

in Cumbria **Every Child Matters**

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Achieving economic well-being



One of the outcomes set out in Every Child Matters is the achievement of economic well-being. This sits well with one of the key themes of the change programme that children, young people and families, not our organisations, must be the focus for all our work.

As described in the Outcomes Framework (see inside) this means that children and young people should:

- engage in further education, training or employment with training on leaving school
- be ready for employment
- live in decent homes and sustainable communities
- have access to transport and material goods
- live in households free from low income.

The Learning and Skill Council's (LSC's) statutory role is to plan and invest in quality education and training, working closely with employers, schools, further education colleges and other training organisations. We have a central role in delivering the Government's five-year strategy for children and learners and are uniquely placed to comment on the multi-disciplinary process of Joint Area Reviews. And we will lead on delivering key indicators particularly:

- the percentage reduction of 16-18 year olds not in education, employment or training;
- the percentage improvement in the numbers of 19 year olds achieving a level 2 qualification; and
- the percentage improvement in young people aged 18-30 participating in higher education.

The recent 14-19 and Skills White Papers further reinforce our role in achieving the Government's 14-19 vision that:

- 14-19 learning provision is planned in a co-ordinated way
- young people are better prepared for working life; and
- children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped to achieve.

We are committed to contributing to the development of the learning and skills agenda in Cumbria, working with others in the best interests of the children and young people we all seek to serve.

Mick Farley
Executive Director
Learning and Skills Council Cumbria

Directions and destinations

The Connexions vision is "The best start in life for every young person" and this has an excellent fit with all five of the Every Child Matters Outcomes. One particular Connexions Cumbria/Learning and Skills Council project, the Summer Learning and Skills Programme, has had a big impact on young people across Cumbria as they approach decisions about life after school. In the longer term, this Summer Programme will also generate improvements in economic well-being for individuals and communities in the future.

"The Programme was first implemented in 2001, in the middle of the Foot and Mouth epidemic. Since then it has developed to include 1088 students participating in over 150 courses in 2004. The students are paid an allowance and travel costs and take part in a range of activities as well as gaining valuable experience and first-hand knowledge from visits and visiting speakers. One key element is time to think and consider their various options with someone alongside who knows the answers to some of their questions."

Dave Clough

Development Director, Connexions Cumbria

Evidence from the 2004 group showed that 130 students enrolled at FE colleges in the area having said that they planned an alternative post-16 destination before the programme and 240 of the 272 young people who were considered at risk of not entering post-16 options decided to continue into education, employment or training. All young people who took part in the programme received certification, with over 58% receiving formal accreditation.

"It was a good choice to take part and it gave me an idea of what I am going to do in September."

Participant 2004

For further information contact Steve Brown, Project Manager via telephone 01931 711300 or email: steve.brown@connexionscumbria.co.uk

Achieve Economic Well-Being – access and aspirations

Children and young people probably have the least spontaneous understanding of this Every Child Matters Outcome but it is also one that will have a major impact on the sustainable future of their communities.

Outcome				
Achieve Economic Well-Being				
Aims				
Engage in further education, employment or training on leaving school	Ready for employment	Live in decent homes and sustainable communities	Access to transport and material goods	Live in households free from low income
Support Parents, carers and families are supported to be economically active				
Priority national targets and other indicators				
% 16-18 year olds not in education, employment and training (DfES)	% 19 year olds achieving L2+ in NVQ 2 or equivalent (DfES) % 18-30 year olds participating in higher education (DfES)	% social housing and vulnerable households in the private sector in a decent condition (ODPM) Cleaner, safer and greener public spaces, and quality of the built environment in deprived areas (ODPM)	Level of material deprivation and low income (DWP/HMT)	% children living in relative low-income households (DWP/HMT) Incl % children living in workless households (DWP) Stock and take-up of childcare for all families (DfES/DWP)
Inspection criteria				
1. Childcare is available to meet the needs of parents in work or seeking work.	2. Young people are helped to prepare for working life.	3. Action is taken to ensure that 14-19 education is planned in a co-ordinated way.	4. Action is taken to ensure that good quality education is provided.	5. Community regeneration initiatives include action to address the needs of children and young people and their families.
		6. Steps are taken to give families and young people access to decent homes.	6. Children and young people who are looked after are helped to achieve economic well being.	7. Children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities are helped to achieve economic well being.

