges, manage them & seize every opportunity.

This plan builds on the excellent work of all our partner agencies and young people over the last 3 – 4 years & shows our shared determination to be ever more successful.

It is a privilege to work with the staff and young people in Harrow and our harmonious and diverse community. Hard work, humour & determination to improve are its defining characteristics.

This plan sets out realistic, but optimistic, proposals for our work together.

I commend them to you.

Paul Clark

Chair Harrow Children and Young People Strategic Partnership

Feb 2009.

## Introduction

The UN convention on the rights of the child sets out the standards that we, as an international community agree as the basic rights of Every Child and every one's aspirations for equality of opportunity and respect for personal and cultural integrity of every child and young person. [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child - full text](#). This plan is guided by the UN convention and by UK legislation, the Children act 1989 and the Children act 2004. Government policy, Working Together to safeguard children and their families, and the Children's Plan and accompanying policy documents are our key reference points for developing our local plan. The national response to the Baby P case will continue to inspire our vision to help people work together to improve the lives of children and young people in the borough. We have provided a list of references to local and national plans at the end of this document

[\(LINK-LIST OF PLANS\)](#)

## Scope of this plan

This is the second plan produced by Harrow Children and Young People Strategic Partnership. [\(Link membership\)](#) It has been produced to ensure wide understanding of what the partnership aims to achieve for children and young people in Harrow and how we mean to achieve it. We pay particular attention to a shared list of priorities. We have to ensure that the most needy receive help. We also need to support parents raising their children so they grow up in a safe and healthy environment, that they are given every chance to achieve their potential, that their contributions to our community are valued and respected and that they achieve economic prosperity as adults. Our key themes throughout this plan are:

- early help and support to prevent long term problems,
- narrowing the gap between those children who may not achieve their full potential without help and support and the rest of the child population and
- developing trusting partnerships with parents and among practitioners and their leaders and managers.

How we worked out our **priorities**:

We looked at the information and statistics on our changing population. We know that there are increasing numbers of young families arriving from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Somalia and the Balkan states. We shape our services to support their needs. Most of this information has been derived from our "Joint Strategic Needs Assessment", and [\(link\)](#) and regular collation of the school rolls at the start of the academic year. We are also informed by the work of managers and staff and their experience and views are included. We have evaluated our first Plan [\(2006-2009\)](#) every year and this experience has helped us in shaping the future. We have looked at our progress on the tasks we set ourselves and checked our performance. Our inspectors [\(link APA\)](#) have made recommendations to us about how we can continually improve. We worked with central government and Harrow Strategic Partnership on a Local Area Agreement [\(link\)](#) to ensure our children's needs are met and that they agree with government's aim for children nationally. We consulted with children and young people, parents and members of the voluntary sector. [\(Link to consultation doc\)](#). Children and young people are the strongest influence on this plan. All of this information when combined forms a "needs assessment" [\(link to children's needs assessment\)](#) informing our decisions about the most important areas of work we need to focus on.

The negative impact of poverty on the potential of children and young people is undisputed. We anticipate a local impact of the world financial crisis through increasing unemployment, debt and resulting family and social problems. This is likely to affect families from a variety of social classes, including those who have not been affected by such issues before.

We are already seeing the local impact of our population changes with some early signs of increasing deprivation in some wards ([reference](#)). There are small increases in the numbers of children attending our schools who need extra help with their learning. Through our shared knowledge of Harrow, we can anticipate trends. This information helps us to target those young people who may need extra help

The plan sets out our vision for the next 2 years for what we want to achieve. We have provided key highlights in this document. Links to more substantial documents are provided should you wish to read more. We have produced one plan and one message so that everyone can share the same ambition for children and young people with them and for them. We have organised our priorities for the next two years using headings as follows;

Be Healthy, Stay Safe, Enjoy and Achieve, Make a Positive Contribution and Achieving Economic Well-being. We provide a summary of how we will make it happen and how we will know we are making a difference.

This plan is brief as we aim to make it easy to read for most people so that everyone understands our goals. More details are available on our website. [www.harrow.gov.uk](http://www.harrow.gov.uk)

## Be Healthy

The health of our children and young people is a priority for the Harrow health community. Working together to support children and families to make choices that enable them to fulfil their potential, remain healthy and avoid health problems is a partnership priority. We do this through a range of activities and services providing a swift and sensitive response when children need it. Our key emphasis in the coming two years is to continue to promote the health of all children whilst targeting extra resources to our most vulnerable and at risk families and communities. Starting early, during pregnancy and the early weeks of the baby's new life, we will achieve long term benefits. The "Be Healthy" sub-group, led by the PCT has **our priorities as follows:**

- To improve maternity services, reduce low birth weight babies and reduce infant mortality rates.
- To tackle inequalities by targeting obesity teenage pregnancy, binge drinking and substance misuse.
- To continue to strengthen the "Healthy Schools" programme
- To improve the oral health of our children
- To improve uptake of all immunisations and vaccination
- To continue to improve our Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
- To promote positive sexual health.
- To improve transition services for Children with Disabilities

### Actions

- To improve maternity services. This includes bringing midwives into the community. This will improve early booking of pregnancy, promote breastfeeding, reduce smoking in pregnancy and strengthen antenatal and neonatal screening programmes.
- To implement the child health promotion programme. This includes increasing coverage of immunisations.
- To improve access to services for children with disability and complex needs.
- To work with Children's Centres and extended services in schools to identify health issues and prevent long term problems in children and ensure that appropriate services are in place.
- To work with parents and children with disabilities, especially those with complex needs, to transform short break opportunities; and to support such families through transitions (e.g. primary to secondary school) and in particular when they move to adult services.
- To develop care pathways for children with obesity.
- The Children's Trust will develop a multi-agency strategy for substances misuse, including alcohol. This will bring the agencies together to make sure children and young people and their families and those who work with them know how to prevent problems and what to do if they are affected by these issues.
- Continue to strengthen treatment services for children with alcohol and substance misuse problem.
- To extend and develop safe, stimulation play opportunities for children across the borough.
- Develop the sexual health strategies for young people

### We will resource these actions as follows:

1. Secure external funding (such as Aiming High for Disabled Children).
2. Ensure best and most effective use of existing resources by establishing a joint governance framework and continuous monitoring of services.
3. Through the PCT's commissioning strategy.
4. Strengthen partnership arrangements and develop a Children's Trust with joint commissioning arrangements and pooled budget
5. Big Lottery fund and Play builder Funding will resource our play strategy.

*"Every child and young person has the right to the best possible health and health services" (Article 24 UN Convention on the rights of the child)*

# Stay Safe

Safeguarding children from harm and promoting their welfare is everyone's paramount concern. We will continue to emphasise the importance of responding swiftly and robustly to protect children from abuse and neglect. Child protection and safeguarding are at the centre of what we all do. We are also concerned to help children and families early, with information advice and support, to avoid escalation and long term problems. We will continue to raise awareness among children and their families to keep children and young people safe in their everyday lives and when on-line.

With the leadership of our Local Safeguarding Children Board our priorities are to:

- Retain a strong focus on Child Protection
- Safeguard vulnerable children and young people by providing earlier intervention and support
- Promote awareness about bullying and e-safety
- Continue our Miss Dorothy.Com programme, providing early learning to help primary school age children to keep safe.
- Improve placement stability and choice for children who are looked after
- Develop accident prevention programmes including the teaching of first aid in schools.
- Improve identification and support to parents with additional needs
- Continue to raise awareness of the risk posed by Domestic Violence.

## Actions:

- We will continue to improve the way practitioners work together by providing multi-agency training, developing the shared assessment tool, the Common Assessment Framework and strengthening our local networks.
- We will further refine our quality assurance programme to make sure we make a visible difference to children and young people.

We will **resource** these actions as follows:

- Our staff are our most valuable resource
- We will approach our work to ensure we get the best from what we have.
- The local authority provides 95% of the social care funding.
- We will continually explore grant funding to develop further initiatives.
- LSCB Partners provide contributions to the LSCB budget, which helps fund the LSCB business plan.

*"Governments must do everything to protect children and young people from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and mistreatment. Help must be available for children and young people who are hurt by violence, abuse, neglect and mistreatment". (Article 19 UN convention on the rights of the child)*



# Enjoy and Achieve

Our young people have a strong and proud track record of achievement. Our schools and colleges have created a culture of ambition and determination in our young people. Our ambition is to ensure that every child makes good progress and attains highly. We will identify children who may need particular help with their learning and support them. We will improve their potential early in their school career, by improving their learning at the Foundation stage. Students at risk of not making good progress due to challenging behaviour, absence from school or at risk of exclusion will be a further focus for support.

