


Somerset Children's Trust

Children and Young People's Plan

2011-2012




Introduction



2 This Plan is a strategic document outlining the vision, ambitions and key priorities for improving outcomes for children, young people, parents and carers in Somerset, and sets out how we plan to work together in order to achieve them. We aim to raise attainment and aspirations, ensure children and young people in Somerset are kept safe and feel safe, and to narrow the gaps that still exist amongst vulnerable children and young people and their peers.


The Plan is owned and produced by [Somerset Children's Trust](#). It is underpinned by more detailed local multi-agency strategies, plans and projects, particularly the county's [Child Poverty Strategy](#), [Child Accident Prevention Strategy](#), [Total Somerset High Contact Families Project](#), and the Healthy Child Commissioning Project.

The financial situation continues to face all partners with unprecedented challenges. At the same time, the policy context is changing rapidly, with for example the Education Bill, which takes forward the legislative proposals in the Schools White Paper, *The Importance of Teaching*; the Public Health White Paper, *Healthy Lives, Healthy People*, which sets out the Government's long term vision for the future of public health in England; and the Government's plans to replace police authorities with directly elected Police Commissioners. It is more important than ever before to work in partnership to achieve our shared aim of enabling every child and young person in Somerset to achieve their full potential. Despite the removal in 2010 of the statutory Children's Trust Guidance and the requirement to produce a Children and Young People's Plan, Somerset has therefore decided to continue with its Children's Trust arrangements.



3 The change in legislation has meant this Plan is taking a slightly different format to previous Plans. It will no longer be a three-year Plan, but will instead be reviewed on an annual basis (although many of the priorities and specific activities have a long-term focus), and monitored half-yearly, as opposed to the four-monthly process previously adopted.

The numbers of priorities have been reduced from five down to three, and aim to maintain focus on the core issues facing the county's children and young people. A needs assessment, feedback from young people and their families, and national and local policies and plans determined these areas of focus.



4 The Somerset Children's Trust and Plan is held to account through Somerset County Council's scrutiny arrangements, and progress will be monitored by the Local Authority's Children and Young People's Directorate Performance and Management Information Team. Performance against the key performance indicators and actions identified is reported to the relevant subgroups of Somerset Children's Trust and the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.

Local Context

Somerset covers **3,452 square kilometers** and is home to roughly **10% of the South West's population**.



It has an overall **population of 523,471** (51% women; 49% men), and is home to approximately **110,539 children and young people** aged 0-17 (21% of the total population).

Divided into **5 Districts** (Mendip; Sedgemoor; South Somerset; Taunton Deane; West Somerset), Somerset is the **third most rural county** in England.



Only about a third of the population live in the county's four largest towns (Taunton, Yeovil, Bridgwater and Frome).



Whilst deprivation levels are low when compared to England, there are estimated to be over **14,700 children living in poverty** in Somerset. **11.74%** of Somerset pupils in 2010/11 are claiming **free school meals**.

As of January 2011, Somerset had 264 maintained schools, made up of **218 primary schools, 9 middle schools, 29 secondary schools and 8 special schools**. There are 9 resource bases for severe and complex speech and language needs, 5 for hearing, 4 for autism and 2 for generic Special Educational Needs. In addition, there are **13 Pupil Referral Units**.



As of January 2011, there were **67,007 pupils** on roll at Somerset schools.



There are approximately **470 children in care** and **335** who are subject to a **Child Protection Plan**.

As of March 2011, there were over **1,150 Early Years providers** in Somerset (including nurseries, childminders, children's centres, private and Local Authority maintained school settings).

5 colleges deliver post-16 courses within Somerset, alongside 9 maintained schools with sixth-forms.

The January 2011 School Census revealed that **11,372** pupils were recorded at **'School Action'** (action to meet learning difficulties in school) and **'School Action Plus'** (where special educational needs cannot be met through School Action and requires external support services). The number of children with **Special Educational Needs (SEN) Statements** (2010/11) stood at **1026** and continues to fall. This places the total number of children and young people with SEN in Somerset schools at **12,398**.



Children's Trust information

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The Government wants to let local professionals come together in the way that best fits local circumstances and needs, reducing the level of central prescription. The Government is neither prescribing nor proscribing the need for a Children's Trust Board. OfSTED found good children's trusts formalised effective partnerships and strengthened the collective commitment and accountability between local agencies. The 'duty to cooperate' remains for the relevant partners who are: district councils, strategic health authorities, primary care trusts, youth offending teams, police, probation services, and persons providing Connexions services. These agencies are expected to have a continuous process of planned engagement, determining implementation and the monitoring of progress against targets. The Trust is made up of a formal Board, which determines the overall vision and key priorities for children's services, and an Executive responsible for the delivery of these priorities (listed in this Plan). The Board and the Executive are supported by a network of groups responsible for the delivery of specific priorities.

