

## Update report from the 11-18 Preventative Services Strategy Group

### 1 Background

- 1.1 Collectively, the People and Communities Department and schools and colleges, together with a wide range of partners, devote significant resources to a range of activities that are designed to prevent 11-18 years olds from suffering disadvantage or harm. Services based in schools and colleges, together with the 117 Project, the Specialist Family Support Service, the Youth Service, Compass, the Family Intervention Project, the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities parenting programme and a range of commissioned services including Connexions, Project 28, Off The Record and Mentoring Plus, all play a valuable part in this work. Many vulnerable young people and families are provided with the services they need when they need them and outcomes for most young people in our area are very good.
- 1.2 However, a small number of young people and families are not served as well as they could be and some young people still experience significant difficulties and poor outcomes, including
  - Disengagement and disaffection at school/college
  - Family breakdown
  - Abuse of drugs and alcohol
  - Offending
  - Becoming pregnant
  - Suffering emotional and mental health problems
  - Becoming homeless
- 1.3 Some young people's vulnerability is not recognised or sufficiently well responded to early on, as borne out by the relatively low number of Common Assessments carried out within the 11-18 age range and the arrival of some young people within specialist services with little preventative support beforehand. The January 2012 OfSTED inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Children Services recommended that we
- 1.4 Ensure that the 11-18 strategy improves early identification of the needs of older children and young people who may be vulnerable, leads to well targeted and effective services for this age group and reduces the need for statutory interventions.
- 1.5 This same theme is now a priority within the Local Safeguarding Children Board's work programme for 2012-13:
- 1.6 Ensure the local provision of early help and preventative services with a particular focus on 11 – 18 year old age range.

- 1.7 This project, part of the Council's Change Programme, was established to address how we could improve outcomes for vulnerable young people. It began with a relatively narrow scope in recognition of the work already being undertaken in the 0- 11 age range and the social care teams' lean review. During the lifetime of the project it has become increasingly difficult to maintain a distinct focus on preventative work with 11-18 year olds for the following reasons:
- we are already looking at whole family approaches with some vulnerable young people (e.g. the Family Intervention Project and the roll out of the Troubled / Complex Families initiative) and a growing body of research evidence is pointing us towards the benefits of whole family assessment, team around the family meetings etc.
  - The transition from primary to secondary school is a key transition and we need to ensure our staff deployment supports good information sharing and continuity of support
  - The workforce is not neatly divided into 'preventative', 'targeted' and 'specialist' services – some staff work with young people at different levels of need and provide valuable continuity and flexibility. Equally, our services are not all focused on the 11-18 age range (e.g. the Compass Project works with 8-17 year olds and the Youth Service mainly with 13-19 year olds, but including up to 25 year olds when young people have additional needs)
  - We need to make provision for children moving out of specialist services as well as ensure ready access for children who need to move into them.

- 1.8 Therefore, whilst we have retained a focus on preventative services wherever possible, we have worked with broader themes with a wider application, in particular, the use of a pathway and integrated practices at any stage of a young person's experience. Much of what we have discussed applies across the 0-18 age range, and we keep being drawn back to the importance of taking a whole family approach, whilst maintaining a distinct focus on individual young people's needs.

## **2 What we have done**

- 2.1 The Change Programme enabled some dedicated Project Officer time, but this project has still relied on the active support of a range of partners. The fixed-life multi-agency Strategy Group benefited from good engagement of schools, colleges and the voluntary sector, particularly in its early stages. The initial scoping and planning identified what we hoped to achieve:
- A streamlined integrated pathway of preventative services for 11-18 year olds with:
    - Clear assessment of needs;
    - Effective commissioning of voluntary sector partners
    - Effective use of time
    - Reduced duplication and more integrated working

- Effective integrated working practices for 11-18 year olds so that every young person and their family with additional support needs has:
  - As few points of access to services as possible
  - A named key professional
  - Swift referral and access to services
  - As few assessments as possible
  - A single plan (or integrated planning) for their support
- Commissioning of high quality, low cost preventative services for vulnerable young people

2.2 Early on, a day-long consultation was undertaken with fifty managers from across the workforce. This conference included an academic presentation on the evidence-base for integrated working and on emerging practice nationally. The Conference generated a lot of positive interest and support, but limited fresh thinking. The feedback endorsed the Strategy Group's original aspirations and led to the establishment of four work streams to undertake detailed developmental work. This work has been tested periodically at three separate events for groups of practitioners.

2.3 Workforce work stream

This group has focused on what sort of workforce we need to work with vulnerable young people. It has developed a Values and Behaviours statement setting out what we promise to deliver for young people – an early offer of support that could be used as a pledge. This will have a particular application in commissioning services, but it can also be used to support staff recruitment, induction and training (see appendix). The group has also examined the role of managers in supporting and holding staff to account for their use of integrated practices to support young people to get the right help at an early stage.

