

Special points of interest:

- Young People at the Centre
- Big Lottery Children's Play Programme Outcome
- The Children's Plan

This monthly update is intended to let you know what happens at a strategic level so that you are aware of things that may affect you in the future, or things that you may want to find out more about. If you have any concerns or suggestions that you wish to be fed into this process please contact Sally Perks at YOW on 01902 771163.



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Young People at the Centre

Young People At the Centre (YPAC) is a key project for the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership because it is showing in practice what effective integrated and targeted youth support means on the ground.

As the name implies it empowers young people to make decisions about the way services are provided - it also gives them money to commission these services. (The Government's recent paper 'Aiming High' talks about 25% of public spending on youth activities and facilities being directly controlled by young people by 2018).



The project operates through a close working relationship between Schools (4 at present), Youth Service, Connexions and Voluntary Sector (currently YWCA). It uses a range of processes (collective and individual) to work intensively with a group of young people identified as potentially vulnerable or underachieving. The programme has had some impressive results in terms of motivating young people and impacting on their school performance. Young people who have been involved in YPAC have shown a more positive attitude at school as evidenced by improved attendance and higher predicted GCSE grades.



Teamwork between the partners is central to its success as is a comprehensive approach to monitoring the progress made by the young people.

The project is sponsored by the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund and overseen by the Learning Partnership. It is supported by the Children's Partnership and is linked to the current Wolverhampton Local Area Agreement. The organisers are keen that it is seen as a way of working for the future and not just a one-off initiative.

Big Lottery Children's Play Programme Outcome

In November 2007 Wolverhampton City Council submitted a bid to the big lottery Funds Children's Play Programme. The City Council received confirmation in early December that the bid had been successful and that a total of £693,407 had been awarded over a three year period.

The bid covered six different projects that fall in line with the Wolverhampton Play Policy, and supports the outcomes of the Wolverhampton Play Strategy. The Bid was prepared in consultation with the Wolverhampton Play Forum and comprises of four projects to develop or refurbish play areas across the city and two projects to support access to quality play opportunities for children with disabilities.



The Children's Plan



The Children's Plan was drawn up to support the Department for Children, Schools and Families in making Britain the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up. It aims to put the needs of families, children and young people at the centre of everything we do.

The Children's Plan is underpinned by five principles,

- Government does not bring up children – parents do – so government needs to do more to back parents and families;
- All children have the potential to succeed and should go as far as their talents can take them;
- Children and young people need to enjoy their childhood as well as grow up prepared for adult life;
- Services need to be shaped by and responsive to children, young people and families, not designed around professional

boundaries; and

- It is always better to prevent failure than tackle a crisis later.

The Children's Plan is aimed at strengthening support for all families during the formative early years of their children's lives, taking the next steps in achieving world class schools and an excellent education for every child, involving parents fully in their children's learning, helping to make sure that young people have interesting and exciting things to do outside of school, and providing more places for children to play safely.

The Plan means that more than ever before families will be at the centre of excellent, integrated services that put their needs first, regardless of traditional institutional and professional structures. This means a new leadership role for Children's Trusts/Strategic Partnerships in every area, a new role for schools as the centre of their communities, and more effective links between schools, the NHS and other children's services so that together they can engage parents and tackle all the barriers to the learning, health and happiness of every child.

The Children's Plan sets out the plans for the next ten years under each of the Department for Children, Schools and Families' strategic objectives, with a chapter at the end looking at how they will make these reforms happen.

A copy of the full Children's Plan or the executive summary is available at

www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan