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Somerset Children's Trust therefore is both a commissioner of services for children and young people and, through the work of its partners, a provider of some of these services.

The SCT Executive Chair and Vice Chair alternates between the Director of Children's Services and NHS Somerset and is reviewed annually. The Chair and Vice-chair of the SCT Board rotates between Somerset County Council, NHS Somerset and Avon and Somerset Police on an annual basis, with the Vice-chair always being from a different organisation to the Chair and becoming the Chair in the following year.

Somerset Children's Trust is led by Somerset County Council, through the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services, working closely with other local agencies. Somerset Children's Trust is not a separate organisation in its own right. Each partner retains its own responsibilities, while working together to join up services because no single agency can improve outcomes for children by working on its own.

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Consultation with children, young people, parents & carers

We developed a range of methods for people to engage in the PoP uP Consultation between September and November 2010, by text, email, online survey, questionnaire, face-to-face, focus group and town centre events. 1,213 people took part, of which 152 were from a minority or targeted group. Thanks need to go to all those who helped with enabling the children, young people and parents/carers of Somerset to have their say and take part in the consultation.



Findings suggested that Somerset is a good place to grow up or raise your children. The countryside, quietness and safety are key reasons, and for those who don't enjoy growing up here it is the 'boring' nature and lack of activities. 67% are doing as well as they would like to at school or college, but distractions are the key reason for not doing so well.



Children and young people appreciate people watching over them and feel safer when with someone they know or if there is CCTV, more police/PCSOs or an adult 'supervisor' present. Relationships and having people around is a key theme. Having someone independent to talk about their problems with matters and these people need to be non-judgmental and trustworthy.

Only 52% of 13-19 year olds have things to do outside of school, and 45% would like there to be more. Requests were made for swimming pools, cinemas and more skate parks. The closure of Sedgemoor Splash was a common topic out on the streets. There were issues with transport in terms of taking part in activities and 11% said they needed either cheaper transport or more regular services.



Recognising the positive impact of working in partnership and sharing information, member organisations of the Somerset Children's Trust believe that it is a good idea to set clear objectives for which they are accountable. This plan is where we record these objectives.

In June 2010, Children's Trust members agreed that the overarching aim for all agencies working with children and young people in Somerset is to **enable every child and young person to achieve their full potential**. To achieve this we will focus on three areas, or priorities:



RAISE ACHIEVEMENT AND ASPIRATIONS
actively support increased educational attainment, achievement and improved outcomes



KEEP CHILDREN SAFE
safeguard vulnerable children and ensure that those looked after by the Local Authority are well cared for



NARROW THE GAPS
challenge inequalities – in health, wellbeing, access and education

Specific partnership activities to support these priorities were proposed in December 2010 by members of the Children's Trust, backed by key messages that emerging from consultation with children, young people, parents and carers countywide as detailed earlier in this plan. We will give a progress update on these activities half-yearly.

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OVERARCHING AIM: To enable every child and young person to achieve their full potential

PRIORITY A - RAISE ACHIEVEMENT AND ASPIRATIONS

actively support increased educational attainment, achievement and improved outcomes

ACTIVITY A1: Ensure access to high quality education for ALL children and young people in Somerset, through the Somerset Children and Young People's Compact

- seeking to understand the outcomes and needs of all children and young people in Somerset
- leading the shaping of provision to meet identified and individual needs and oversee effective and responsive quality assurance of services
- encouraging the development of school-to-school collaboration to improve standards
- ensuring effective process for support and challenge where outcomes for children and young people are at risk and signalling where intervention may be appropriate
- maximising efficiency and value for money in service delivery to meet children's needs
- ensuring opportunities for leadership, continuous professional development and staff development are at the heart of school improvement for staff at all levels

ACTIVITY A2: Invest in new schools, ensuring high quality school places and the improved condition of school facilities

- continue the build of Chilton Trinity Technology College alongside Sedgemoor District Council swimming pool and leisure centre
- continue the rebuild of Robert Blake Science College and Elmwood Special School alongside the PCT Health Clinic
- create a community use and leisure offer to residents of Bridgwater
- relocate Somerset Centre for Integrated Learning to Chilton Trinity site alongside the National Skills Academy for Sports and Leisure