Below are our **priorities** and the key actions we have agreed to achieve:

1. To enhance student progress and attainment
2. To Narrow the Gap between overall achievement and particular groups of students.
3. To maximise attendance.
4. To reduce permanent exclusions
5. To improve activities for children with disabilities
6. To improve attendance and achievement of children looked after and other vulnerable young people

**Actions:** We will;

- concentrate on narrowing the gap at the end of the foundation stage, for Black Caribbean pupils and for White British pupils eligible for free school meals.
- promote and ensure high quality leadership and management, teaching and provision in all schools and colleges.
- work with schools to reduce permanent exclusions and minimise the impact these have on pupil achievement.
- work with the schools to minimise the level of persistently absent students.
- through the work of the Virtual Head Teachers, the independent reviewing officers and the PEP (personal education plan) co-ordinator, to promote expectations of good progress for children looked after.
- enable more children and young people with disabilities to gain access to high quality universal, targeted and specialist play and leisure activities

We will **resource** these actions as follows:

- Developing effective partnerships with schools and colleges
- Focussing external resources on targeted schools and students
- Seeking additional external funding

*"Governments agree that the aim of education is to help the fullest possible development of the child or young person's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities."*- Article 28 Un convention on the rights of the child.

# Make a Positive Contribution

Children and young people have a strong and continuing influence on this plan. Young members of the partnership continue to enthuse and energise our work. They encourage children and young people from all walks of life to make a positive contribution to our community. This includes those who are vulnerable. It involves those who are tempted to commit crimes and helping those who have already done so. We have identified that there are a disproportionate number of at risk black young people and this plan includes actions to help them too.

Children and young people are our active partners and leaders in driving forward this vision. Our priorities are their priorities;

- Reduce crime, fear of crime, anti-social behaviour and reduce the number of victims of youth crime.
- Continue the engagement and participation of all Children and Young People, in particular those who are considered vulnerable
- Engage young people in decision making
- Raise the positive profile of children and young people
- Improve opportunities for volunteer work

## Actions:

We will

- Make sure children have plenty to do, after school and in the holidays and that they know what's out there through our new website, ([insert address](#)) and through our magazine ("That"), events and publications.
- Further enhance their influence by involving them in key decision making groups, meeting with the Director of Children's Services and our politicians and establishing our local youth parliament so that it has a central influencing role.
- Target those at risk of offending and exclusion by providing them with opportunities to do constructive things and be productive.
- We will ensure children leaving care get the best start to help them achieve independence.

We will **resource** these actions through:

- Direct funding from the Council and its statutory partners
- Efficient and effective use of central and regional government grants
- Working with partners to apply for specific grants and other funding streams
- Recruiting training and supporting local community volunteers.

*"Every child and young person has the right to freedom of expression, including the right to all kinds of information and ideas..."-*

Article 13 Un convention on the rights of the child.

# Achieving Economic Well Being

This section sets out our priorities in helping every child achieve their potential by maintaining a focus on the family. Harrow is a thriving diverse community. We anticipate that the World financial crises will have an impact on families with children in all social groups. Some families will experience the pressures of debt, unemployment and the poverty that goes with it. Harrow's population is changing. Some families new to Harrow will have difficulty in adjusting. Children new to Britain will need help in settling into school.

We aim to support families with children to achieve their best through a series of connected activities. We are giving parents increasing opportunities to learn new skills, enabling them to get jobs and/or to get better jobs. While they are learning or working we provide their child with learning opportunities, giving them a better start at school. We aim to continue our success in keeping the numbers of young people who do not have any education, employment or training at very low levels.

## Priorities:

- Further reduce the number of Young People not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)
- Improving opportunities for parents' employability/economic well-being
- Provide high quality Childcare
- Narrow the gap between those children at risk of under-achieving and the mainstream population, and helping every child to achieve their potential

## Actions:

- We will work together, involving the business community, to produce a single strategy to make sure very young person has access to Employment, Education and/or training, providing work experience places and modern apprenticeships.
- To target our resources to support those at risk of becoming NEET.
- To ensure that there is affordable, high quality and accessible childcare available across Harrow. ([Through the implementation of the Childcare Sufficiency Assessment LINK](#))
- To work together to provide a range of innovative services including access to English Classes and employment support for those families who most need it.

We will **resource** these actions as follows:

- Direct Government Grants
- Accessing other funding streams
- Pooling resources with other agencies
- Partnership working with other groups in the west London area to bid for resources

*"Children and young people have the right to a standard of living that is adequate for them to develop fully"*  
(Article 27 UN Convention on the rights of the child)

# Making It Happen

Parents, young people, leaders, managers, schools and staff in all agencies, including the voluntary sector will work together to deliver this plan. Schools and colleges are at the heart of co-located local community services. We will realise our ambition and build upon our excellent partnership arrangements by formalising them. This is called a Children's Trust.