Looking after the future

There are some 520 looked after children living with foster carers, and in other situations across Cumbria. The LACES team (Looked After Children Education Service) makes a huge contribution towards their achievements and attainments – supporting them in and out of school, monitoring their attainments and working with those in other services to ensure that looked after children do as well in school as their Cumbrian peers. It is an early example of ‘joined up’ services across social services and education in the county.

“Supporting looked after children to achieve good results at all stages in their education, particularly GCSEs, has been shown to have a huge impact on their life opportunities. We know that the support of carers and key adults is paramount – along with close working with schools. Learning has to happen beyond the classroom and family learning weekends in partnership with Cumbria Outdoors have already developed carer’s skills and children’s self confidence and friendships.”

Eileen McLean

Coordinating Manager, looked after children service

But economic well-being relies on much more than just educational attainment and one challenge is to give these young people a context and consistency that will help them to make good judgements about money and work in the future.

“Looked after children will have fewer safety nets than those in conventional families may have in their twenties and they have sometimes been moved frequently between different standards of living and attitudes to work. Add to this an astute awareness that people are being paid to look after them and we need to help them to cope with unusual pressures and develop positive attitudes to their own capabilities.”

Lindy Ketchen

Children’s Rights Officer

For further information about the work of the LACES team contact either Fraser Livesey on fraser.livesey@cumbriacc.gov.uk or Lindy at lindy.ketchen@cumbriacc.gov.uk

Voluntary and community sector involvement

"The main aim of the reforms which underpin our programme Every Child Matters: Change for Children is to improve child outcomes by reconfiguring services around the needs of the child and shifting to preventative services whilst strengthening the protection of children at risk. A strong, vibrant and diverse voluntary and community sector will be a key aspect of this. Voluntary and community organisations are not only major providers of services to children, young people and families, they have significant expertise to offer in developing strategy and planning these services."

Margaret Hodge MP, Minister for Children, Young People and Families

All those involved in children's services recognise the tremendous value of the voluntary and community sector, but working out the details of how to involve such a diversity of organisations at every stage in changes is a huge challenge at a local level.



Ged Campion, Prevention and Family Support Manager based with the Cumbria Children's Fund, is organising a conference entitled **Children's trusts – how will you survive?** on 9 May 2005 at Newton Rigg. This will bring together up to 200 representatives of the sector from across the county to work out the priorities and practical implications of involvement in Cumbria's Change for Children Partnership and in future developments. **Peter Stybelski**, the Chief Executive of Cumbria County Council will open the conference and there will be various speakers looking at different angles and issues as well as plenty of chance for discussion.

"The government talks about integrated front-line delivery, integrated processes and integrated strategy but we have to work out the who and when and how. Voluntary and community sector representation in the Change for Children Partnership provides a real opportunity to influence the implementation of Every Child Matters in Cumbria, so this is an important conference for us all."

Ged Campion

For further information contact Ged on 01539 742345.

Integrated inspection

Key elements of the Outcomes Framework for Every Child Matters are the 40 or so Inspection Criteria, described as "how the inspectorates will judge the contribution of services to improving outcomes".

Draft proposals for inspection processes are currently out for consultation and four pilot inspections have been completed elsewhere in the country. There will be more pilots during the summer and then a three-year inspection cycle to cover all authorities will begin in September 2005 with Cumbria due for inspection some time in late 2006/early 2007.

"We are already reflecting the new approaches, performance indicators and draft inspection criteria in both our planning and our work. The systematic and detailed inclusion of interviews with children and young people in the process is a new and welcome feature. This reflects the focus on the needs of children and young people throughout the Change for Children process."

John Swainston, Head of Standards and School Improvement

The recent Budget indicated the creation of fewer inspection agencies by combining existing ones and also made it clear that a single inspection body would be responsible across children's services.

"The new model introduces exciting new methodology that will ensure that the inspection taps directly into the experience of what it is like to be a young person in our community. Also, by undertaking a detailed analysis of one community, it will explore the effectiveness of the coordination of services. Inspections will be less about central processes and policies and much more about the reality of services for children, young people and the community. This is a welcome challenge."