ACTIVITY A3: Promote and encourage positive activities for all children and young people

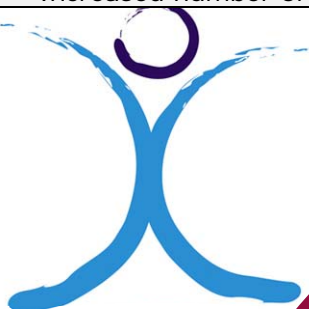
- develop community capacity within the youth and community sector to deliver positive activities
- support the most 'at risk' children and young people in Somerset through the PROMISE mentoring and advocacy service
- engage and support young people living in rural areas in a range of social, economic, educational and recreational opportunities through the Somerset Rural Youth Project (SRYP)
- assist young volunteers through the Somerset Youth Volunteering Network (SYVN)
- support the Voluntary and Community Sector working with children and young people across Somerset through the Children and Young People's Partnership in Somerset (CHYPPS)
- create more opportunities for children and young people to participate in cultural life and the arts in and outside of school
- promote a 'Raising Aspirations' programme, mobilising philanthropic and other funds to raise aspirations and improve educational attainment, particularly of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, to be led by Somerset Community Foundation (SCF)
- maximize benefits for the community of Somerset that inward investments bring, in order to provide opportunities for increased educational attainment & aspirations

ACTIVITY A4: Deliver and strengthen information and data-sharing agreements across partnership agencies

- focus the use of the Common Assessment Framework in Somerset on identified vulnerable groups
- share performance data and needs assessments more widely to ensure better targeting and focusing of resources in areas or individuals most in need

Anticipated outcomes

- Improved quality of provision, determined by the % of educational settings measured as good or outstanding by Ofsted (split by primary, secondary and special)
- Improved achievement at all levels:
 - Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage
 - Achievement at level 4 or above in both English and Maths at Key Stage 2
 - Achievement of 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths
 - Progression by 2 levels in both English and Maths between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2
 - Progression by 3 levels in both English and Maths between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4
- Increased school attendance
- Reduced exclusions
- Increased participation in volunteering and positive activities to enhance confidence and soft skills
- Increased number of 16-18 year old learners starting apprenticeships



PRIORITY B - KEEP CHILDREN SAFE

safeguard vulnerable children in Somerset, and ensure that those looked after by the Local Authority are well cared for

Activity B1: Working alongside the Children's Trust, ensure that multi-agency child protection and safeguarding arrangements continue to work effectively in Somerset through the work of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB):

- implement the LSCB Workplan 2010-12
- improve safeguarding outcomes for children and young people using key performance indicators agreed by the LSCB
- complete regular audits as agreed by the LSCB and reported through the LSCB Policy & Procedures Group and Children's Trust where appropriate
- manage the identification of multi-agency training needs and deliver an effective LSCB Training Strategy
- ensure the Local Authority Designated Officer manages reports on and ensures effective actions are taken with allegations against adults working with children

Activity B2: Work together to join up the commissioning of housing and support services for care leavers and 16/17 year old homeless young people:

- publish an agreed statement of commissioning intentions
- develop a clear pathway of housing and support services for young people to prevent homelessness
- commission / provide a range of suitable, cost-effective housing and support options that offer choice and stability for young people and meet legislative requirements

Activity B3: Ensure those children looked after by the Local Authority are well cared for:

- ensure the quality of all provision for children looked after, including residential, fostering and commissioned care
- improve the stability of children's placements and achieve long-term settled placements and permanency planning
- improve the emotional health and wellbeing of children looked after
- improve the educational achievement of Looked After Children

Activity B4: Educate and empower children and young people to make themselves safer:

- reduce incidents of bullying and discrimination, including incidents before and after school
- improve sexual health and reduce the level of unintended pregnancies
- ensure all young people have access to sexual health and contraceptive advice services that meet their needs and are young people friendly
- improve children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing and ensure high quality services are in place to meet mental health needs
- reduce the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people

Action B5: Protect children and young people from harm:

- ensure that all contacts and referrals in relation to child protection are dealt with effectively, consistently and within prescribed timescales
- ensure that child protection procedures are fully understood and followed by all agencies
- ensure that lessons from local and national Serious Case Reviews and from examination of local practice and audit are embedded in practice
- work across agencies to develop improvements and efficiencies by utilising technology and co-location to improve service delivery
- ensure the commitments within the Somerset Child Accident Prevention Strategy are understood and implemented across all agencies

