

CHILDREN'S TRUST NEWSLETTER

'Working together for a better future for our children'

Issue 1 – January 2010

www.portsmouthchildrenstrust.org



Director Of Children's Service's Introduction

I would like to thank everyone for the very warm welcome I have received. Portsmouth is an exciting place to come and work for, with a number of challenges but also great opportunities.

With the recent announcement over the Building Schools for the Future programme, we have the opportunity to make Portsmouth a world-class city for learning and achievement. This is not only a challenge for schools, but for all children's services, parents and the community as a whole - to equip young people with the skills and confidence to be successful

Communication

From the feedback I have received it is clear that we need to strengthen our working together arrangements, and that communication between services is not as strong as it should be, particularly in a city of Portsmouth's size.

This Newsletter is an attempt to improve communication and I am keen to hear your views and contributions.

Performance of Services

We have some excellent and outstanding services across the City, however we do need to ensure that what we do is making a difference and that we are able to evidence impact on the outcomes of children and young people.

It is clear that we will be facing significant pressures on budgets across children's services but also across public services generally which will have an impact on Portsmouth. It is therefore important over the next year that we put in place the frameworks and arrangements which will enable us to cope with the challenges ahead and at the same time improve the outcomes for young people in the city.

I look forward to working with you over the coming years.

Best wishes



Julian Wooster

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1. News from the Children's Trust Board

In January 2009, the Children's Trust Board was formally set up, taking over from the previous Children and Young people's Strategic Partnership Executive. The Board is made up of senior managers from a range of partners in the city including the city council, Primary Care Trust, police, schools, colleges, voluntary sector and Youth Offending Team.

Children's Trust Boards are statutory partnerships following new legislation in November 2009.

Throughout 2009, the Board has been doing a number of pieces of work to ensure it is effective in shaping services for children and families in the city including;

- Self-audit work using Audit Commission and Commissioning Support programme tools
- Producing a development plan as part of the Children and Young People's Plan
- New Terms of Reference
- New membership in line with the Children's Act 2004 and the new legislation
- Beginning some work to review and potentially restructure the partnership groups that sit below the Board.

The Board is also currently overseeing four commissioning reviews to develop new strategies around some particular issues in the city. These are;

- Children with Disabilities
- School attendance
- Young People who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)
- Domestic Abuse

If you would like any more information about the work of the Children's Trust Board, please contact Hayden Ginns, Partnerships, Policy and Commissioning Manager at hayden.ginns@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

2. News from the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB)

1. The LSCB is a Statutory Board whose role is to monitor and scrutinise safeguarding arrangements in the city. The LSCB has a responsibility to ensure that agencies are working together to safeguard children and young people and to highlight areas of unmet safeguarding needs.
2. This report to the Children's Trust follows the verbal report from the chair of the LSCB in 2008 and also aims to highlight areas of concern from the LSCB which have come to light since that time.
3. During 2009 there have been a number of key changes and work undertaken by the LSCB. The most pertinent to this report include the following:
 - The previous Independent chair of the LSCB retired in June 2009 and we are looking to carry out interviews for a replacement chair in January 2010. In the interim chairing responsibility lies with Julian Wooster as the DCS.
 - A full time administrator has been agreed to support the board for a one year temporary contract.
 - The LSCB undertook city wide work on neglect to develop an identification tool to assist practitioners to identify and measure neglect. The LSCB developed practitioner guidance on how to use the tool and also arranged a City wide conference, with an international speaker on neglect presenting at the conference.
 - The Portsmouth Safer Babies Campaign has been funded by the Child Death Overview Panel and will be rolled out Hampshire wide.
 - National guidance has been issued in respect of the ways in which the Children's Trust Board and LSCB should be populated and guidance regarding governance arrangements.

- The LCSB is in the process of reviewing its Constitution, working Committees and has committed a half away day in January to review the Business Plan.
- The LSCB has been in liaison with BECTA regarding E Safety and has advised on a number of referrals regarding e safety incidents.

