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2018-2023

# Children and Young People's Plan – Draft for consultation

Protecting all children and giving them the  
best start in life



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# 1 Introduction

Torbay Council has an ambition of creating a prosperous and healthy Torbay. In meeting this ambition, the Council and its partners have a clear vision for children and young people which is articulated throughout its plans and strategies to ensure we take a consistent approach.

The Council's Corporate Plan sets out as one of its Targeted Actions that it will "Protect all children and give them the best start in life". This Children and Young People's Plan has been drawn together with the involvement and support of a range of partners, stakeholders and young people, with the aim of improving our outcomes for children and families.

It is intended as an overarching plan for all services which directly affect children and young people in all of the communities which make up Torbay. It draws upon the evidence base provided by our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Sufficiency Strategy. It is underpinned by the plans of partner agencies, reflecting how we are working together to improve the lives of our children and young people.

The Children and Young People's Plan aligns to the rest of the Council's Policy Framework including the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy, Housing Strategy and the Economic Strategy.

Throughout the Plan consideration is given to the safeguarding of children and young people, their health and social care needs, their education and their futures as active, informed members of the community



## 2 Context

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Torbay is located on the South Devon coastline and comprises of the three district communities of Torquay, Brixham and Paignton. As part of what has become known as the 'English Riviera', Torbay attracts thousands of visitors each year drawn to its harbours and beaches. Tourism and fisheries remain important elements within the local economy although this is diversifying to include electronics, photonics, and health and care provision. Road links have improved significantly in recent years with the opening of the South Devon Highway acting as a further stimulus to the economy.

Over recent years, Torbay Council has faced significant reductions in its budgets due to successive reductions in the funding it receives from Central Government, totalling around 40%. This has required difficult decisions in relation to the services it provides. However, within this context, Children's Services has been prioritised and benefitted from considerable support from central balances to deal with successive overspends. A Medium Term Financial Strategy was refreshed in February 2017 with the aim of bringing expenditure in line with comparators whilst continuing to ensure improvement activity is adequately resourced.

Torbay's population is 133,373 (2015 MYE) and estimated to rise to 148,500 by 2039, albeit this is a slower rate than that seen nationally. Older people make up a bigger proportion of the population than that seen in England as a whole and Torbay's population of over 70s is expected to increase by around 28.1% by 2025. In 2015, for every person of retirement age there were just fewer than 2 of working age, compared to 3 persons in the England average.

In 2015, the birth rate was 10.3 per 10000 which is below the South West and national averages. The proportion of children aged between 5 and 14 is also expected to rise by 11% over the next 10 years, which is slightly higher than that seen across England.

Torbay comprises of areas with significant material wealth alongside areas of deprivation. The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2015 ranks Torbay as the 46th most deprived authority in England (out of 326) compared to 37th in 2013 and 41st in 2010. In terms of overall Multiple Deprivation, there are 14 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Torbay which fall into the most deprived 10% nationally and 28 LSOAs in the most deprived 20%.

Levels of unemployment in Torbay are at 5.4% which is above the South West average of 4.1%, and national average of 4.8%. The percentage of young people aged 18-24 claiming Job Seekers Allowance is 3.7% and above the south west and the national averages. The Council commissions Careers South West which targets support to the most vulnerable young people, as well as funding other initiatives to get young people into employment. Around 23.6% of children in Torbay are classed as living in poverty.

Educational attainment in Torbay has continued to improve across all phases. Children receive a high quality start through access to a range of good and outstanding early years provision resulting in 70.6% of children achieving a good level of development against 69.3% nationally. Key Stage 2 results for 2016 were below national and regional comparators. The percentage of young people educated in Torbay's schools achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C including English and Mathematics is 58.6% which is up on the previous two years and higher than national and regional. Following recent inspections 100% of mainstream secondary provision is judged to be good or outstanding.

Torbay has 4.4% of pupils with Statements or Education, Health and Care Plans compared to 2.9% nationally. Children in receipt of additional support achieve well at Key Stage 2 with Torbay ranked as the 27<sup>th</sup> best performing Local Authority in this respect.