Anticipated outcomes

- Reduced emergency hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people
- Reduced use of unsuitable accommodation
- Improved quality of Local Authority maintained children's residential units, with a higher number rated by Ofsted as 'good' or better
- Improved stability of placements of looked after children (number and length)
- Reduction in bullying and prejudicial incidents
- Reduction in the number of teenage conceptions and sexually transmitted infections
- Increased proportion of schools with staff trained and experienced in responding effectively to children with mental health difficulties
- Increased proportion of schools with counselling/listening/developmentally appropriate therapeutic support available for pupils with mental health difficulties
- Reduced repeat incidents of domestic abuse where children are members of the household

PRIORITY C – NARROW THE GAPS

Challenge inequalities – in health, wellbeing, access and education

ACTIVITY C1: Improve the prospects for children and young people at risk of being disadvantaged

- implement the Child Poverty Strategy and Action Plan
- tackle health inequalities via the Healthy Child Programme, to include the Health & Well Being Learning Programme based on the Healthy Schools Plus model and Health Visitors and Children's Centres promoting services to support teenage parents and children in need
- reduce rates of youth offending

ACTIVITY C2: Narrow the gap in educational achievement between vulnerable groups and their peers

- build the capacity of children's services to support children and young people with Special Educational Needs, disabilities and behavioural needs to have access to a personalised curriculum at an appropriate local provision
- promote the educational achievement of vulnerable groups, including Children Looked After, Travellers, children learning English as an additional language or from other under performing groups (e.g. some minority ethnic groups and children and young people eligible for free school meals)
- deliver Youth Inclusion Programmes across Somerset
- ensure Nursery Education Funding for 2 year olds is targeted at children in need
- identification of support and school entry plans in place for children with SEN or other significant need through MAISEY (Multi-agency Identification and Support in the Early Years) process
- reduce the number of schools falling or at risk of falling below the Key Stage 2 & Key Stage 4 floor standards

ACTIVITY C3: Deliver practical information, advice and guidance for Somerset families

- increase the proportion of 'hard to reach' families accessing Children's Centres services and community services through regular Health Visitor – Children's Centre liaison and effective outreach
- maintain and develop existing systems providing information on family services (Somerset Family Information Directory etc)
- develop greater awareness of the needs of service families/children and identify ways that services can better support them
- develop better and more efficient ways to deliver services to multi-need families reducing interventions required, through the Total Place High Contact Families Project

ACTIVITY C4: Focus Early Intervention resources on proven preventative strategies for vulnerable groups

- provide parenting and family support through the Triple P (Positive Parenting Programme) and other accredited parenting programmes (Early Intervention PODs, Parenting and Family Support Advisers, Children's Centres, Health Professionals)
- provide additional Youth Worker capacity in disadvantaged areas and continuation of Youth Opportunity Fund
- provide support for Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgendered young people
- provide Foundation Learning Opportunities for young people not achieving Level 2 qualification at age 16, and provide post-16 opportunities to support young people remaining in learning

Anticipated outcomes

- Proportion of children (under 16) living in poverty reduced.
- Increased take-up of Free School Meals in relation to national figures.
- Increased take-up of child tax credits.
- Increased take-up of 2 year old Nursery Education Grant.
- Increased prevalence of breast feeding.
- Reduced smoking in pregnancy.
- Increased uptake of immunisations.
- Increased number of children and young people looked after who take part in their annual health assessments.
- 100% of final statements of SEN issued within 26 weeks (2011/12), both excluding exceptions & all statements.
- Gap narrowed between the lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and the rest.
- Gap narrowed between SEN and non-SEN achievement at level 4 in English and Maths (at end of Key Stage 2) and 5+ A*-C GCSEs (including English and Maths) at end of Key Stage 4.
- Gap narrowed between Free School Meals/non-Free School Meals at level 4 in English and Maths (at end of Key Stage 2) and 5+ A*-C GCSEs (including English and Maths) at end of Key Stage 4.
- Reduced obesity rates (Reception and Year 6).
- 50% of Somerset schools to complete the NHS South West HS+ programme, and the Health & Well Being Learning Programme which builds on this best practice to be fully launched to all schools to by August 2012.
- Reduced number of first time entrants to criminal justice system (aged 10-17).
- Reduced numbers of young people (including young offenders, care leavers and teenage parents) not in education, employment or training.
- Increased educational attainment of vulnerable groups.
- Increased number of children in care achieving at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4.
- Improved representation of vulnerable groups on school Gifted and Talented registers.
- Reduction in re-offending rates in Somerset Children's Homes.
- Reduction in numbers of second teenage conceptions.