

Hampshire Children's Trust

Developing Local Children's Partnerships

Report to Governing Bodies of Hampshire Schools and Colleges

By
The Director of Children's Services

Introduction

1. In order to comply with the requirements of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Bill 2009, Local Children's Partnerships are being established to support the work of the Hampshire Children's Trust.
2. This paper summarises the issues for Governing Bodies and seeks their agreement to the following resolution to support the school or college being fully engaged in local partnership working and to ensure their duty to cooperate with the Hampshire Children's Trust is fulfilled.

“The Governing Body agrees to become a member of the Local Children's Partnership and shall receive reports on the work of the partnership in improving outcomes for all children and young people”

Governance and the legal basis

3. The legal basis for Children's Trust Boards is contained in the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. This amends Part 2 of the Children Act 2004.
4. Section 12A of the 2004 Act, as amended, compels Children's Services Authorities to establish a Children's Trust Board for their area. That must include a representative of the Authority and each of the relevant partners.
5. A relevant partner includes schools and colleges and the governing body of a maintained school, by virtue of amendments to s.10 of the 2004 Act.
6. The legislation provides that to promote co-operation, relevant persons or bodies may provide staff, goods, services, accommodation or other resources to another relevant person or body, and/or make contributions to a fund out of which relevant payments may be made.
7. Given the requirement to establish Trust Boards (and by definition local partnerships accountable to the Trust Board) it is not necessary to establish new governance arrangements such as formal legal trusts. Partners have available to them within their existing management and governance arrangements the powers to engage in collaborative working and to pool resources as they determine. The use of these powers in relation to schools and colleges is for governing bodies to agree locally.

Purpose of the changes

8. The Act is intended to strengthen partnership working to improve outcomes for all children and young people by:
 - Putting Children’s Trust Boards on a statutory footing.
 - Extending the number of statutory relevant partners with a duty to cooperate to include maintained schools, city technology colleges, academies, non-maintained special schools, further education and sixth form colleges and Jobcentre Plus.
 - Introducing a power to pool funds and share other resources between children’s trust relevant partners.
 - Ensuring that schools forums and relevant partners will have regard to the local Children and Young People Plan (CYPP)
 - Requiring the children’s trust board to develop, publish, monitor and review the CYPP and to publish an annual progress report on the extent to which partners have acted in accordance with the Plan.
 - Establishing a duty on the children’s trust board members to supply information to the board to enable or assist the board to perform its functions.
 - Ensuring all partners on the children’s trust board share responsibility for preparing the CYPP, but the partners are individually responsible for delivering it.

Purpose and function of Local Children’s Partnerships

9. The Children’s Trust has identified purpose, function and accountabilities for Local Children’s Partnerships as summarised below.
10. Purpose
 - being the delivery arm of the Hampshire Children’s Trust at a local level
 - commissioning local services on behalf of the Children’s Trust
 - coordinating and influencing delivery of all local services to improve all outcomes set out in the CYPP

Function

- Ensure educational inclusion
- Strengthen and develop local networks
- Develop a detailed understanding of local needs and outcomes
- Direct responsibility for delivery locally of defined outcomes, e.g. teenage pregnancy and reducing child poverty
- Influence improvement for all outcomes for all children
- Co-ordinate early intervention and prevention activities

11. Accountabilities of local partnerships and of partners

For process and ownership:

- For a local delivery plan to address all the targets within the CYPP
- For influencing others in aligning resources to agreed objectives and priorities
- Individual and collective ownership of the local delivery plan

For performance and outcomes

- For all partners to make a contribution to all the outcomes in the CYPP
- For all partners to specifically address performance areas identified as 'at risk'
- For arrangements within the partnership for the co-ordination of early intervention and prevention services – potentially to include direct management of some resources

The development of local partnerships

12. There are 11 existing local partnerships based on District Council areas and these were developed before the duty upon all schools and colleges to cooperate were introduced
13. Local partners are considering the best local configuration to ensure that all partners can be fully engaged in the work of their local partnerships, rather than that there would be a representative arrangement
14. In some areas, due to the scale or location of local schools there will be more than one Local Children's Partnership and local arrangements are anticipated to consist of two or possible three 'layers' as summarised below. It is anticipated there could be in the order of 20 local partnerships across Hampshire.
 - Local Children's Partnerships involving all schools, colleges and all other partners within a defined local area fully engaged in the business cycle at a senior manager/senior leader level
 - Sub-group arrangements to undertake detailed work in geographical areas or on a thematic basis reporting to whole partnerships
 - A mechanism to ensure the representation of each Local Children's Partnership within the District Council based Local Area Agreement/Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) structure.

Outcome improvement and performance indicators

15. It is intended that Local Children's Partnerships consider the contribution they can make to all the outcomes identified in the Children and Young People's Plan.
16. This element is essential in ensuring that the interrelationship between social and educational factors, that affect the overall wellbeing of all children and young people, is appreciated and reflected in the way all partners focus their resources upon agreed objectives.

17. Accepting that there are over 70 individual performance indicators represented in the Children and Young People's Plan it is envisaged that local delivery plans will address a number of key areas where outcomes are at risk. Individual partners remain accountable for their contribution to all areas of performance through their existing management and governance arrangements.
18. The Hampshire Children's Trust Board will identify a number of outcomes, which all Local Children's Partnerships should address in their delivery plans and partners will identify those additional areas where outcomes should be improved, with a clear relationship to School Improvement Plans and subject to OfSTED inspection.
19. Those key areas identified by the Trust Board that all local partnerships should consider might include the following:
 - Reducing teenage conceptions – NI 112
 - Reducing those not in employment education or training - NI117
 - Increasing the number of children in care in employment, education or training - NI 148
 - Improving the educational attainment of vulnerable children .e.g. NI 102 – the educational achievement gap for those on free school meals or for Children in Care
 - Reducing the impact of poverty. E.g. NI 116 – reducing families in receipt of workless benefits and a number of educational attainment targets

Business process of local partnerships

20. The essential focus of Local Children's Partnerships is upon all partners engaging in the core business cycle and It is likely there will be a need for 3 whole partnership meetings on an annual basis. Partners may also wish to consider holding an annual stakeholder event to support engagement and participation and it is envisaged sub group or thematic groups will emerge to undertake some of the detailed work on behalf of local partners.
21. On an annual basis it is anticipated each local partnership will meet on 3 occasions, once a term. In the first year of the revised Local Children's Partnership arrangements (2010/11), this cycle will be a limited process to ensure that a local delivery plan is agreed by the end of July 2010 and reported to the Trust Board in September.
22. Subsequently the cycle of whole partnerships meetings is anticipated to be as summarised below
 - In April each year to agree new delivery plan and to undertake an annual self assessment of the impact the local partnership is having upon outcomes for all local children and young people
 - In October each year to undertake a mid year review of progress
 - In January each year to begin the process for drafting a new delivery plan – leading to sub groups undertaking some detailed work.