3. The Portsmouth Children and Young People's Plan

The Portsmouth Children and Young People's Plan is soon to be renamed the *Portsmouth Children's Trust Board Plan* to emphasise the Board's new statutory responsibility for its development and implementation.

The Plan in place now covers the period April 2009 – March 2011.

The Plan has 13 priorities;

Specific Outcome-Related Improvement Plans

1. Improving Health
2. Improving Emotional Well-being
3. Improving outcomes for children with disabilities
4. Improve educational attainment
5. Improve access to education
6. Promoting Pro-Social Behaviour
7. Enabling young people to engage and enjoy
8. Improving Outcomes for Looked After Children

Cross-cutting Strategies

9. Supporting Parenting
10. Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy
11. Improving Safeguarding
12. Developing the children's workforce
13. Improving Governance and Commissioning

Each Priority is led by a multi-agency partnership of managers and practitioners that reports into the Children's Trust Board via the Joint Commissioning Group.

4. Head of Children's Social Care & Safeguarding –Stephen Kitchman

I have now been in Portsmouth City Council just over 2 months and am really pleased to be here. Previously I was working for Surrey and prior to that I had worked for local authorities in London for the last 18 years. One of most the striking things for me is the similarity of Portsmouth City Council to London authorities in terms of the levels of need, so hopefully my previous experience will help.

It has been a busy time since I started, not least having our unannounced inspection by Ofsted of contact, referral and assessment services within my second month, the outcome was generally positive with many areas of strength, a significant conclusion again was the excellent partnership working between agencies that is in place and I would hope to build on and sustain this. So far I have met with many Portsmouth City Council staff groups and partner agencies and am looking forward to continue this over the coming months to help feed into improved service delivery for our most vulnerable children and young people.

5. Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy

Priority 10 of our Children and Young People's Plan is focussed on improving the way in which agencies work together to identify children and young people who are at risk of poor outcomes and ensuring that effective interventions are put in place.

There are a number of elements to this strategy including;

- Embedding the Common Assessment Framework
- Ensuring children who require multi-agency support have clear plans led by lead professionals
- Improving co-ordination of work between children's and adults services so that particularly vulnerable families are supported
- Improving prevention in universal settings such as nurseries, schools and colleges
- Commissioning effective services for children at Tier 2 and 3 of the Windscreen model of need.

On the 15th November, a large event was held to consult on proposals for the first Phase of implementation of the Strategy. Three main developments are now being implemented;

1. Setting up multi-agency cross-city panels split into age groupings (0-5, 5 – 13 and 13 – 19 plus a fourth panel for vulnerable families)
2. Setting up a CAF Support Team to provide;
 - support for practitioners undertaking assessments and co-ordinating Team Around the Child (TAC) processes
 - administrative support for the new panels
 - support in collation of data to identify vulnerable children building on the current Pupil Audit
3. Formally constituting a multi-agency governance group for the Strategy within the Children's Trust Structure

Recruitment for the CAF Support Team is now underway and the panels are expected to start in late January.

The next Phase of implementation of the full strategy will begin in March 2010.

For more information please contact Andy Hough at andy.hough@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

6. Integrated Working and Safeguarding Training Programme

During 2009, we have been developing the Integrated Working and Safeguarding Training Programme for practitioners and managers across the children's workforce and partners in adults and community services.

The programme aims to equip learners with the skills, knowledge and competence to;

- Work effectively with practitioners from other agencies providing services to vulnerable children and families
- Undertake Common Assessment Framework assessments
- Act as a lead professional
- Contribute effectively to multi-agency Teams Around the Child
- Effectively identify and respond to safeguarding issues
- Manage practitioners working in multi-agency contexts

We have developed 5 modules which are delivered once a month each by a multi-agency training pool.