## Leadership

Our new Children's Trust will lead on these formal arrangements; its core purpose is to drive forward our vision. It will encourage managers in all agencies to work together, combining their skills, experience and resources. ([Commissioning strategy-web link](#)). Each organisation (Health, Local Authority and Schools, Colleges and the voluntary sector) is a partner, and together we have the same goals. The children's Trust will mean that we can be more flexible in providing what the child needs. There will be greater opportunities for the growth of the voluntary sector as we develop more creative solutions to fund services.

There were three common strands running through our consultation programme; a need for a central resource to ensure everyone who works with children and families has the right professional support, the importance of early intervention, and improved communications to help everyone know what is available. These three strands are brought together by the Children's Trust. We will create a central resource providing professional advice, information and support to help professionals work together better and help everyone access available resources, and ensure this is communicated to our community. Children, young people and their families will increasingly experience a more co-ordinated approach by those working with them. The information sharing programme ([insert link](#)) will make this happen. These arrangements meet our legal obligations under the Children Act 2004

## Management

Managers will explore new and creative ways to use their resources together. We will build on the success of our experience in providing help at early stages to parents and children. We will formalise communications between professionals working with children. In doing this, professionals are supported in tackling issues early to prevent serious problems long term. Managers will champion the need to communicate better by using formal procedures. The Common Assessment Framework, Lead Professional roles, The Resource Directory, Swift and Easy referral and Contact Point ([SEE information sharing programme plan, link](#)) are tools to support professionals to work together. Through the setting of our ambitious goals these will become a normal feature of our communications in Harrow.

Services are increasingly being provided in our Children's Centres and schools. They are, and will continue to be sensitive to our changing population. They work with local parents, children and young people, GP's, teaching and non-teaching staff in schools, health visitors, school nurses and all professionals working in their area. They actively involve our community in planning what services are needed. They will explore local opportunities to combine effort and resources to meet those needs. ([Joint commissioning strategy-web-link "cluster based commissioning"](#)) and will continue to inform parents, children and young people and staff about what is available locally..

## Staff

Our integrated workforce strategy, launched in 2008 will develop a combined learning programme to provide staff with the skills and tools they need for working together. It will also support arrangements for locating staff together. We will build on the positive experience of the Children's Centre programme and the Local Safeguarding Children Board and create an accredited learning programme for the workforce.

*"Adults should always try to do what is best for children and young people. Governments must do everything to make sure children and young people are safe and well looked after" Article 3 Un Convention on the rights of the child.*

# Making a Difference

We make this plan because we want to make a difference to Children and Young People. We are ambitious, but we also need to be focussed.

We have limited resources, and have to prioritise. We agreed our list of priorities together, so all those working with children and young people are working to the same goals. Our priorities are largely influenced by children and young people and by local need. They are consistent with Central Government priorities. We work this out with the Harrow Strategic Partnership as part of our Local Area Agreement. They are also consistent with Harrow Council Priorities. ([Link](#)).

Each priority is looked at in detail so that we can work out very carefully what we want to improve. These are our indicators (referred to as “Key Performance Indicators”). Additionally, we decide by how much we want to improve and set targets.

We have listed each of the indicators and we check them together as a partnership.

We do this in multi-agency groups, at regular intervals throughout the year.

We look at the priorities we have agreed in a particular outcome area:

- Be Healthy
- Stay Safe
- Enjoy and Achieve
- Make a Positive Contribution
- Achieving Economic Well-being.

We bring our reflections on progress to our full partnership meetings. (The Children and Young People’s Partnership meetings)

In this way, we can see clearly our progress, but also where we might be experiencing difficulty.

If we are struggling to achieve our targets, we can work out together what needs to be done, and do it.

Partners work together in this way to check our progress. They also report to their individual organisations on how they are progressing. For example, Harrow Council has a Performance Improvement Board which examines the Council’s contribution.

This is called our *“Integrated Performance Programme”*.

Details on this can be found from [david.harrington@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:david.harrington@harrow.gov.uk)

Attached, a list with our priorities and targets for the period of this plan and a list of our performance for 2008-2009.

*“Governments must do all they can to help parents look after children well. Parents are the most important people in children and young people’s lives. Parents must always do what is best for children and young people”* -Article 18 UN convention on the rights of the child.

## FINAL WORD

We hope that Aakash will provide a few words here!