2.4 Pathway work stream

A single integrated pathway has been developed to inform responses to vulnerable young people (see appendix 4). It has helped to affirm that most young people in universal settings access the help they need very readily. For those with additional needs, it has helped to clarify when to make direct referrals and when to undertake a Common Assessment, and what should follow. In particular, the pathway discourages a 'scatter-gun' approach to referring young people for support services. It makes clear that where a single service could meet identified need, then a direct referral can be made, but where it appears that more than one service could be involved, or where the precise nature of the need is unclear, then a Common Assessment should be undertaken.

2.5 The pathway has been consulted with managers and practitioner groups and amended to reflect feedback. The Children's Society has supported this work stream to devise a questionnaire for young people

and feedback from these and from a series of focus groups will be collated at the end of May. The findings will be used to support the Year 9/10 pilot described below, to strengthen future Common Assessment training and to inform the revision of written guidance for staff. The results will be published on the Be Active website so that young people can access them directly.

- 2.6 In response to requests from colleagues in schools, this work stream has also engaged with the Family Information Service to produce a final hard-copy version of 11-18 services booklet, based on information contained in the One Big Database. It is using this as an opportunity to promote awareness of the on-line service and to enable the Family Information Service to encourage staff to consider Common Assessments and to signpost them to further information.
- 2.7 Decision-making work stream  
Broadlands, Wellsway and Hayesfield schools volunteered to explore how educational settings could work with the Local Authority and other partners to identify vulnerable young people at an early stage and put integrated systems in place to support their access to the right help. The schools already had informal systems for highlighting vulnerable young people willing to be involved will be offered a Common Assessment and a team around the child meeting and be offered relevant support and services, including a lead professional. A group of enablers has been identified and briefed to undertake a supportive role with schools who have limited experience of integrated practices. There is commitment from the services involved in the Strategy Group to contribute towards support plans and a budget for spot-purchasing small items or supporting access to services. The pilot will test out the pathway referenced above. The project is running between March and July 2012, with evaluation to be completed by October 2012 (and further follow-up by October 2013).
- 2.8 This work stream has also considered how to engage young people in decision-making and has been drawn to the benefits of a person-centred approach and a model for helping young people to prepare for meetings. Through a number of Parent Support Advisers employed by secondary schools, it is currently consulting with parents/carers whose young people have experience of decision-making meetings, to find out how we can make these more accessible for families. Learning from these exercises will be incorporated into revised guidance on integrated working.
- 2.9 Commissioning work stream  
This work stream submitted an expression of interest and was subsequently interviewed for possible inclusion in the New Economics Foundation roll out of a co-production approach to commissioning. Although unsuccessful, the Authority will have access to the learning from the project as a result of this piece of work. There is an appetite for planning, consulting and where possible,

delivering preventative services with the active involvement of the wider community. It is intended that the commissioning panels identified to take forward the re-commissioning of three key preventative services in the next 12 months give active consideration to piloting a co-production approach within the overall commissioning framework. There will also be clear expectations about integrated working practices in the specifications used in future commissioning. The services are:

- A youth substance misuse service (in partnership with adult services).  
Total cost £1 million p.a. of which approximately £214,000 is for youth provision)
- A youth crime prevention service (including exploration of whether to commission a broader mentoring service in its place). Total cost £64,000 p.a.
- A Connexions service. Total value is £850,000 p.a. Recently there have been significant changes in relation to the current Connexions Service, for example, from September 2012, legislation places responsibility for securing Impartial Careers Education Advice and Guidance for young people aged 14-18 with schools. A full options appraisal for the future provision of support for vulnerable young people currently provided by Connexions to ensure that it is fully integrated into wider preventative work should be undertaken in the next 6 months.

### **3 Recommendations specific to 11-18 preventative work**

- 3.1 Adopt the Values and Behaviours Framework for the Commissioning of 11-18 Preventative Services (see appendix 3)
- 3.2 Adopt the integrated pathway for vulnerable young people, to support them to access the right help at the right time (see appendix 4)
- 3.3 Explore piloting elements of a co-production approach in the re-commissioning of preventative services for 11-18 year olds (substance misuse and crime prevention for 2013 and, following a thorough options appraisal of Connexions services by September 2012, the re-commissioning of that service as soon as possible after that date.
- 3.4 Support completion of the Strategy Group's Concluding Work Programme.

#### **Recommendations accepted by people & communities leadership team**

- 3.5 Mainstream integrated practices and ensure an outcomes focus in preventative work

- 3.6 Within the new structure, identify a named strategic lead to champion integrated working (Divisional Director level).
- 3.7 Within the new structure, identify a named senior operational lead or leads across the age ranges (Links with recommendation (e) below)
- 3.8 Appoint a Common Assessment or Integrated Practices Co-ordinator for 11-18s (jointly funded by schools and the Local Authority?) – or remodel the Integrated Working Manager post to undertake this role across the pre-birth-18 age range – in order to develop the operational capacity of the workforce
- 3.9 Appoint a dedicated administrator across the pre-birth -18 age range to act as a single point of contact for integrated processes e.g. Common Assessment Information, Team Around the Child/Family arrangements and to produce monitoring reports
- 3.10 Broaden the scope of the Behaviour and Attendance Panels by devolving funding to them (£300,000 secondary and £300,000 primary, together with Pupil Retention Grant of £160,000 secondary to schools and £100,000 primary to panels) and ensuring the work of the panels is integrated with other decision-making processes about young people. This is to include alignment with ‘step up’ and ‘step-down’ decisions in relation to social care involvement and access to preventative support across children’s services NB A senior operational manager will attend each Behaviour and Attendance Panel (Links with recommendation (b) above)

## **Appendix 1**

### **Membership of the Preventative Service Strategy Group**

Tony Parker	Divisional Director, Learning and Inclusion Service (Project Sponsor and Chair)
Sally Churchyard	Youth Offending Service Manager (Project Lead)
Dawn Harris	Executive Headteacher, Specialist Behaviour Service
Simon White	Deputy Head teacher, Wellsway School
Steve Ferguson	Assistant Head teacher, Broadlands School
Richard Thomson	Head teacher, Culverhay School
Lynne Scragg	Director of Student Experience, City of Bath College
Mike Tichelar	Director, Mentoring Plus (VCS representative)
Jocelyn Tagg	Director, Off The Record (VCS representative)
Caroline Dowson	Integrated Services Manager
Liz Price	Divisional Director, Health and Commissioning
Charlie Moat	Service Manager, Children’s Social Care
Paula Bromley	Principal Youth Officer
Mary Clappen	Connexions Team Manager
Mary Kearney-Knowles	Policy and Strategy Manager

## **Appendix 2**

### **Integrated practice**

By integrated practices, we mean as much as is necessary in each individual case, of the following practices. These apply at any stage of a young person's involvement with our services, where needs are complex and support is required from more than one source.

- information sharing across agencies to support early identification of vulnerability
- completion of Common Assessment
- convening a team around the child meeting
- inter-agency agreement with young person about how things can be improved
- a written plan shared by all agencies, the young person and, usually, their parents/carers
- identification of a lead professional
- integrated support services, provided with an awareness of impact on young person e.g. proper sequencing of interventions, co-ordinated by the lead professional. In some instances, additional services may not be necessary, but better co-ordination and information sharing will make a lot of difference for the young person
- review of the plan and listening to the experience and wishes of the young person
- evaluating work undertaken and the impact it has had on the young person
- feeding this information back so that it can contribute to an improved local understanding of need and effective interventions

## **Appendix 3**

### **Values and Behaviours Framework for the Commissioning of 11-18 Preventative Services**

#### **Context**

A multi-agency group was established in 2011 to review the current provision and future commissioning of services to support vulnerable young people achieve their potential. This group considered it essential to develop a set of values and behaviours that would form the benchmark/standard for the future commissioning and or delivery of services to vulnerable young people. The groups reviewed current values and behaviour statements held by the Council and partner agencies in arriving at an agreed a set of values and behaviours. The multi-agency group has endorsed these set of values and behaviours as outlined below.

#### **Statement on Values and Behaviours**

The Children and Young People's Plan 2011-2014 agreed the vision for children and young people, that:

**“We want all children and young people to enjoy childhood and to be well prepared for adult life”**

To deliver this vision, the Plan identified a set of values that the entire children and young people’s workforce- everyone who works with and on behalf of children and young people, their parents and carers- would need to collectively and individually own; these values mean a workforce that:

- Expects the best of our children and young people across Bath and North East Somerset
- Shows respect for all
- Uses help/services that are evidenced based
- Ensures transparency in decision making
- Has energy and purpose
- Does not “assume” without thinking
- Is positively disposed to deliver the best outcomes for each individual child
- Recognises that participation in cultural, sports, play and leisure opportunities by children and young people is valuable and is to be encouraged.

Supporting these values, are an agreed set of behaviours that everyone is expected to embrace: these include:

- Young people are central to any discussions of their needs
- Young people are involved in any meetings/discussions about their individual needs and plans
- All staff front –line staff /Head Teachers /managers/volunteers across the workforce will take responsibility for looking at the young people’s needs and assessments holistically- look at the big picture : will join up their work with that of other colleagues and or the family and develop one plan of support/intervention
- The young person will know who is the lead person for their plan and how to contact them
- Staff will be accountable to the young person in delivering the plan
- Line managers will make it happen

Young people across Bath and North East Somerset have identified the following as important behaviours and therefore we will provide workers who are:

- Honest
- Responsible
- arrive on time
- non-judgemental
- Show a caring attitude towards the young people
- Start at the point the young person wants them to
- Empower young people to take control of their lives



- Involve young people in all decisions/ panels/ meetings
- do what they say they will do
- communicates clearly and keeps young people up to date
- committed to the principles of equity and diversity
- safeguards the welfare of young people

Parents and carers want the same from the workforce, plus an active consideration with the young person the right level of support from the parent/carer in planning for the young person.

### **Commissioning and Delivery of Services**

Taken together, these values and behaviours support the development of a person centred approach to supporting young people's critical involvement in decisions about the design, delivery and effectiveness of services.

They will be incorporated into the future procurement and commissioning of all service for young people aged 11-18 across Bath and North East Somerset.

February 2012

**Appendix 4: The Pathway**