The health and wellbeing of children in Torbay is mixed compared with the England average. Infant and child mortality rates are similar to the England average. Children in Torbay have average levels of obesity: 9.5% of children aged 4-5 years and 18.0% of children aged 10-11 years are classified as obese. Admissions for children for mental health conditions and self-harm were higher than England average in 2015/16.

Torbay Council was subject to a Statutory Direction in May 2016, with the Chief Executive of Hampshire County Council appointed as the Department for Education (DfE) Commissioner and Hampshire Children's Services as Improvement Partner. The DfE Commissioner chairs a multi-agency Children's Improvement Board (CIB) which meets on a six weekly basis and provides for oversight of improvement activity.

A robust improvement plan and enhanced performance management framework are now in place to ensure improvement and performance are determined by reference to national, regional and statistical comparators. This is evidencing sustained improvement against some of the key concerns raised at the last Ofsted inspection – particularly seeing children in a timely fashion, completion of assessments and plans, leadership and management oversight. Comprehensive performance reports are provided on a regular basis to the CIB, Executive Member, Chief Executive and Children's Services senior leadership and managers.

Our Early Intervention Service ensures that our family support resources are able to respond to the needs of families identified at Level 3 on the Welfare Continuum of Need. Our aim is to provide direct practical support to families to empower them to affect long term, sustainable improvement. The Local Authority's Troubled Families Programme is located alongside the Early Intervention Service and provides further support for families across all levels of the Continuum. The changes within Children's Services form part of the wider refresh of local early help arrangements across the Torbay Safeguarding Children Board partnership.

Our Children's Centres are delivered on a commissioned basis via Action for Children on a thematic delivery model. They provide a good mix of targeted and universal services and are well integrated within our early help strategy.

Our multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH) is well established with police, social care, health and schools support services into a co-location arrangement. Decision making is timely and robust. The MASH has recently reconfigured to incorporate Early Help referrals through a 'single front door' model.

Mental health and well-being is acknowledged as a key local priority. Children's Services commission Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services practitioners who focus on providing additional support to children and families open to social care services. We work well with health colleagues and have developed a sub-regional commissioning strategy to ensure greater co-ordination, a tight focus on key priorities and deliver value for money, across a bigger footprint than the Local Authority.

We have worked with the Clinical Commissioning Group to improve the timescale for diagnosis for children with Autistic Spectrum Condition, resulting in stronger universal and specialist provisions being developed. Specialist Speech and Language Therapy Services are provided in a variety of settings. Access to these services in a timely manner remains a priority development. Children with disabilities have a well co-ordinated support packages through effective referrals routes to physiotherapy and occupational therapy.

Torbay contributes towards a number of regional projects including the development of a multi area Youth Offending Management Board, a Regional Adoption Agency and Sector Led Improvement.

The voice of the child is key to our service improvement programme and we have successfully utilised a wide range of engagement techniques including digital technology, survey work, direct training of practitioners by young people in care, focus groups and the Annual Democracy Debate to ensure this is successful. To further strengthen our approach, we have commissioned Checkpoint to deliver a range of advocacy, missing from home/ care interviews and support services. We have in the last two years rolled out across social care and partners the 'Signs of Safety' model allowing for a strengths-based and safety-focused approach to Child protection in Torbay.

