

Statutory guidance on inter-agency co-operation to improve the wellbeing of children: children's trusts



Every Child Matters
Change For Children



STATUTORY
GUIDANCE

Children's trusts: leadership, co-operation, planning and safeguarding



This document is one of a suite of five which give guidance on children's trust governance and strategic planning, and on the cross cutting issue of safeguarding. All documents referred to will be accessible through <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>.

The five documents support provisions in the Children Act 2004 which underpin Every Child Matters: Change for Children. These include the creation of duties on local agencies in relation to improving the 'wellbeing' of children and young people and safeguarding and promoting their 'welfare'.

(1) *Inter-agency co-operation to improve the wellbeing of children: children's trusts* (which follows here) describes the duties placed on local authorities and other key partners to co-operate to improve the wellbeing of children and young people. The guidance sets out the features of co-operation through children's trusts and provides a strategic framework within which all children's services in an area will operate.

"Wellbeing" has a legal definition based on five outcomes; their achievement of these is, in part, dependent upon the effective safeguarding and promotion of children's welfare. Statutory guidance on the (2) *Duty to Make arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children* sets out the key arrangements agencies should make to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the course of discharging their normal functions.

Where an agency has both co-operation and safeguarding and promoting welfare duties, this is because it is both a strategic body with a significant impact on children's services within the local authority area, and also an agency with direct responsibility for the provision of services to children and young people. Certain agencies are included within only one of these duties.

(3) *Guidance on the Children and Young People's Plan* supports the fulfilment of both the co-operation and safeguarding and promoting welfare duties. The regulations to which this guidance refers require local authorities to work with partners to produce a strategic plan describing the actions and provisions by which they will achieve the five outcomes for children and young people. This plan replaces 19 other planning requirements.

Guidance on the governance and leadership required within the new strategic framework is provided by (4) *The role and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children* and (5) the chapter on *Local Safeguarding Children Boards* held within the revised *Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children* (issued for consultation in July 2005, with publication expected in January 2006).

These five core documents should be used alongside other key policy and planning documents relating to Every Child Matters. These include:

- *The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services* sets out a ten-year programme to stimulate long-term and sustained improvement in children's health and wellbeing;
- *Every Child Matters: Change for Children – Young People and Drugs* gives guidance on co-operation and joint planning to counter drug misuse;
- *Duty on Local Authorities to Promote the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children* which will set out the implications of the new duty in the Children Act 2004 for local authorities' strategic planning, joint area reviews and day-to-day working practices;
- *The Framework for the Inspection of Children's Services* sets out the principles to be applied by an inspectorate or commission assessing any children's service, and defines the key judgements which, where appropriate and practical, inspections will seek to make. It is available from <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk>.

A number of other documents focus directly on integrated front line delivery and the processes that support it. These include:

- *The Common Assessment Framework* and cross-government guidance on information sharing within and between agencies and organisational boundaries;
- *The Children's Workforce Strategy* and the *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge*. Both documents should inform strategic planning for developing the children's workforce locally;
- *Lead Professional Good Practice Guidance* sets out key responsibilities, skills and knowledge required by practitioners to carry out this function, and draws on good practice to provide emerging models, working solutions and suggestions on how the role might be developed, implemented and managed;
- *Multi-agency Working Toolkit* (to be published summer 2005) includes practical advice, case studies and resources to help managers and practitioners set up effective integrated services and teams.

Taken as a whole the strategic and operation guidance listed here is intended to support change at all levels within an area and thereby help drive improvement for all children and young people.

Contents

Statutory guidance on inter-agency co-operation to improve the wellbeing of children: children's trusts



Section 1: Introduction	4
Overview	4
The essential features of a children's trust	6
The legislative provisions	8
Section 2: The Features of Children's Trusts	11
Outcome, child and family focused	11
Integrated front line delivery: multi-agency working and co-location	13
Integrated processes: common assessment and information sharing	15
Integrated strategy: planning and commissioning with pooled resources	16
Inter-agency governance: leadership, partnerships and clear accountability	21
Section 3: Conclusion	24
Appendix 1: Other related documents and guidance	25
Appendix 2: Inter-agency partners	34

Section 1: Introduction



Overview

1.1 There is wide agreement about the outcomes we all want for every child – that they should be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic wellbeing. Improved outcomes can only be achieved and sustained however, when agencies work together to design and deliver integrated services around the needs of children and young people. There is widespread support, and increasing evidence, for this approach. A considerable amount of effective practice is already in place.

1.2 The delivery of universal and sustained reform will often need to challenge long-standing practice and cut across long-established professional and organisational boundaries. This will require whole-system change, led and managed at local level and supported nationally.

1.3 **The new duties in section 10 of the Children Act 2004** (see 'The Legislative Provisions', page 11) are a key driver for achieving these changes. They require local authorities¹ and their 'relevant partners' to co-operate to improve children's wellbeing: this is defined as the five outcomes referred to in paragraph 1.1 above. Local authorities must take a lead in making arrangements to promote co-operation between local agencies whose work impacts on children within the authority's area. As joint stakeholders, the relevant partners must co-operate with the authority in the making of those arrangements and will wish to help shape them so as to ensure that co-operation results in improvements in all areas of service delivery and in associated outcomes for children and young people.

1.4 The 'relevant partners' include key statutory agencies. But to achieve their full potential, the co-operation arrangements must encompass a much wider group of partners working and caring for children and young people.

¹ 'Local authority' has the same meaning in this guidance as the term 'Children's Services Authority', which was introduced by the Children Act 2004. 'Local authority' is used to describe: a county council in England; a metropolitan district council; a non-metropolitan district council for an area where there is no county council; a London borough council; the Common Council of the City of London and the Council of the Isles of Scilly. Where the term 'local authority' includes district councils in a two tier area, this is made clear in the text. 'Local authority' has the same meaning in this guidance as the term 'Children's Services Authority', which was introduced by the Children Act 2004.

1.5 'Making arrangements' is not just about agreeing a set of processes; it includes the continuous joint working needed to make co-operation a reality. And it is not limited to work at a strategic level; it covers multi-agency front-line teams as well as high level inter-agency governance.

1.6 **A set of effective local arrangements, operating at every level, will be a children's trust in action.** These arrangements will involve:

- front-line staff providing integrated delivery to the child and family;
- the shared processes used to support their work;
- joint assessments of need, plans and commissioning arrangements with pooled budgets – setting priorities and delivering the necessary resources; and
- the inter-agency governance arrangements needed to agree the overall vision and drive through change.

1.7 The voice of children, young people and their families should be heard at all levels in order to inform local design and delivery of the arrangements.

1.8 Given the statutory responsibilities of many of the key partners, joint working within the children's trust will need to be underpinned by clear arrangements for shared governance. These may often need to manage geographical issues such as differences between partners' boundaries, the cross-border take up of services by children, the need to work with partners from outside the children's trust boundaries e.g. a Primary Care Trust commissioning services from a hospital trust, and the location of partners in rural areas. Where elements of the children's trust agenda are being delivered through thematically based sub-groups, or through inter-agency arrangements serving only part of a county or unitary local authority area – e.g. based on district council areas – governance arrangements should make clear that the children's trust established at the county or unitary local authority level is in the lead.

1.9 Partners will need an integrated local change programme, reflecting local priorities, but also ensuring that the safeguarding of children remains a priority throughout the change process. The order and pace at which areas tackle issues will need to reflect local analysis. But achieving the desired outcomes for children and young people will involve action at every level, front-line working, shared processes, planning, commissioning and governance.

1.10 The legislative framework is set not only by the statutory duty to co-operate but by:

- this guidance, which has a statutory basis. All local authorities and relevant partners must have regard to it – in exercising functions under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, they have to take account of the guidance and, if they decide to depart from it, they must have clear reasons for doing so;
- the duty to appoint a Director of Children's Services and a Lead Member for Children's Services, to provide local leadership and drive forward change. We expect most local authorities to have Directors and Lead Members in place by 2006, and all to have them by 2008;

- the requirement to have a Children and Young People's Plan by April 2006 (except those local authorities exempted by virtue of an 'excellent' CPA rating). Regulations coming into force in 2005, will require all areas to produce a single, strategic, overarching plan for all local services for children and young people (see integrated planning on page 19). This will need to be based on a shared assessment of needs set against the outcomes framework (see Outcome, child and family focused on page 14);
- statutory arrangements for the joint inspection of all children's services in an area. Joint Area Reviews (JAR) will report on how far services are working effectively together to secure positive outcomes for children and young people. JARs begin from September 2005, with an initial JAR in each local authority area within three years;
- new powers to pool budgets in support of the duty to co-operate;
- other changes made in the Children Act 2004. These include a duty on named local agencies to make arrangements for ensuring that their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (see note in Appendix 1).

