

# in Cumbria Every Child Matters

UPDATE



Issue 2 November 2004

## → A Cumbrian Children's Trust

The Government's long-term vision is to integrate services for children within a single organisational focus. The Government's preferred model for achieving this integration is Children's Trusts.

Children's Trusts integrate local education, social care and some health services for children and young people. They may incorporate an integrated commissioning strategy delivered through a wide range of providers that is designed to meet local evaluations of need. Trusts can also include other services such as Connexions and Youth Offending Teams. A range of other local partners - such as the Police, voluntary organisations, housing and leisure services - may also become involved.

The Government states that 'Children's Trusts are a key organisational vehicle in the drive to achieve the five main outcomes for children identified in the Green Paper *'Every Child Matters'* - being healthy, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and economic well-being'. In the Green Paper the Government stated that its long-term vision was to integrate key children's services within a single organisational focus.

The Green Paper, *'Every Child Matters'*, and *'next steps'* confirmed that most areas should have established Children's Trusts by 2006.

In September 2004, Cumbria County Council (Children's Services Development & Improvement Panel) declared the intention to lead on, and facilitate, the formation of a Children's Trust in Cumbria.

**Next Steps:** - Consultation on the formation of a Children's Trust will take place in the Autumn, with a conference led by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership. Key decision makers from around Cumbria will be invited to attend on 7th December.

## → Director of Children's Services

In the first edition of 'In Cumbria - *'Every Child Matters'*, we asked you to comment on the creation of a new post of Director of Children's Services. Thank you to those of you that responded. A report on your comments will be available in November after the next meeting of the Children's Services Development & Improvement panel.

A working group is currently considering the key functions of this post, and reported to the Chief Executive in October.

## → Integrated Children's System (ICS)

The pilot of the Integrated Children's Systems electronic exemplars, in the Penrith Children Services team, has been running since August. The pilot will run alongside a six month consultation and evaluation process with Social Services, key partner agencies, children and families.

## → Research & Development Officer

The newly appointed Research and Development officer is a welcome addition to the ICS team. Amy Holliman comes to Social Services from the Children's Fund. Amy will be leading on the evaluation of the ICS pilot. Part of her brief will be to involve key agencies in discussions about the impact and value of the ICS exemplars on information sharing, partnership working and common assessment.

## → Information Sharing Toolkit

All partnership organisations of the Cumbria Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership have agreed in principle to sign up to a Cumbria Information Sharing Toolkit. The Information Sharing Toolkit (IST) has been developed to establish a comprehensive and consistent standard within and across organisations in respect of the treatment of personal identifiable information.

## → Mapping the Needs of Children in Cumbria

Karen Sayers, of The Children's Fund, has recently completed a major mapping exercise of Children's Needs in Cumbria.

Cumbria Children's Fund was tasked by the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership to produce a report containing a set of data providing evidence of the needs of children and young people from 0-19 years old in Cumbria. This data will facilitate the strategic development of individual and integrated services for children, young people and their families as outlined in the Children Bill.

The information gathered will help to answer the following questions:

- Does Cumbria have services that meet identified need?
- Is priority being given to the right children and young people?
- Are the services in the right place?

**For more information on the integration of Children's Services, please visit our website:**

**[www.cumbria.gov.uk](http://www.cumbria.gov.uk) or contact Michael Blakey, Project Officer, at [michael.blakey@cumbriacc.gov.uk](mailto:michael.blakey@cumbriacc.gov.uk) or telephone: 01228 601192.**

## Integrating Children's Services

The following principles will underpin any proposals to change the way we work together.

1. The rights of children and young people are paramount and this principle will underpin everything we do. Any developments will have to demonstrate clear benefits for young people and for their families.
2. Services will be based in the communities they serve. Local people will be involved in monitoring or managing the services we provide.
3. Any developments will take full account of the Council's statutory responsibilities. They will also be consistent with the government's expectations for Local Authorities and will be discussed with the relevant government departments. These include the DfES and Ofsted, the Department of Health and the Social Services Inspectorate, and the Government Office North West.
4. The Local Authority cannot deliver a full range of services on its own. We intend to work in partnership with schools, voluntary organisations and other statutory organisations in planning and delivering services.
5. We will organise our services to take account of current administrative boundaries. We will follow, in particular, the boundaries of Local Committees and the existing Strategic Partnerships. In addition, we will try to ensure that developments are consistent with any future reorganisation of local government at a regional level.
6. We will consult all staff, believing that they are uniquely placed to advise us on how our services can be developed. We will ensure that their views are considered carefully, and we will keep them fully informed throughout this process.
7. We will carry out a risk assessment of the impact of change before any changes are agreed. A number of Performance Indicators may be affected. These may be Best Value or Local Performance Indicators, or found within Quality Protects or the Education Development Plan.
8. We will consult fully with Professional Associations and Trade Unions in planning and proposing changes.
9. Fieldwork staff will continue to receive supervision from line managers who have appropriate professional qualifications.
10. No staff will become redundant as a result of closer working between the two Directorates. Some existing jobs may change in the future and where this happens, appropriate training will be given to the staff who are affected.