Michael Watmough, Head of Access and Inclusion

For further information, please contact Michael at michael.watmough@cumbriacc.gov.uk.

in Cumbria **Every Child Matters**



Extending into communities

At the beginning of March, Tricia Bewick of Cumbria Sure Start hosted a conference on the theme of Extended Schools in Cumbria in her role as Children's Centres & Extended Schools Policy Officer. Tricia's responsibilities cover developing, co-ordinating and managing the Strategy for Extended Schools and Children's Centres on behalf of Cumbria County Council.

What are Extended Schools and Children's Centres?

The Every Child Matters programme identifies Children's Centres and Extended Schools as the means by which a framework of services will be developed and delivered to all children 0-19 years.

Extended Schools build on the existing role of schools in communities as a focus for activities and as a resource for all ages. The aim is to build stronger ties and relationships and to offer access to learning and support as well as practical services for children, families and other adults. Cumbria County Council has already committed to promoting this concept and is supporting two pilot Extended Schools - one in Carlisle at Petheril Bank primary school and the other at the secondary school in Millom where the Family Network Centre (funded by the Children's Fund) and the Children's Centre based at the nursery school are working in partnership, aiming to deliver integrated services for children pre-birth to 19 years of age and their families.

Children's Centres will serve children and families in targeted communities in phase 1 (2004-06) by providing integrated care and education for young children (0 to 5 years), health services, family support and a base for childminders. This integrated approach provides holistic support for children's development, support to families with young children and should also enable those parents who are currently unemployed to return to the workforce. There are 16 Children's Centres developing around the county in phase 1 and planning for phase 2 developments will be underway shortly. Eventually the government wants to see a "Children's Centre in every community".

Why link the two initiatives?

The Local Authority is responsible for the delivery of both these initiatives. It is therefore essential that a strategic policy be developed for the two in parallel as they share many of the same aims and may, in some areas, work as one service or a partnership.

What was the reaction of head teachers and service providers to the pilots and proposals when you discussed them at the conference?

The feedback so far has been very positive as schools have said that they are pleased with the decision by Cumbria County Council to invest in developing two schools as pilots to "test the water" rather than wait until the funding from DfES for the development of Extended Schools comes on line in April 2005. Schools also appreciated that a strategic approach needs to be taken in developing Extended Schools across the county, that is, not all schools will deliver all services but, in line with the Director of Education's vision, some schools will act as "hubs" (they will host multiple agencies) and some as "spokes" (where some services will be delivered).

What is your vision for these new developments?

Children's Centres and Extended Schools are going to be a major vehicle for the delivery of integrated services in locations that are accessible to those children, young people and families who need them. The work done so far in Petheril Bank (Carlisle), Millom and elsewhere has already generated tremendous enthusiasm and innovation so we are determined to build on this. It is vital that we make these initiatives work well for us in Cumbria and we are fully committed to developing them in the long term as part of our universal provision.

For further information contact Tricia Bewick at tricia.bewick@cumbriacc.gov.uk.

Measuring prevention

Over 100 people working with children and young people in Cumbria met recently to explore ways of measuring the difference that they are making. The conference, entitled Measuring the Difference, was organised by Cumbria Children's Fund and covered various case studies and perspectives as well as evaluation of emotional resilience.

"Measuring prevention is hard to do because the ideal is that the negative things don't happen – measuring an absence. When we turn it around into positives, one of the things that projects often cite as a valuable outcome is improved emotional resilience or a child's ability to cope with change."

Jane Humphries, Programme Director of Cumbria Children's Fund.

The main presentation of the day was from Sally Wassell, an independent social worker and researcher. She explained a model of emotional resilience and showed how various existing tools and approaches could be linked back to the national Change for Children Outcomes Framework and used to show improvements and justify funding.

"We cannot protect children from life, but we can help them develop the resilience to cope with its difficulties and make the most of its opportunities."

Judith Porter, Porter Brown Solutions

In a moving conclusion to the day, parents talked about the value of involving them in planning.

"It is easy to forget what we have to offer and we don't always know enough to ask the right questions but if you invest some time in involving us, we can give you our local knowledge and user perspective and you'll be building our self-esteem which we can then pass on to our children."

Parent speaking at the conference

In Cumbria Every Child Matters is published by the Cumbria Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, a multi-agency group with representatives from both voluntary and statutory organisations covering health, education, social care and all aspects of work with children and young people in Cumbria. The newsletter is also available online via the Cumbria County Council

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