The essential features of a children's trust

1.11 These are:

- *A child-centred, outcome-led vision*: a compelling outcome-led vision for all children and young people, clearly informed by their views and those of their families;
- *Integrated front line delivery* organised around the child, young person or family rather than professional boundaries or existing agencies – for example, multi-agency teams, co-located staff in extended schools or children's centres, joint training, and arrangements for identifying a lead professional wherever a child is known to more than one targeted or specialist agency and a co-ordinated response is required;
- *Integrated processes*: effective joint working sustained by a shared language and shared processes. These include a Common Assessment Framework, effective information sharing arrangements, and the re-engineering of other local processes and procedures to support, joint working;
- *Integrated strategy (joint planning and commissioning)*: joint assessment of local needs; the identification of all available resources; integrated planning to prioritise action and a move towards preventative services; and joint commissioning of services from a range of providers, supported appropriately by shared resources and pooled budgets². Voluntary and community organisations, and other providers, should be able to contribute to planning and commissioning services on an equal footing with other partners;

2 See Section 1 paragraph 1.16, and Section 2 paragraph 2.51 regarding YOTs

Pooled budgets, bringing together significant partner agency funding, are an important lever for integrating commissioning strategies, decision-making processes and front-line services. Partners will need to consider which funds to pool in order to support effective service integration (see paragraph 2.51 regarding YOTs);

- *Inter-agency governance*: whilst each partner is responsible for the exercise of its own functions, robust arrangements for inter-agency co-operation are needed to set the framework of accountability for improving and delivering effective services. The cornerstone must be a strong integrated governing board or structure representing all key delivery partners at senior level, determined to drive whole-system change through clear leadership and effective local change programmes;

Effective inter-agency governance at all levels will give partners the confidence and trust to engage in new ways of working, and to share resources across service boundaries. The local authority will need to lead in establishing arrangements that help all public, private, voluntary and community organisations to work together effectively to achieve agreed outcomes. This will require sophisticated leadership of a high order to secure a genuinely joint and outcome-focused vision, full engagement of all key partners, and clear lines of accountability.

1.12 Children’s trusts put improved outcomes for children and young people at the centre of all activity. This can be represented in the diagram below. At every level, children’s trusts must be supported by effective leadership arrangements, robust performance management and the involvement of children and young people.

1.13 Local change programmes and, from 2006, Children and Young People’s Plans, will reflect local priorities, strengths and approaches. But they will also show how sustained progress will be made in developing all five of the essential features of a children’s trust – and so ensure that most children’s trusts are in place by 2006, and all by 2008.

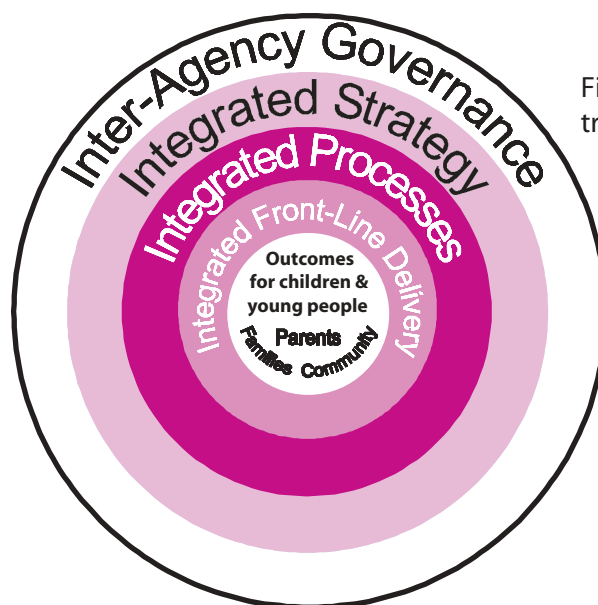


Figure 1: The children’s trust in action

The Government is making specific resources available to support the setting up of children's trusts arrangements. This funding, combined with more effective use of existing resources, means it is not a pressure on council tax. The Government is committed to working with local authorities, their representative organisations and their partners as policies are developed further to ensure that they do not place new unfunded burdens on local authority resources.

The legislative provisions

1.14 Section 10 of the Act places a duty on all local authorities in England to make arrangements to promote co-operation between the authority, the 'relevant partners' (see below), and other locally determined partners, to improve the wellbeing³ of children in the authority's area.

1.15 The arrangements must cover all children and young people under the age of 18, while section 10(9) extends the potential for the inclusion of all 18 and 19 year olds, young people aged 20 and over leaving care, and young people up to the age of 25 with learning difficulties.⁴ Taken together, these provisions ensure that the local authority can include all agencies that provide services to children and young people. Some will also provide services that support the transition into adulthood. Partners will wish to ensure that children's trust arrangements help service users to make effective transitions between children's and adult services.

1.16 The 'relevant partners' must co-operate with the local authority in making arrangements to improve children's wellbeing. This duty requires them to work together with the local authority at every level in making the arrangements. The relevant partners are as follows:

- the district council in two tier authorities. Services provided by the district council which impact upon children's wellbeing include housing, leisure and recreation, and must therefore be considered within the context of children's trust;
- the police authority and the chief officer of police for a police area any part of which falls within the area of the local authority;
- a local probation board for an area, any part of which falls within the area of the local authority;
- the youth offending team (YOT). YOTs will have an important role to play in local partnership arrangements. In order to deliver the outcomes for children and young people, they and local authorities with responsibility for establishing them, with the co-operation of other partners, will need to continue to discharge their statutory functions under sections 38-40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – including services to the Courts, dealing with offenders and submitting Youth Justice Plans. The annual Youth Justice Plan will need to be aligned with the Children and Young People's Plan (see paragraph 2.34);

3 see definition in paragraph 2.4

4 For probation, police and YOTs the arrangements apply only up to the age of 17.

- a Strategic Health Authority (SHA) and Primary Care Trust (PCT) for an area, any part of which falls within the area of the local authority;
- agencies providing services under section 114 of the Learning and Skills Act 2000 in any part of the area of the local authority i.e. the local Connexions Partnership; and
- the Learning and Skills Council for England. In practice it will be local Learning and Skills Councils that participate in the co-operation arrangements.

1.17 To assist with interagency co-operation, Section 10(6) and (7) of the Act provide the local authority and the relevant partners with the power to establish and maintain a pooled fund and pool other resources for the purpose of the co-operation arrangements. Other resources are defined as staff, goods, services, accommodation or other non-pecuniary resources. Further details on pooling funding and other resources can be found on page 21 of this guidance.

1.18 The co-operation arrangements should not be limited to the local authority and 'relevant partners'. Section 10 (1)(c) states that other agencies that exercise functions or are engaged in activities in relation to children and young people should also be involved. These will include:

- children and young people themselves;
- voluntary and community sector agencies;
- agencies with responsibility for delivering other front-line statutory services to children young people and their families, e.g. not for profit and private sector bodies, colleges, work-based learning providers, providers of health services (including NHS Trusts and General Practitioners), Jobcentre Plus and, where appropriate, the immigration services;
- childcare, culture sport and play organisations;
- families, carers and communities. The Act also specifically requires authorities to 'have regard to' the importance of parents and other persons caring for children when making arrangements under section 10.

1.19 As the universal service provider that maintains contact with most children five days a week throughout most of the year, schools are central to the drive to improve all five outcomes for children and young people. They should therefore be appropriately involved in the local children's trust co-operation arrangements.

1.20 Schools increasingly recognise their role in helping combat the barriers to learning and attainment that lie outside the school gates. Pupil performance and wellbeing go hand in hand. Pupils cannot learn if they do not feel safe or if health problems are allowed to create barriers to learning. Educational achievement is also central to lifting young people out of poverty and disaffection.

1.21 In recognition of the crucial role of schools in improving the wellbeing of children and young people, the statutory purposes of school inspection have been defined in the Education Act 2005 to include:

- how far the education provided in the school meets the needs of the range of pupils at the school; and
- the contribution made by the school to the wellbeing of those pupils.

1.22 Inspectors will therefore assess the overall effectiveness of the school, including any extended services; how far programmes or the curriculum meet external requirements and are responsive to local circumstances; and the effectiveness of links made with other providers, services, employers and other organisations to promote the integration of care, education and any extended services so as to enhance learning and promote wellbeing.

Section 2: The Features of Children's Trusts



Outcome, child and family focused

2.1 All partners have a shared agenda to maximise opportunities and minimise risks for all children and young people, focusing services more effectively around needs and promoting equality of opportunity. Children's trusts are a new way of delivering this shared commitment. They put improved outcomes for all children and young people at the heart of integrated service delivery, early intervention and prevention.

2.2 'All children and young people' includes the most disadvantaged, and improving their wellbeing means narrowing the gap between disadvantaged children and their peers in achieving these outcomes. Local authorities and their partners should ensure that equality and diversity are promoted in all their work with children, young people and families, and seek greater progress towards these outcomes for disadvantaged children. In exercising their statutory functions the partners must also have due regard to their responsibilities to promote equality of opportunity and eliminate discrimination. They must ensure that, in carrying out their functions, they have due regard to the need to eliminate racial discrimination and to promote equality of opportunity and good race relations.

2.3 'Integration' is used in this guidance to describe a set of processes and actions by which partners ensure outcome-focused, front-line delivery. It means a holistic approach within which needs can be identified, and priorities – national and local – can be addressed. This does not imply any loss of focus on key targets and priorities for meeting the needs of specific groups of young people, for example those supported through the work of YOTs or through Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services. But specialist services need to work effectively within a framework of wider co-operation.

2.4 Wellbeing is defined by the five positive outcomes set out in section 10 (2) of the Children Act 2004. They are:

- physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing;
- protection from harm and neglect;

- education, training and recreation;
- the contribution made by them to society;
- social and economic wellbeing.

2.5 The outcomes are mutually reinforcing; activity in any one area will contribute to and impact on the achievement of the others. Children's trust partners should collectively own all five outcomes and recognise that they have a role in contributing to the achievement of each one.

2.6 The Every Child Matters Outcomes Framework⁵ (<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>) describes the five outcomes and their underpinning aims. It links these to Public Service Agreement targets and other key indicators, and to inspection judgements and criteria. Partners will wish to consider using these indicators as the basis for their own outcome-led approaches, supplemented by additional local indicators and reflecting local priorities.

Safeguarding and the 'staying safe' outcome

2.7 The Children Act 2004 requires local authorities to establish and operate Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCBs) as the statutory successors to Area Child Protection Committees. The work of LSCBs fits within the wider context of the children's trust, and whilst it contributes to the overall goal of improving the wellbeing (i.e. the five outcomes) of all children, it has a particular focus on aspects of the 'staying safe' outcome.