The Integrated Working and Safeguarding Training team is made up of;
Sam Wilkinson - Children's Workforce Officer
Alison Cottrell - Safeguarding Trainer
Michelle Marriner - Administrative Support

Training on safer recruitment is also being rolled out across schools.

For more information, please see www.portsmouthchildrenstrust.org

7. ContactPoint

ContactPoint will be the quick way to find out who else is working with the same child or young person, making it easier to deliver more coordinated support. ContactPoint is a national database that is being rolled out during 2009/10.

However there is some uncertainty around the future of ContactPoint as the national system may be amended – with responsibility passed back to local areas, if there is a change of government in 2010.

A small pilot group of Portsmouth users will be trained in December 2009 and more information about local deployment will be available early in 2010. There is more information on the Practitioner's page of the Portsmouth Children's Trust website.

8. A new team for young children with complex disabilities

Portsmouth Primary Care Trust is setting up an additional new team for children with complex health needs and disabilities to be based in the Child Development Centre with the wider multi disciplinary team already based there.

Starting in mid January 2010, it will comprise a clinical team leader/nurse specialist, three nurse specialists and team secretary. It will provide services and support those children with the most complex health needs from birth to five years.

The team will provide both the universal health visiting service and a specialist service model based on implementing and using the Early Support Programme materials. Working in partnership with parents/carers at all times they will take the lead professional role for the children and families when appropriate and in addition ensure the provision of emotional support, timely and co-ordinated information about the child's condition and services available to avoid unnecessary gaps or delays in getting what is available and needed. They will enable access to what is available and prevent parents from having to "do battle" with the systems; provide co-ordination to avoid an unmanageable range of appointments, poor flow of information and unnecessary duplication of assessment procedures, and address the whole picture of the child's condition, treatment and progress in addition to considering the wider family situation and welfare.

The team will work closely through collaboration and integration with Portsmouth City Council children's services and align to Sure Start Children's Centres, Community Improvement Partnerships and Extended Schools.

For more information, contact Jenny Gilmour at jenny.gilmour@ports.nhs.uk

9. Building Schools For The Future

Five top companies are through to the next stage of the procurement process to deliver the £200 million transformation of 12 city secondary schools.

Two private sector partners are being procured by the council to deliver its Building Schools for the Future Programme (BSF) - one to design, build and maintain the schools and one to deliver the ICT.

Five of those companies, two bidding to deliver the design, construction and maintenance of the schools and three bidding to deliver the ICT have been invited to continue to talk the council.

Project director Mike Fowler said: "These companies have demonstrated a very good track record, drive and enthusiasm to deliver really exciting BSF proposals for the city. We are looking forward to working with them over the next few months to help shape their ideas."

The preferred partners will be selected in September 2010 and the building work at King Richard and Priory Schools will start in 2011.

Further information on BSF, click on the 'Building Schools for the Future' link on www.portsmouth.gov.uk/learning or telephone (023) 9284 1117.

10. Voluntary Sector Alliance

The Children and Young People's Voluntary Sector Alliance is a relatively new body representing voluntary and community based organisations in the city who work with children, young people and families. The Alliance ensures there is good voluntary sector representation across all the partnerships that make up the Portsmouth Children's Trust and runs workshops, events and briefings to support the sector.

The Alliance is part of the wider Community Network supported by Community First for Portsmouth.

The alliance has recent appointed an Alliance Co-ordinator, Jo Eamey who can be contacted at Jo.Eamey@community1st.org.uk.

11. Events

Children with Disabilities Workshop – January 11th 2010

A morning workshop with practitioners and managers from across the Children's Trust partners to help shape the new Children with Disabilities three-year strategy. The event will include parents of children with disabilities.

Contact: Steve Laycock – steve.laycock@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Domestic Violence and Children Conference – March 11th 2010

A local conference to explore the issue of domestic violence and the impact on children.

Contact: Tonia Earey – tonia.earey@portsmouthcc.gov.uk