STRENGTHS	ISSUES	OPPORTUNITIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Educational outcomes at all Key Stages are generally in line or above national averages and good progress is being made to close the gap for vulnerable learners</li> <li>▪ A multi-agency safeguarding hub was established in March 2015 and is providing an effective multi-agency front-door for referrals, including Early Heap</li> <li>▪ An extensive programme of Signs of Safety (SoS) has been delivered to social care practitioners and has extended to partner agencies to provide a consistent multi-agency approach towards risk</li> <li>▪ Good progress has been made in meeting the SEND reform agenda with over 90% of Statements now transferred to EHCP, with all transfers completed by March 2018. There is a good level of timeliness with new EHCPs and high levels of confidence and satisfaction reported by parents.</li> <li>▪ Our Early Help Strategy has been revised with thresholds which are well understood and applied by partners who are taking the lead in the majority of early help cases.</li> <li>▪ Solid foundations have been established to support sustainable improvement in social care provision informed by a comprehensive performance dashboard which enable managers at all levels to identify issues and intervene</li> <li>▪ Our Youth Offending Service is performing well with low rates of custody, reduced reoffending and first time entrants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social care practice needs to be more consistent in delivering good quality plans and assessments and ensuring the impact the situation of the child</li> <li>▪ Our populations of children looked after and subject to child protection plans remain high and further work is needed to bring these in line with comparators</li> <li>▪ The gap in educational attainment between our vulnerable learners and their peers is closing however more work is needed</li> <li>▪ Further work is required to improve the timeliness of access to CAMHs Services</li> <li>▪ Torbay has higher rates of under 18 conceptions than in England</li> <li>▪ Excess weight in reception age children is high, with one in four being overweight or obese</li> <li>▪ Hospital admissions for 5-24 year olds for injuries, self harm and alcohol misuse are significantly higher than the England average</li> <li>▪ Torbay experiences higher proportions of children living in poverty compared with England</li> <li>▪ One in five mothers in Torbay smoke during pregnancy</li> <li>▪ More children provide levels on unpaid care and support in Torbay than the England average</li> <li>▪ Health outcomes have not improved in a number of areas for many years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Children's Services working with the Department for Education Commissioner in entering into a partnership with Plymouth City Council to provide for sustainably improved outcomes for children and young people</li> <li>▪ A local education board bringing together the local authority and educational providers across all phases will be established as the local mechanism to drive school improvement</li> <li>▪ A new commissioning project has commenced bringing together children's centres, school nurses, health visitors and family support within an integrated service model for 0-19 year olds</li> <li>▪ Work is underway with Play Torbay and youth trustees to develop a comprehensive youth offer for children and young people fully integrated with our education, SEN and social care improvement activity</li> <li>▪ Torbay Council, working with a number of south west local authorities, will be entering into a regional adoption agency as the basis for future service provision</li> <li>▪ Work has commenced with our post 16 providers to develop an Education/Employment Pathway to ensure we maximise opportunity for our children and young people.</li> <li>▪ Work has commenced with our schools to review our SEN provision and support its continued development to meet the needs of Torbay children and young people</li> </ul>

# 3 Objectives

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## Objective

The objective of this Plan is:

**To ensure all of our children and young people are safe, happy and healthy in order that they can reach their full potential.**

## Principles

We will measure all of our work against the impact that it will have on children and young people and, reflecting on the principles with the Council's Corporate Plan, the principles within this Children and Young People's Plan are:

- We will use our resources where they will maximise the impact on the child or young person
- We will use prevention and innovation to reduce the impact on children and families from key risks such as domestic abuse, alcohol/substance misuse and child exploitation
- We will take an integrated and joined up approach towards commissioning and delivery for children and families

## Priorities

To deliver the objective of this Plan there are four inter-connected priorities which will ensure that we protect all children and young people and give them the best start in life.

[Drafting Note: The narrative around each priority will be finalised as the action plans are developed during the consultation and engagement process.]

- **Priority 1: Children get the best start in life**

We will .....

- **Priority 2: The impact on children and families from key risks including domestic abuse, alcohol/substance misuse and all forms of child exploitation is reduced**

We will ...

- **Priority 3: Education outcomes for all children and young people are improved and the gap between vulnerable learners and their peers is closed**

We will continue to .....

- **Priority 4: Young people are healthy, make positive choices and influence their own future.**

We will address the health inequalities within our population of children and young people. We will ensure that all children and young people are provided with opportunities that inspire them.

- **Priority 5: Torbay Council is an effective and trustworthy corporate parent to all the children or young person who are in our care.**

We will know our children, their needs, talents and aspirations and promote their interests. We will hold high aspirations for their futures, expect the best for and from them and support them in becoming independent, confident adults.

## 4 Action Plan

[Drafting Note: The Action Plan currently shown takes the actions already identified within the Council’s Policy Framework as they relate to children and young people. It also includes the actions arising from the opportunities in section 2 above. As part of the consultation and engagement process, the Action Plan will be further developed based on discussions with partners and stakeholders.]