2.8 Whereas the children's trust has a wider role in planning and delivery of services, LSCBs are not front-line delivery organisations: their objectives are about co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of what their member organisations do individually and together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the local authority area. They will contribute to broader children's trust delivery / commissioning arrangements, for example through the Children and Young People's Plan.

2.9 LSCBs will need to be able to form a view of the quality of local activity and to provide challenge as required, speaking where necessary with an independent voice. Their place in local governance arrangements must provide them with a clear and distinct identity.

2.10 The role and functions of LSCBs are set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children* (issued for consultation in July 2005, with publication expected in January 2006). As part of the design of the wider children's trust arrangements, local partners may consider it appropriate for the Board to hold additional functions and roles to those described *Working Together to Safeguard Children*. The Local Authority and its partners should however, make sure that any extended role does not lessen its ability to perform its core role effectively.

5 It is recognised that a small minority of children are educated at home and the requirements of this framework should be read and applied in that context.

Child and family focus

2.11 Local partners should ensure a culture of openness across their children's trust arrangements, so that listening and responding to children and young people becomes an integral part of everyday practice. They should ensure that children and young people participate in decision making about their own lives, and in designing and developing services. A personalised approach is required and partners should develop innovative and creative methods for involving children and young people, drawing on national and local toolkits.

2.12 The views of parents and carers should also be taken into account. Families are in most cases the key determinant of positive outcomes for their children, and good parenting is a major factor in improving children and young people's life chances. The Act explicitly requires the local authority to have regard to the importance of parents and carers in making arrangements under section 10 (3).

Integrated front line delivery: multi-agency working and co-location

2.13 Building a genuinely outcomes-led approach requires innovative thinking about how people are deployed and located to deliver services for children and young people.

Multi-agency working

2.14 Multi-agency working has a valuable role to play in improving outcomes for children and young people. Collaboration between people working in universal, targeted and specialist services strengthens inter-professional relationships, stimulates trust, promotes shared vision and values, increases knowledge of local services, provides alternative and creative intervention strategies, and addresses a wide range of risk factors. This in turn facilitates early identification, early intervention and preventative work. Good practice guidance on making decisions about appropriate models of multi-agency working to meet local needs will be available from Autumn 2005.

2.15 It is important that professionals working in multi-agency settings have access to continuous professional development and appropriate clinical and professional supervision, management and governance, with clear lines of accountability. The relationship between individual practitioners' working in a multi-agency setting and their home agency will need to be negotiated and understood. This may require the development of inter-agency protocols which establish how working arrangements will operate in practice and take into account the practicalities of travel requirements in rural areas.

2.16 Services working with children and young people to address specific needs will need to retain their particular focus, but work across traditional service boundaries and provide access to a wider range of practitioners and intervention strategies. Examples of targeted programmes include those focusing on children and young people experiencing emotional or behavioural difficulties, mental health problems, disorders and illnesses, or needing specific health interventions such as physiotherapy. Similarly youth offending teams will need to continue to discharge their statutory functions, including services to the Courts, dealing with offenders and submitting Youth Justice Plans. The annual Youth Justice Plan will need to be aligned with the Children and Young People's Plan (see paragraph 2.34).

2.17 A minority of children and young people have additional support needs that require integrated input from more than one practitioner or agency. For children and young people requiring integrated support, this can often be most effectively delivered through practitioners acting in a lead role – for example, by acting as the Lead Professional as described in *Lead Professional Good Practice Guidance*. By taking the lead role, the Lead Professional will:

- act as a single point of contact that children, young people and families can trust, and who is able to support them in making choices and in navigating their way through the system;
- ensure that children and families get appropriate interventions when needed, which are well planned, regularly reviewed and effectively delivered; and
- reduce overlap and inconsistency from other practitioners.

2.18 Lead Professional could be any practitioner who has the skills, knowledge and authority to carry out this role. What is important is that each local area sets out clear criteria by which lead professionals are appointed and how this will be managed at a local level. This will require the development of clear accountability systems and escalation routes through which issues can be addressed within the chain of command, thereby ensuring that all those involved in appointing, working with, or managing lead professionals for individual children, young people and families are clear about who, how, and when this role comes into play and is delivered.

Co-location⁶

2.19 There is a strong case for basing multi-agency working arrangements in and around the places where children and young people spend much of their time, such as schools and children’s centres. Co-location may be particularly appropriate for communities with high levels of need and existing low levels of access to services, and will help to deliver the NSF standard on child-centred care.

2.20 This may mean multi-agency teams working across a cluster of local schools or schools acting as ‘hosts’ for these teams that also reach into other schools and the wider community. It may also be served in part by establishing extended schools to provide a school-based network of multi-agency support for children, young people and families. Other settings, for example neighbourhood-based services, should also be considered, especially where there may be barriers between the school and the communities they serve. Alternative settings might include youth centres, libraries, sports centres, village halls, health centres or Connexions one-stop shops. On the other hand, co-location may not be appropriate for dispersed rural communities, and alternative provision, such as virtual teams or multi-agency panels may need to be considered.

2.21 Existing effective local practice on multi-agency working and co-location provides a platform from which to develop and expand integrated working, examples being extended schools, Children’s Centres, youth offending teams, Connexions, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Behaviour and Education Support Teams, and Drug Action Teams.

6 Any strategy for developing co-location must take into account the need to ensure that vulnerable children are not exposed to risk from other service users.

Integrated processes: common assessment and information sharing

2.22 All practitioners and strategic planners need to be supported by better integrated processes, in particular common assessment procedures and information sharing. Improvements here will be vital in delivering the NSF, including the need for early intervention set out in standard one, and for both the standards on child, young person and family-centred care, and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People (CAF)

2.23 A common assessment has the potential to drive multi-agency working by embedding a shared process, developing a shared language of need and improving the information flow between agencies. This will support wider behavioural change, earlier intervention and reduce bureaucracy. It will both improve the quality and reduce the number and scale of assessments that individual children undergo, while also facilitating better referrals. Over time, the CAF will dovetail with existing assessment frameworks, which may themselves need modification to accommodate the CAF.

2.24 Common assessments should be:

- holistic, centred on the child or young person and rooted in child development: being aware of the range of possible needs including education, health and social care, and of the context of the child's family and the community, culture and educational setting in which he or she is growing up, regardless of the specialism of the assessor;
- solution and action focused, building on strengths as well as identifying and addressing difficulties: building a sound basis for effective and ongoing intervention, where appropriate;
- developing an inter-agency culture of understanding and trust: agencies working together will need to be confident that the information they share is reliable; and
- easy to use and not time-consuming to complete: an easy and accessible process for all practitioners.

2.25 The intention is to introduce one national CAF for children's services so that when children move between local areas or services their assessments are easily transferable. When practitioners move, their skills in using the CAF should also be transferable.

2.26 The CAF was published on 1 April 2005 (see Appendix 1) for trialling in local areas. The CAF can be trialed in any local area that chooses to do so during 2005-06. Revised forms and materials will be published prior to national roll-out which is expected to be from April 2006-08. All local areas should be undertaking planning activity in 2005-06 for implementation in 2006-08.

Information Sharing

2.27 Good information sharing is key to successful collaborative working. Arrangements under section 10 of the Act should ensure that information is shared for strategic planning purposes and to support effective service delivery. These arrangements should cover key issues such as improving the understanding of the legal framework and developing better information sharing

practice between and within organisations, including information about individual children and young people. These organisational and cultural aspects will be among the themes on which children's services will be inspected and are areas in which action can and should be taken in advance of the implementation of information sharing indexes (databases) under section 12 of the Children Act 2004.

2.28 Local authorities and senior managers in partner organisations should ensure that information sharing is properly addressed in their own organisations⁷, and that all:

- change strategies and service delivery plans incorporate effective and clearly understood mechanisms for sharing information across service and professional boundaries;
- relevant managers and practitioners receive adequate training on information sharing;
- managers, practitioners and other staff understand the legal basis on which information can be shared;
- information sharing becomes an integral part of the way in which practitioners fulfil their duties;
- strategic managers are familiar with the guidance that their managers in children's services should follow; and
- information sharing indexes are established and operated as set out in regulations and accompanying guidance.

2.29 The Government has published national benchmarks in *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*, and is making available exemplar material based on existing best practice for establishing information sharing arrangements within and between organisations and practitioners. Further non-statutory cross-Government guidance for practitioners on information sharing practice and the legal framework covering it will be published in December 2005 (see Appendix 1).

2.30 The production of statutory guidance and directions is also planned under section 12 of the Act, specifically to support the establishment and operation of information sharing databases or indexes.

Integrated strategy: planning and commissioning with pooled resources

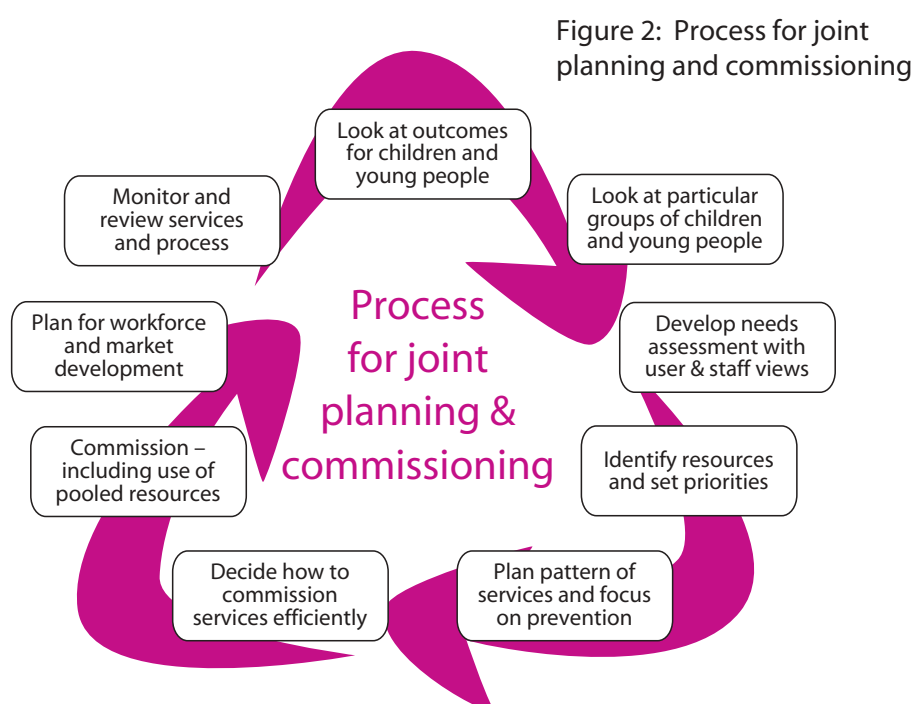
2.31 Strategic planning and commissioning arrangements need to maintain and improve service delivery while simultaneously helping to bring about fundamental changes in the way those services are delivered.

⁷ Teachers, health or other professionals should notify the local authority of cases of private fostering which come to their attention where they are not satisfied that the local authority has already been or will be notified of the arrangement.

Integrated planning

2.32 To deliver an integrated strategy for the planning and commissioning of children's services that draws upon the Outcomes Framework and the local vision of service provision, the partners within the children's trust will need to:

- consider the current pattern and recent trends of outcomes for children and young people in their area, against national and relevant local comparators;
- look within the overall picture at outcomes for particular groups of children and young people (e.g. disabled, special educational needs, looked after children), as they may require a differentiated approach to service provision or additional support;
- use all this data and the views of children, young people and their families, local communities, and front-line staff to develop an overall, integrated needs assessment;
- agree on the nature and scale of the local challenge, identify the resources available and set priorities for action;
- plan the pattern of service most likely to secure priority outcomes, considering carefully the ways in which resources can be increasingly focussed on prevention and early intervention;
- decide together how best to purchase or provide (commission) those services, including drawing in alternative providers to widen options and increase efficiency;
- develop and extend joint commissioning from pooled budgets and pooled resources;



- develop the local markets for providing integrated and other services, and produce and implement a local workforce strategy covering service and role re-design, and the necessary ways of working to support delivery; and
- monitor and review to ensure services and the joint planning and commissioning process are working to deliver the goals set out for them.

2.33 These activities will be reflected in, and driven by, the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP).⁸ Each CYPP will set out the improvements which the children's trust intends to make to the outcomes for children and young people, the local vision, the assessment of needs, and the actions and outline costs involved. It will also explain the relevant arrangements for co-operation with partners under the section 10 duty to co-operate, and will need to be consistent with the strategic plans of those partners.

2.34 Local authorities, working with key partners that include health and youth justice agencies, will be expected to take a lead in joint planning. A key test of the robustness of the inter-agency governance arrangements (see Inter-agency governance on page 24) will be their capacity to deliver and implement a comprehensive, integrated plan for children and young people in the locality that covers all services available to children, and a shared strategy for improving those services. The Department of Health has, in parallel, made clear the need for PCTs to plan local services for children jointly with local authorities.⁹

2.35 Local authorities and their partners are being given support and challenge through 'priorities conversations'. This strategic dialogue between local agencies and representatives of central government will cover how local priorities reflect national priorities, the outcomes anticipated and an understanding from each partner of their roles and responsibilities. This is a key part of the children's services improvement cycle described in *Every Child Matters: Change for Children*.

Joint commissioning

2.36 In developing joint commissioning activity, children's trust partners will wish to keep in mind that there are levels of joint commissioning including: strategic (involving major resource allocations), operational (service level decision making) and individual, where services are commissioned around an individual child.

2.37 Where appropriate, local partners within the children's trust will need to develop operational-level plans and associated commissioning cycles to underpin the strategic actions set out in the CYPP, and to turn them into a reality on the ground.

2.38 No single agency can deliver any one of the 25 aims in the Outcomes Framework by working in isolation and, in principle, joint commissioning should be developed wherever the meeting of identified needs requires contributions from two or more children's trust

8 From April 2006, the local authority is required to publish a Children's and Young People's Plan (CYPP) – except those exempted by virtue of an 'excellent' CPA rating. Regulations will be made in July 2005. More information can be obtained from <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>

9 *National Standards, Local Action – Health and Social Care Standards and Planning framework.*

partners. Local partners will therefore need to respond to the strategy set out in the CYPP by considering together:

- how best to meet identified needs, tested and led by the involvement of children and young people, including how services can be designed in an outcome focused way;
- how best to allocate and utilise collective resources of all kinds in order to secure those services, from both statutory and non-statutory sources, against outcome based targets; and
- what agreements, contracts and monitoring arrangements need to be put in place in order to ensure effective delivery and to influence future planning activity.

2.39 Effective joint commissioning will lead to more sensitive, efficient, relevant and effective responses to children and young people's needs. It should also result in quicker and more integrated, tailored packages of services, where these are recommended by multi-agency assessments of need, both at whole-population (macro commissioning) and individual levels (micro commissioning).

2.40 It will not however, be appropriate for every need to be met through services that have been jointly commissioned, for example acute health services delivered by hospitals. But all such individual commissioning must be understood and positioned within the context of the CYPP, and the children's trust should lead the planning, and co-ordinate the commissioning of all services for children and young people.

2.41 Children's trusts will play a central part in a changing landscape of commissioning that includes an increased role for schools and GP practices as commissioners. By identifying strategic priorities and local needs through an integrated planning process, the children's trust will be well placed to provide a framework to inform school and local primary care commissioning. Local authorities and local health partners with responsibilities for strategic planning will wish to ensure that school and practice based commissioning is shaped by the strategic priorities of the children's trust, so that children's services are joined up to meet the needs of children and young people in a coherent way.

2.42 The use of joint commissioning does not mean that a service will necessarily be delivered in a multi-agency way; delivery by individual providers, particularly of specialist services, will often be the best way of meeting certain needs. But providing a specialist service for a child or young person can often have implications for other services, for example, a long term stay in hospital which involves schooling being missed. It is important that such implications are taken into account during planning, and that a co-ordinated response is put in place.

2.43 Services will be jointly commissioned from, and provided by, both statutory and non-statutory bodies. Partner organisations engaged in the commissioning process may also have service provider responsibilities, so arrangements will have to be made to identify and respond to any potential conflicts of interest.

2.44 Arrangements for joint commissioning should ensure that there is a level playing field for potential providers, whether in-house or from the voluntary or private sectors, and that best value principles are followed. The local market for integrated services will often be under developed, and children's trust partners will need to build a market development strategy as a component of their overall strategic planning.

Re-prioritising resources

2.45 Effective joint planning and commissioning can secure much better use of available resources. A strategic overview of service delivery must ensure efficiencies are not only made through the identification of duplication and innovative service redesign, but also through the potential for economies of scale within and outside the local area. As co-ordinated and increasingly integrated activity by children's trusts delivers improved outcomes more effectively and efficiently, partners will wish to focus on reinvested funding in further children's services. In particular, partners will want to consider how quickly resources can be progressively shifted into prevention and early intervention.

2.46 There is a crucial link within the joint planning and commissioning cycle between the allocation of funding and the identification of forecast needs. It is important that the potential requirement for tailored packages of services, generated in response to a holistic assessment of an individual's needs, is carefully considered in the strategic planning stage. This will help to avoid demands for such bespoke packages of services placing unexpected additional pressures on key budgets.

Pooled budgets and pooled resources

2.47 Maintaining pooled budgets, and pooling other resources under the powers of the Children Act 2004, are key features in developing joint commissioning arrangements that will enable children's trusts to deliver the outcome-led approach. Pooled budgets provide an important lever for the integration of commissioning strategies and decision-making processes, and for the integration of front-line service provision to secure better outcomes for children and young people. The pace and focus of the development of pooled budgets will depend on local priorities and local change programmes. But a clear strategy for their creation and deployment will need to be an integral part of the development of all children's trusts.

2.48 Partners in a children's trust are together responsible for identifying all resources deployed across the area on children's services, and local authorities and their partners need to consider which funds to pool in order to deliver integrated front-line services effectively. Pooled budgets provide the mechanism by which partners can bring money together to form a discrete fund from which services can be commissioned, and the potential of pooling should be fully explored in order to deliver the joint commissioning strategy of the children's trust partners. As national Local Area Agreement policy develops, children's trust partners should also consider utilising their potential to strengthen joint planning and commissioning arrangements through receiving centrally pooled funding via a Local Area Agreement.

2.49 The purpose and scope of pooled funds should be agreed at the outset and then used to pay for the jointly commissioned service. Regardless of the levels of contributions partners commit to the pool, the budget must be used on the agreed services. This promotes the focus on users' requirements rather than organisational patterns and ensures appropriate financial accountability for services' use of funds. Pooling funds under formal agreement strengthens the bonds of partnership working.

2.50 Children's trust pathfinder areas are developing arrangements for pooling funds and resources. Further information on pooling, drawing on their work, is available from the Every Child Matters website at <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>.

2.51 YOTs can jointly commission and pool budgets with other partners for the benefit of children at risk of offending and those involved in the youth justice system. The decision on commissioning and pooling will rest with the head of service of the YOT.

2.52 Partners may also pool staff, goods, accommodation or other non-pecuniary resources. This might include providing a site on which to establish a co-located service, or contributing a member of staff to work as part of a multi-agency team.