### Priority 1: Children get the best start in life

Action	Responsibility	By when?	Impact Measure
Establish a new model of integrated services for 0-19 year olds			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improving parenting capacity of vulnerable young parents</li> <li>Reducing the numbers of women who smoke during pregnancy</li> <li>Maximising the uptake of childhood immunisation programmes</li> <li>Increased numbers of breastfeeding mothers</li> <li>Reduced prevalence of childhood obesity</li> <li>CAMHS and mental wellbeing</li> </ul>
Play Torbay/Youth Trustees scheme [Drafting Note: to be defined more precisely]			

### Priority 2: The impact on children and families from key risks including domestic abuse, alcohol/substance misuse and all forms of child exploitation is reduced

Action	Responsibility	By when?	Impact Measure
Embed the Signs of Safety model of practice to assist families to develop their strengths and manage risk appropriately		April 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reductions in the numbers of children becoming looked after or subject to child protection plans due to key risk factors</li> <li>Meaningful parent/carer participation within treatment and family support programmes</li> <li>Increasing the numbers and timeliness of looked after children achieving permanence through adoption, special guardianship and child arrangement</li> </ul>
Integrate the Children’s Service workforce with Plymouth City Council in line with the partnership agreement			
Create a regional adoption agency for the south west			



			orders (residence orders) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Numbers of CSE cases considered by the MACSE and disruption operations at local and sub-regional levels</li> <li>• Timeliness and quality of early help and social care plans and assessments</li> </ul>
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**Priority 3: Education outcomes for all children and young people are improved and the gap between vulnerable learners and their peers is closed**

Action	Responsibility	By when?	Impact Measure
Support South Devon College's growth into higher education opportunities offering more educational opportunities for our young people and our workforce			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance at Foundation Stage, Key Stages 1, 2, 4 and 5 when compared with regional and national averages</li> <li>• Reduction in the gaps in attainment and progress between all vulnerable groups and their peers across the above metrics</li> <li>• The numbers/proportion of Torbay schools judged good and outstanding by Ofsted</li> <li>• The numbers/proportion of pupils attending good or outstanding schools as judged by Ofsted</li> <li>• Reduction in the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) for vulnerable groups</li> </ul>
Strengthen school improvement through building capacity within the "school to school" model	Torbay Teaching School Alliance/Regional School Commissioner	September 2018	
Continue to deliver the Schools Capital Programme ensuring that it meets the demands of the population moving forward	TDA	Phased approach until 2019	
Establish a Local Education Board to drive school improvement			

**Priority 4: Young people are healthy, make positive choices and influence their own future**

Action	Responsibility	By when?	Impact Measure
Expand engagement between business and schools through developing the MADE pilot project			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further reduction in teenage pregnancy</li> <li>• Reduction in alcohol related hospital admissions</li> <li>• Narrowing the gap in health outcomes for</li> </ul>
Commission Ready for Work training schemes targeted towards our care leavers, as well as those in our deprived wards			
Organise at least one Jobs Fair a year to help match young			

people with current vacancies			particular vulnerable groups including CLA, care leavers and young offenders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people tell us that our plans make a difference</li> <li>• Reduction in number of children and young people admitted to hospital due to unintentional and deliberate injuries (including self harm)</li> </ul>
Work with schools and other partners to expand the provision of information advice and guidance to young adults through the Torbay Works Programme			
Use National Apprenticeship Week as a signature event to bring together employers, schools and education providers and young people			
Develop the Education/Employment Pathway to maximise opportunity for our children and young people			
Deliver the Healthy Weight Strategy, including increased physical activity for children, healthy eating and delivery of healthy schools and early years.	Health and Wellbeing Board	2020	
Deliver the Physical Activity Strategy to increase activity and reduce sedentary behaviour in children	Director of Public Health	2020	

**Priority 5: Torbay Council is an effective and trustworthy corporate parent to all the children or young people who are in our care.**

Action	Responsibility	By when?	Impact Measure
Improve the long term stability of placements offered to looked after children			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased educational attainment</li> <li>• Fewer children being placed out of area</li> </ul>
Improve employment, education and training outcomes for children in care and care leavers, closing the gap with their peers			
Ensure employee awareness and commitment to corporate parenting			
Continue to develop the Corporate Parenting Group, Children in Care Group and Care Leavers' Group as key mechanisms for engaging young people			
Ensure the views and aspirations of children looked after and care leavers contribute to the plans made on their behalf			