Inter-agency governance: leadership, partnerships and clear accountability

2.53 Robust inter-agency governance arrangements are essential to drive the change processes and to create the framework for a new way of working. Effective partnership working needs to be sustainable and embedded, with supporting structures and processes which maintain the momentum of change and set a clear direction of travel. The key elements of inter-agency governance arrangements will be:

- *effective leadership* by the local authority;
- full engagement of all *key partners*, including the voluntary and community sectors;
- clear accountability; and
- relationships built on trust, a shared vision and a determination to improve outcomes for children.

2.54 Children's trusts will require strong governance, in particular a powerful integrated governing board or structure through which senior representatives of all key partner organisations can give strategic leadership and direction, and drive through change. Successfully creating such arrangements is not sufficient in itself to constitute a children's trust. But the creation of strong governance arrangements must be central to the trajectory of change.

2.55 In developing governance arrangements, local partners will need to consider whether it is appropriate to build on existing partnership structures such as Children and Young Peoples Strategic Partnerships. Partners should also consider whether the adoption of a children's trust governance model offers opportunities for rationalising existing governance arrangements.

Leadership

2.56 The local authority must lead on developing the co-operation arrangements in their local area, bringing together other partners to achieve radical change and improvement, and championing the interests of children and young people. In doing so it should involve key stakeholders at an early stage, thereby permitting them to establish appropriate forms of representation where required and mechanisms for keeping a wider body of partners engaged.

2.57 Within the local authority, the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the Lead Member for Children's Services have the lead role in establishing and maintaining the inter-agency governance arrangements required by section 10 of the Children Act 2004. The DCS also has a crucial role to play in ensuring that there is clear leadership at all levels within the local authority; similar clear leadership will be needed in all partner agencies. This is particularly important where practitioners are working in new and more challenging environments – especially within newly emerging integrated services and multi-agency teams.

2.58 It is vital therefore that all those who have a responsibility to lead and manage such multi-agency services have the skills, knowledge and competences to carry out these challenging roles effectively. National qualifications for those leading integrated services are currently in development alongside a clear framework to enable managers and practitioners to gain the necessary knowledge and skills. Through the co-operation arrangements the DCS will want to ensure that those tasked with leading and managing integrated services have access to such learning and appropriate developmental opportunities.

Key partners

2.59 The exact configuration of children's trust governance arrangements are a matter for local discretion and will need to take into account the implications of partner agencies' geographical boundaries, many of which may not be shared. Each set of arrangements will therefore be different, and should take account of local needs and priorities. They will all, however, need to clarify the reporting lines to the local authority and the boards of all the relevant partners.

2.60 Governance arrangements must include the 'relevant' partners outlined in paragraph 1.16 (section 10 (4) Children Act 2004). The local authority should also include other bodies involved in work relating to children, young people and their families. Which agencies are covered will vary with local circumstances, but to ensure wide ownership of the arrangements the partners should seek representation from the following¹⁰:

- voluntary and community sector agencies and private sector bodies working with children and young people (e.g. childcare providers, culture, sport and play organisations). Where participating organisations are understood to be representing a wider body of interested parties, it will be important that representatives both report to those they are representing and are able to be instructed and informed by them. Where existing infrastructure to

¹⁰ Bodies brought into the arrangements in this way will not be under a statutory duty to co-operate with the local authority in making the arrangements

accommodate representation does not exist, the authority will need to consider how best representation can be achieved and what support they can offer to facilitate representation;

- young people and their families, either through the direct representation, or through some form of advocacy arrangement. Participation from children and young people should also reflect local diversity in the community and include the input of service users, for example disabled children;
- schools, including special schools, which will be expected to work with the children's trust partners through appropriate co-operation arrangements. A head teacher of a large extended school may be well-placed to participate in the children's trust governance arrangements directly; others may be represented by a delegate; or through an umbrella body. Some schools may simply express their views through consultation exercises;
- other agencies with responsibility for delivering front-line statutory services to children, young people and their families, e.g. , colleges, General Practitioners, faith organisations and Job Centre Plus;
- agencies such as the Immigration Service, which may come into contact with children, young people and families on a regular basis.

2.61 The local authority should establish clear and transparent arrangements for determining which other bodies form part of the inter-agency governance arrangements.

2.62 Further information on partners is in Appendix 2 of this guidance.

Accountability

2.63 The local authority should establish a framework of accountability and seek to ensure that all of the partners are clear about their roles and responsibilities within the local arrangements. The level of representation on central boards and participating bodies needs to be appropriate to the strategic-level nature of the arrangements. Representatives should be in a position to make decisions and commitments on behalf of their organisations, particularly on service collaboration and funding.

2.64 Local accountability frameworks should support decision making and provide clarity about how the governance arrangements interact with and support other related partnerships, for example Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership or Foundation Partnerships. Over time, the aim will be to migrate other partnerships, such as Children's Fund Partnerships, into the children's trust.

Section 3: Conclusion



3.1 Children's trusts will lead the way in delivering a step change in services for children and young people. They will bring together a range of partners, including agencies of consequence to children and young people that are not under a duty to co-operate, in order to integrate the planning and commissioning of child and family-centred services. The focus on inter-agency working makes children's trusts the key means of delivering services personalised to a child or young person's needs.

3.2 Partners, working through children's trust arrangements, will:

- understand the local supply and demand for children's services, engaging children and their families and the wider community;
- joint commission from statutory, voluntary, community and private sector partners; and
- involve front-line deliverers of services, helping them meet the full range of children and young people's needs and to increasingly provide targeted support and early intervention within universal settings.

3.3 Improved outcomes are more likely to be delivered if people work together and focus on the child or young person as a whole. So the essential features for child-centred service provision are: integrating front-line services; integrating processes; integrating strategy, within an inter-agency governance framework; and the appropriate use of significant pooled budgets to support integrated services. The transition requires significant change in culture and working practices at every level and will need to be developed while maintaining and improving services.

3.4 Each locality is unique, and local partners are best placed to determine the right starting point for their change programmes. But all the essential features need to be put in place and, taken together, improve outcomes for all children, young people and families in the local area, within the framework and direction of travel set by Every Child Matters.

Appendix 1: Other related documents and guidance



1.1 A range of statutory and non-statutory guidance documents aimed at supporting the implementation of the Children Act 2004 and related policy are to be produced. The scope of these documents and approximate date of issue is described below. The Every Child Matters (ECM) website has copies many of these documents listed below. The ECM website can be found at www.everychildmatters.gov.uk.

Statutory Guidance

Duty to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (July 2005)

1.2 Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on a range of public sector bodies to make arrangements for ensuring that their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The aim of the duty is to evaluate the priority given to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by those organisations and encourage them to incorporate this in their objectives and priorities, thus improving safeguards for all children, particularly the most vulnerable.

1.3 The guidance will be in two parts. The first focuses on the legislative requirements, the timetable for implementation and sets out the overarching principles underlying the work of all the agencies named in Section 11 of the Act. The second part describes how these agencies will make arrangements to carry out this new duty.

Safeguarding children in education (September 2004)

1.4 This guidance relates to the duty on LEAs, schools of all kinds and further education institutions to have arrangements for carrying out their functions with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It also updates and replaces the existing guidance about the organisation of child protection arrangements in the education service that is contained in *Circular 10/95: Protecting Children from Abuse: The Role of the Education Service*.

The guidance covers:

- the effect of the duty to have arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children introduced by section 175 of the Education Act 2002;

- the infrastructure and arrangements that need to be in place to ensure that people in the education service have the skills, means and training necessary to ensure children and young people are protected from harm.

Available from <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/socialcare/>

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (December 2005)

1.5 Sections 13 to 16 of the Children Act 2004 require local authorities to establish Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs). Key local agencies will be required to participate in LSCBs as Board partners. *Working Together to Safeguard Children: a guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children* will provide a national framework within which LSCBs can draw up and agree their own ways of working together. The guidance is due to be published in December 2005. The duty commences on 1 April 2006 and all LSCBs must be in place by this date.

1.6 The guidance, together with LSCB regulations, will provide clarity about:

- the role and functions of LSCBs;
- LSCB accountability;
- membership – securing the right representation of relevant organisations;
- key ways of working;
- new child death review processes.

Information Sharing Databases/Indexes (2006-07)

1.7 Section 12 of the Children Act 2004 gives powers to the Secretary of State to make Regulations to require local authorities or another specified body to establish and operate databases or Indexes of information about all children. These Indexes will facilitate contact between professionals about individual children.

1.8 Detailed statutory guidance and directions will be issued to support the establishment and operation of these Indexes, including arrangements for management, technical specifications, security aspects, transferring and cross matching data and advice on data protection rights.

The roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services (April 2005)

1.9 Sections 18 and 19 of the Children Act 2004 place new duties on every local authority in England to appoint an officer as their Director of Children's Services and to designate an elected member as their Lead Member for Children's Services. Guidance explaining the legislative provisions as well as the roles and their associated responsibilities was issued on 5 April 2005 and can be downloaded at <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>.

Duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children (Autumn 2005)

1.10 Section 52 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children. The duty – which comes into force on 1 July 2005 – means that, as their corporate parent, local authorities must give particular attention to the educational implications of any decisions about the welfare of all children looked after by them, including those placed out-of-authority.

1.11 The statutory guidance sets out the implications for an authority's strategic planning in relation to the role of the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member and, where appropriate, its Children and Young People's Plan. It also describes what joint area reviews will be looking for to ensure that services deliver positive outcomes for looked after children, as well as what the duty means for local authorities in terms of its implementation on a day-to-day basis. Available from <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>.

Other related publications

Every Child Matters (2003)

1.12 A core document which sets out a national, long-term programme of change. This document summarises the five outcomes we want to see for children and young people, sets common expectations for all those who work with children and young people, and explains how the Government will support local change and sets out a timeline of future developments.

Every Child Matters: Change for Children (December 2004)

1.13 This document launches a national programme of change, 'Every Child Matters: Change for Children', setting out the action local areas will want to take to ensure that services meet the needs of children, young people and families and what Government will do to support local areas.

1.14 Documents explaining what Every Child Matters means for schools, social care, health and the Criminal Justice System are also available at <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>.

National Service Framework for Children Young People and Maternity Services (2004)

1.15 *The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services* (Children's National Service Framework) is a 10 year programme intended to stimulate long-term and sustained improvement in children's health. It aims to ensure fair, high quality and integrated health and social care from pregnancy, right through to adulthood.

1.16 The NSF is a 'developmental standard' within the NHS Standards Framework set out in *National Standards Local Action*, the key planning document for the 2005-08 period. It sets national standards for the first time for children's health and social care, which promote high quality, women and child-centred services and personal care that meets the needs of parents, children and their families. The NSF embodies the Every Child Matters commitment to change services for children and young people so that they are designed and delivered around the needs of children and families using those services. Successful delivery will depend on the local authority and other partners as well as on health organisations. Children's trusts will therefore need to ensure that the delivery of the NSF is fully reflected in their work.

Department for Education and Skills: Five-year Strategy for Children and Learners (July 2004)

1.17 This Strategy summarises central government's plans for Early Years, Primary & Secondary Schools, 14-19 education and training, adult skills and higher education. It outlines the principles for the reforms and the expected outcomes. It involves expansion of a number of existing programmes and maintains central government's commitment to produce fewer new initiatives, focusing instead on supporting a system which increasingly drives its own improvement. The programme is backed by a big increase in resources and guaranteed three-year budgets for schools.

1.18 The Strategy outlines how the Department will change to enable the planned transformation, focusing particularly on ways to reduce bureaucracy and increase flexibility in the system, to raise the skills of the workforces which impact on children and learners, and improve partnership working, leadership and technical support. More information and copies of the strategy are available at <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/5yearstrategy>.

Guidance on the Children and Young People's Plan (July 2005)

1.19 Guidance to support local authorities and their partners preparing the Children and Young People's Plan sets out the scope and main elements of the plan, explaining the requirements of the Regulations.

Every Child Matters: Change for Children – Young People and Drugs (2005)

1.20 This document sets out how those responsible for delivering children and young peoples' services and the national drugs strategy should co-operate and plan holistic responses to young people who are using or are otherwise affected by drug misuse. It is available from <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>.

Choice for parents, the best start for children: 10 Year Strategy for Childcare (December 2004)

1.21 *Choice for parents, the best start for children: A Ten-year Strategy for Childcare* sets out its commitment to invest in childcare, early education and work life balance so that families are able to secure the best start in life for their children. The goal is for all parents to have access to good quality early education and childcare for their children and for childcare provision to be flexible, good quality, affordable and accessible, fitting into the lives of families.

1.22 The strategy builds on the work that Sure Start local programmes and early excellence centres have established in many areas. It represents a major central government commitment to ensuring that these services are available to all children and families. More information is available at <http://www.surestart.gov.uk/aboutsurestart/>

Working with voluntary and community organisations to deliver change for children and young people (December 2004)

1.23 This strategy establishes a framework within which local authorities, other public sector partners at national, regional and local level, and voluntary and community organisations can work together to improve outcomes for children and young people. It sets out what the

Department for Education and Skills will do to strengthen its national relationship with voluntary organisations that work with children, young people and families. It explains what the Government is doing, through the Every Child Matters: Change for Children programme, to support effective engagement with voluntary and community organisations at the local level. It is available to download or order from <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>.

Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People – (CAF) (April 2005)

1.24 The CAF will provide a common approach to needs assessment that can be used by the whole children's workforce, whether they are in universal or specialist services, for any child in need of support. The CAF aims to provide a non-bureaucratic 'whole child' assessment, enabling the practitioner to make a decision about how far they themselves can meet the needs and who else needs to be involved.

1.25 Introduction of the CAF should reduce the number of assessments that an individual child or young person undergoes by improving the quality of referrals between agencies and by enabling information to follow the child. Where a number of agencies and practitioners are involved, they should all have access to CAF information rather than gathering their own. This should reduce the scale of what is required under any specialist assessment.

1.26 The CAF consists of a:

- simple **pre-assessment checklist** to help practitioners identify children who would benefit from a common assessment. The checklist can be used on its own or alongside specialist universal assessments, such as those done by midwives and health visitors;
- **process for undertaking a common assessment**, to help practitioners gather and understand information about the needs and strengths of the child, based on discussions with the child, their family and other practitioners as appropriate;
- **standard form** to help practitioners record, and, where appropriate, share with others, the findings from the assessment in terms that are helpful in working with the family to find a response to unmet needs.

1.27 The CAF documents published on 1 April, 2005 are available at <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/>.

Information Sharing (from March 2005)

1.28 The Government is making available a range of material to support agencies and practitioners on information sharing. It is important that there is a common understanding of how information sharing arrangements should operate and how practitioners should share information on a day-to-day basis. In advance of statutory guidance on information sharing indexes the Government action includes:

- national benchmarks to apply to information sharing arrangements within and between agencies;

- good practice exemplar materials on the DfES Information Sharing and Assessment community website. Access to this website is through local authority ISA Project Managers;
- cross-government guidance for practitioners on the legal framework to, and good practice in, sharing information about individual children and young people. This will be applicable across children's services. (Due December 2005).

Lead Professional Good Practice Guidance (July 2005)

1.29 The guidance is aimed at operational managers and senior officers to support the successful development and implementation of the Lead Professional role. It sets out a broad framework of the key responsibilities, skills and knowledge required by practitioners to carry out this function and draws together key themes from areas currently developing the lead professional role; emerging models, working solutions and suggestions on how the role might be developed, implemented and managed in practice.

Multi-agency Working Toolkit (May 2005)

1.30 A web based resource (<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>) will provide support to middle managers and practitioners in developing multi-agency working at operational level. It will highlight examples of good practice and provide guidance on a number of operational challenges including: developing vision and purpose; recruitment; developing policies; development & training; management & supervision; case management systems; monitoring and evaluation; and working with universal services.

Children's Trusts (various release dates)

1.31 In addition to the information on children's trusts contained within this publication, further guidance will include:

- a technical toolkit of guidance and information to assist local partners in developing a children's trust. This is already available on the Every Child Matters website <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>
- emerging practice evidence to help the implementation of key parts of a children's trust by showing different ways that functions are being successfully implemented in local areas. These will be available on <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk> from July 2005;
- findings from the national evaluation of children's trusts pathfinders led by the University of East Anglia in partnership with the National Children's Bureau. The first findings were published October 2004 and subsequent reports will follow in 2005, 2006 and 2007;
- a series of 'questions and answer' guides, providing implementation guidance on key aspects of children's trust development and delivery;
- a five year vision for children's services joint planning and commissioning will be published on www.everychildmatters.gov.uk in Autumn 2005.

The Children's Workforce Strategy: a strategy to build a world-class workforce for children and young people

1.32 This strategy was published for consultation on 1 April 2005. It sets out the Government's vision of a workforce that:

- is competent and confident;
- people aspire to be part of and want to remain in – where they can develop their skills and build satisfying and rewarding careers; and
- parents, carers, children and young people trust and respect.

1.33 The strategy identifies and addresses four key challenges facing the workforce:

- recruitment into the workforce;
- retention and development of the workforce;
- strengthening inter-agency and multi-disciplinary working; and
- promoting stronger leadership, management and supervision of the workforce.

1.34 To tackle these, the Strategy includes proposals to develop – nationally – a single qualifications framework to improve career pathways and progression opportunities for the workforce and looks to Local Authorities to work with partners to develop *locally relevant workforce strategies*. These strategies, which will need to address skills and career development to take account of local need and local circumstance, including the constraints of the local labour market, should form an integral part of the Children and Young People's Plan.

1.35 The strategy makes clear that there are urgent issues to be addressed in specific sub-sectors of the workforce:

- in the early years – to deliver the Government's 10 year childcare strategy; and
- in social care and foster care – to improve the stability and quality of the workforce.

1.36 It also recognises the paramount contribution of staff in the universal services of health and education and the need for continued close-working with and full involvement of the voluntary and community sector.

1.37 The Government will publish a response to the consultation – which closes on 22 July 2005 – later this year, to include an implementation plan.

Guide to Promote a Shared Understanding of the Benefits of Managed Local Networks (2005)

1.38 Managed local networks are defined in the National Service Framework as: 'linked groups of health professionals and organisations from primary, secondary and tertiary care, and social services and other services working together in a co-ordinated manner'.

1.39 Children's trusts will lead the planning, commissioning and delivery of integrated children's services for a local area across health, education, social care and other partners. Children's trusts are the embodiment of the 'duty to co-operate' to improve outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; this duty applies to – among others – PCTs and Local Authorities. Managed local networks as described in the document will often take forward workstreams that form part of a children's trust's programme of work set out in the Children and Young People Plan (CYPP) for the local area, and will therefore need to ensure a good strategic fit with the CYPP. Managed networks will often cover a wider geographical area than the local area for the children's trust and will help to ensure that for some specialisms- such as neo-natal intensive care- commissioning is structured at the best scale. In these cases, there may well also be a need to establish strong links with the relevant children's trusts. The guide is available from <http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/>

Extended Schools

1.40 An introduction to *Extended Schools: Providing Opportunities to All*, provides guidance for schools, local authorities and others who are looking to set up extended services directly under the powers of the Education Act 2002. This includes information on legal, financial and practical issues. The *Extended Schools: Access to opportunities and services to all* – A Prospectus sets out the Government's vision on extended schools and advises schools on how they can develop additional services. It contains short case studies, good practice tips, questions and answers and signposting for further information. Both the Guidance and the Prospectus are available from <http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/extendedschools>

Children's Centres

1.41 *Developing Integrated Services for Young Children and Their Families* sets out local authorities' responsibilities for working with key partners to develop children's centres offering integrated services for children under five and their families. A series of implementation updates have been produced available at <http://www.surestart.gov.uk/surestartservices/settings/surestartchildrenscentres/implementationplans/>. A consolidated version of children's centre guidance will be available early in summer 2005.

Framework for the Inspection of Children's Services (June 2005)

1.42 Section 21 of the Children Act 2004 provides that a Framework set out the principles to be applied by an inspectorate or commission assessing any children's service. The purpose is to ensure that all assessments consider the extent to which the service contributes to improving the wellbeing of children and young people. This Framework, which will be available from [July] 2005 (<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk>), is being prepared by Ofsted in consultation with other inspectorates and commissions and other relevant bodies, and requires the consent of the Secretary of State.

Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce (April 2005)

1.43 The aim of the *Common Core of Skills and Knowledge for the Children's Workforce* is to set out those areas of expertise that everyone working with children, young people and families (including those who work as volunteers) should, depending upon the nature of the work, be able to demonstrate at an appropriate level. The essential skills and knowledge required are described under six areas.

1.44 The Common Core provides a set of common values for the children's workforce that will help all professionals develop the necessary child-centred approach, promote equality and diversity and challenge stereotypes to enable all children and young people to reach their full potential and achieve the outcomes identified in *Every Child Matters*. Over time the DfES expects the Common Core to be embedded within National Occupational Standards and qualifications frameworks and used it as a tool to support continuing professional development and training. Further information on the Common Core is available at <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>.

Appendix 2: Inter-agency partners



2.1 This appendix briefly describes the relevance to children's trusts of a number of essential and likely partners. It also highlights the partners' planning and guidance documents of greatest significance to the co-operation arrangements.

Local Authority

2.2 In its community leadership capacity, county and unitary local authorities which also become children's services authorities under the Children Act 2004 will need to work with a variety of agencies and organisations in order to improve outcomes in the five priority areas. Authorities will also ensure their constituent departments work together to achieve a coherent, whole agency approach. Relevant departments include education, children's social services, regeneration, lifelong learning, the youth service and, in unitary authorities, housing and leisure. The activities of these departments will need to be co-ordinated within the Children and Young People's Plan, which in turn should be consistent with the community strategy.

2.3 Children's trust arrangements should include a means of ensuring that strategic-level decision making is fully informed by the experiences of those at the front-line. Securing the participation of staff from different levels within the organisation will require clear channels of communication and, where appropriate, information and training. Co-ordination with the front line delivery bodies, including schools will be essential.

Planning documents and other associated guidance:

Preparing Community Strategies: government guidance to local authorities, Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions, (2000). http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_localgov/documents/page/odpm_locgov_605670.hcsp

A New Commitment to Neighbourhood Renewal: National Strategy Action Plan, Cabinet Office, (2001). <http://www.socialexclusionunit.gov.uk/page.asp?id=92>

Creating Opportunities: Guidance for the Development of Local Cultural Strategies in England, Department of Culture Media and Sport, (2000). http://www.culture.gov.uk/global/publications/archive_2000

Sure Start Guidance, 2004-2006, Sure Start Unit, Department for Education and Skills, (2003).
<http://www.surestart.gov.uk/publications/>

The relevant partners

2.4 The agencies that are named in the Children Act 2004 as 'relevant partners' have a reciprocal statutory duty to co-operate in making the arrangements with the local authority. They are the key universal agencies that exist in every local authority area and as such will command substantial budgets and have strategic level plans which inform commissioning and delivery of services that are integral to the co-operation arrangements. All are fully committed to the five outcomes for children and will wish to play their part in improving wellbeing.

District Councils

2.5 In areas where there is a county and a district council, it is the county council that is the local authority with responsibility for overseeing the co-operation arrangements. The district council will have a reciprocal duty to co-operate in the arrangements in the same way as other 'relevant partners'.

2.6 District councils are responsible for a range of functions of significance to children's trusts, including planning, play and leisure, environmental health and housing. The housing issues of greatest relevance are those concerning housing support packages for children and young people, prevention of homelessness, the allocation of housing, the exercise of housing choice, the housing needs of unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people, the identification by housing staff of child protection and welfare issues, the planning of new schools and homes, and the need for joint training and workforce development.

2.7 District councils must engage with the children's trust to ensure that they contribute to the local vision and strategy for meeting the five outcomes. By doing so, they will also be contributing to the alignment of services across the tiers of local government and to the development of the Children and Young People's Plan.

Planning documents and other associated guidance:

Homelessness Code of Guidance

http://www.odpm.gov.uk/stellent/groups/odpm_control/documents/contentservertemplate/odpm_index.hcst?n=869&l=3

Care leaving strategies – A good practice handbook

http://www.dfes.gov.uk/qualityprotects/pdfs/care_strategies.pdf

Police & Police Authorities

2.8 A police authority is an independent body with the responsibility to ensure that there is an efficient and effective local police force that gives best value to local people. The police authority sets the strategic direction for the force and holds the chief constable to account for the policing service delivered. Each police authority usually comprises 17 members made up of 9 local councillors, 5 independent members, and 3 magistrate members.

Planning documents and other associated guidance:

The overall strategic direction for the police service both for the medium term and the year ahead is established by the annual National Policing Plan (NPP). Beneath this are two local planning documents which will need to be consistent with the local vision for children and strategic actions set out in the Children and Young People's Plan:

Three Year Strategy Plans – this sets out the long term and medium term strategies for the policing of the area. It includes local targets that set out the force's contribution to national targets.

Local Policing Plan – the annual local policing plan sets out the police authority's expectations of the local police force, what it is expected to deliver in the year ahead in terms of both national and local policing priorities; the resources available for doing so; and how the force's performance will be measure and judged. The local policing plan is also the key document through which the police authority communicates to local people what they can expect from the police service. The local policing plan must be consistent with the authority's three year strategy plan, have regard to general guidance issued by the Home Secretary and the views of local communities.

A copy of the annual NPP can be found at
<http://www.policereform.gov.uk/nationalpolicingplan05.html>

National Offender Management Service (NOMS) – Probation Service

2.9 The Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 established the National Probation Service (NPS) for England and Wales and a local probation board for every area. The probation and prison services have since been joined to form NOMS. Within NOMS, the probation service has the following aims: protecting the public; reducing re-offending; and rehabilitating offenders.

2.10 As part of its work to minimise the impact of crime on communities, the probation service is already engaged in multi-agency working arrangements: the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA). MAPPA was established under the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000 (updated by the Criminal Justice Act 2003, sections 325/327) and provides a statutory framework for inter agency co-operation in assessing and managing violent and sex offenders.

2.11 Probation boards are able to work with the local authority and partner agencies to contribute strategic priorities for children and young people and deliver improved outcomes through the Children and Young People's Plan.

Planning documents and other associated guidance:

The Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) Guidance: Probation circular 25/2003, National Probation Directorate, Home Office, (2003).

<http://www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/output/Page30.asp>

National Probation Service for England and Wales Business Plan 2005-2006.

http://www.probation.homeoffice.gov.uk/files/pdf/NPD_BusinessPlan.pdf

Youth Offending Teams

2.12 Youth offending teams (YOTs) are multi agency teams with pooled budgets made up of representatives from the police, probation service, social services, health, and education; and, at local discretion, other relevant services such as drugs and alcohol misuse and housing. They are executive bodies specialising in tackling youth crime and dealing with young offenders. They serve the courts and are part of the criminal justice system as well as being a children's service. They identify suitable programmes to help prevent further offending for each young offender and undertake work to prevent children and young people offending in the first instance.

2.13 YOTs will have an important role to play in local partnership arrangements. In order to deliver the outcomes for children and young people, they and the Local Authorities with responsibility for establishing them, with the co-operation of other partners, will need to continue to discharge their statutory functions under sections 38-40 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 – including services to Courts, dealing with offenders and submitting Youth Justice Plans. The annual Youth Justice Plan will need to be aligned with the Children and Young People's Plan.

2.14 YOTs can jointly commission and pool budgets with other partners for the benefit of children at risk of offending and those involved in the youth justice system. The decision on commissioning and pooling will be with the head of service of the YOT.

Planning documents and other associated guidance:

Youth Offending Teams: Sustaining the Success, Youth Justice Board, (2004). <http://www.youth-justice-board.gov.uk>

Inter-departmental circular on establishing Youth Offending Teams, Home Office, Department of Health, Welsh Office and Department for Education and Employment, (1998). <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs/yotcirc2.html>

Youth Justice – The statutory principal aim of preventing offending by children and young people – Framework Document, The Home Office, The Lord Chancellor's Department, The Attorney General's Office, The Department of Health, The Department for Education and Employment, The Welsh Office, (1998). <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/docs/youjust.html>

Strategic Health Authority and Primary Care Trust

2.15 Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) and Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) have a key role in ensuring the provision of health services to meet the needs of the population. They have a central role in delivering all five outcomes and must be closely involved with the children's trust arrangements at all levels.

2.16 Both SHAs and PCTs have responsibility for identifying health needs and ensuring provision in line with the priorities they identify for children, young people and their families as part of their wider remit towards the health of the community as whole. In addition to their duty under section 10 of the Children Act 2004, section 22 of the 1977 National Health Service Act (as amended by the 1999 Health Act) places them under a duty to co-operate with local

authorities to 'secure and advance the health and welfare of the people of England and Wales' a subset of whom are children.

2.17 SHAs manage the National Health Service (NHS) locally and are responsible for improving health services in their local areas.. SHAs should ensure that the approach to managing children's services across local partner organisations is consistent and that this is reflected in organisational and joint plans, including the Children and Young People's Plan. SHAs should also help PCTs to recognise the relevance and importance of achieving both the standards held in the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services, and the Every Child Matters outcomes. SHAs should ensure that PCTs are actively working towards meeting these objectives.

2.18 PCTs are responsible for commissioning and some provision of health services in local areas. They work with local authorities and other agencies that provide health and social care to make sure the community's needs are being met. PCTs receive 75% of the NHS budget and have responsibility for ensuring sufficient, accessible services are available. In addition to aligning their business plans with those of the local authority, they will need to identify what proportion of their budgets are used to provide services for children and consider how they can best contribute to pooled budgets and joint commissioning. PCTs commission primary care services using a number of different contracts. Drawing upon these contracts and other mechanisms such as training and development, PCTs will be able to ensure the engagement of primary care providers, including general practitioners, in the arrangements made in partnership locally under section 10 of the Act.

Planning documents and other associated guidance:

The four documents listed below can be found at:
<http://www.dh.gov.uk/PublicationsAndStatistics/fs/en>

National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services, Department of Health, (2004).

The NHS Improvement Plan: Putting people at the heart of public services, Department of Health, (2004).

National Standards, Local Action – Health and Social Care Standards and Planning Framework 2005/6 – 2007/8, Department of Health, (2004).

Improvement, expansion and reform – the next 3 years: priorities and the planning framework 2003 – 2006, Department of Health, (2002).

Agencies responsible for providing services under section 114 of the Learning & Skills Act 2000 – The Connexions Service

2.19 The Learning and Skills Act 2000 section 114 gives the Secretary of State a power to provide or secure the provision of services which will encourage, enable or assist (directly or indirectly) effective participation by young persons in education or training and should consult

a range of local stakeholders before providing or securing this provision. Those stakeholders named in the Act include the local authority, Health Authority, chief officer of police, police authority, probation committee, youth offending team, Primary Care Trust and the voluntary and community sectors. This power is currently carried out by the Secretary of State through Connexions Partnerships. The Secretary of State also carries out through Connexions the statutory duty, under section 140 of the Learning and Skills Act, to arrange an assessment for a young person with a statement of special educational needs, who is intending to continue in education or training beyond statutory school age.

2.20 Connexions is based on a multi-agency, multi-disciplinary approach in which services are wrapped around the individual (aged 13-19 years or up to 24 in instances where the individual has LDD). A joint planning protocol exists between Connexions Partnerships and Local Learning & Skills Councils with the aim of helping these key partners develop effective arrangements for the provision of local services. As an established multi-agency way of working, Connexions is well-placed to be delivered within the broader and more strategic children's trust arrangements.

2.21 Connexions Partnerships have to-date undertaken the mapping of need, data collection, strategic planning and commissioning of services for teenagers in their area. This will provide a useful and detailed basis for, assessing need, pooling budgets and joint commissioning for young people within the children's trusts arrangements.

2.22 Connexions Partnerships have to-date produced business plans that set out the key goals and how they will be fulfilled in particular in relation to meeting targets to reduce the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). The local vision for children and strategic actions set out in the Children and Young People's Plan should be consistent with and build on this Connexions work, reflecting the broader actions partners need to take to deliver NEET reductions.

Planning documents and other associated guidance:

Connexions Service Business Planning Guidance, Department for Education and Skills, (annual publication). <http://www.connexions.gov.uk/partnerships/index.cfm>

Learning and Skills Council

2.23 The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) was set up under the Learning and Skills Act 2000, and has statutory responsibility for planning, funding and improving the quality of post-16 education and training, up to but not including higher education, in England. It is a single unitary body which operates through 47 local arms, known as local LSCs.

2.24 The LSC is a key player in planning and commissioning services for young people in the locality. It has significant funding powers and extensive networking and brokering skills, with cross-agency links at national, regional and local level. The LSC also has an important role in helping to improve the skills and supply of the children's workforce (up to level 3).

2.25 The LSC will work to ensure that its local strategic plans are closely aligned with the local Children and Young People's Plan, and it will also help to bring a specific focus on "older" young people and provide an important link with employers.

Planning documents and other associated guidance:

LSC Corporate Plan to 2006, LSC Business Plan (for appropriate year); and Local LSC equivalent can be found on the LSC website at <http://www.lsc.gov.uk>

Other partners

2.26 There are a diverse range of other organisations which local authorities will need to work with in developing and maintaining effective partnership arrangements. The involvement of these will vary between local areas, but in order to reflect the overall contribution to children's wellbeing the local authority should include frontline service providers, especially schools, and representatives from the voluntary, community and private sectors e.g. youth work providers, culture, sports and play organisations.

2.27 Unlike the 'relevant partners' these agencies have no statutory duty to co-operate with the arrangements. The local authority should consider how best these varied partners can be represented and seek to build capacity where needed to facilitate appropriate engagement, e.g. for the voluntary and community sectors.

Children, young people and families

2.28 Partners in a children's trust should ensure the views of children, young people and their families are taken into account. They may wish to seek support from local voluntary and community organisations with experience of embedding the views of children and young people in their working. Children's Fund, Youth Services and Connexions Partnerships have embedded participation in their working and are also useful sources of expertise.

Associated guidance:

Building a Culture of Participation: Involving children and young people in policy, service planning, delivery and evaluation, NCB and PK Research Consultancy, published by DfES, (2003). <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/>

The DfES is funding the development of a *Virtual Participation Practice Centre* which aims to build the capacity of organisations to involve children and young people in the way they work and in what they deliver. The project will develop new resources on networking and standards, create a central web access point for information, resources and best practice, and coordinate a Strategic Participation Board of key stakeholders to develop a national strategy around the participation of children and young people. This work is being led by National Children's Bureau (NBC), Carnegie Young People's Initiative and the National Youth Agency. Further information about the project is available on the NCB website at <http://www.ncb.org.uk>.

Hear by Right: Standards for the active involvement of children and young people, The National Youth Agency, (2003). <http://www.nya.org.uk>

Schools, City Technology Colleges, Academies, Further Education Colleges and Work-Based Learning Providers

2.29 Schools are central to delivering the five outcomes for children. They provide the main universal service for children over 4 years, with school staff having prolonged and regular personal contact with them. As such, the potential of schools to affect positive change, through employing new ways of working is immense and schools will need to play a key role within the children's trust arrangements. Schools vary in size and capacity to engage directly in partnership forums so local authorities will need to employ a range of different strategies to engage schools in strategic planning. A head teacher of a large extended school may be well-placed to engage with the co-operation arrangements directly, others may be represented by a delegate or through an umbrella body. Others may simply express their views through a consultation exercise.

2.30 If the needs of all children in the locality are to be taken into account, local authorities should ensure that they engage all schools and colleges in their area, including Academies, City Technology Colleges, FE Colleges and those in the independent sector. As the main providers of apprenticeships and the E2E work based learning programme, work-based learning providers will also be important partners in addressing the Every Child Matters outcome 'achieve economic well-being'.

Primary Care Providers

2.31 For many children, primary care is the entry point into children's service provision, involving universal services with the potential to impact upon the wellbeing of all children registered with the primary care practices. To ensure that GPs and other primary care professionals are connected in an effective way with the arrangements made in partnership locally under section 10 of the Act, the PCT will need to ensure their engagement. PCTs commission primary care services using a number of different contracts. PCTs will be able to ensure the engagement of primary care providers, including general practitioners, by drawing upon these contracts and other mechanisms such as training and development. This means both ensuring their participation in developing the arrangements and active involvement in joint actions agreed as local priorities.

NHS Trusts and Foundation Trusts

2.32 Hospitals are managed by NHS Trusts (also known as Acute Trusts), which make sure that hospitals provide high quality health care and that they spend their money efficiently. They also decide on a strategy for how the hospital and allied children's community health services will develop so that services improve. NHS Trusts, which include Mental Health Trusts, are accountable to Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) for their performance and can be directed by central government.

2.33 NHS Foundation Trusts are a new type of NHS organisation established as independent Public Benefit Corporations. NHS Foundation Trusts are firmly part of the NHS and their primary purpose is to provide NHS care to NHS patients – that is free, based on need not ability to pay – according to national standards. However, NHS Foundation Trusts are controlled locally, not

nationally, and therefore are not subject to performance management by SHAs and cannot be directed from Whitehall. Instead, as commissioners of NHS services, Primary Care Trusts are responsible for holding NHS Foundation Trusts accountable for service delivery.

2.34 To ensure that local secondary care organisations and professionals are connected with the arrangements made under section 10 of the Children Act 2004 in an effective way, the PCT and SHA will need to ensure that local NHS Trusts and NHS Foundation Trusts are also engaged in the arrangements for co-operation. This means both ensuring their participation in developing the arrangements for co-operation and their active involvement in joint actions agreed as local priorities.

Voluntary and community sector

2.35 Voluntary and community organisations have significant expertise to offer in working with children, young people and families, particularly in reaching the wider community, identifying unmet needs, involving users in service delivery and developing innovative practice. In many areas, the sector is also a major provider of services, funding source and employer of the children's workforce. Co-operation arrangements will therefore, be most effective if they include voluntary and community organisations at all levels – not only as service providers, but also in strategy development, service planning and commissioning. The local authority should ensure that certain voluntary and community sector partners are able to participate in co-operation arrangements on the same basis as better-resourced partners by taking a strategic approach to supporting capacity building activity and infrastructure provision.

2.36 The Compact on relations between Government and the voluntary and community sector in England, its associated Codes of Practice and the guidelines for Local Compacts provide a framework within which local relationships with the voluntary and community sector should be developed. Preserving voluntary and community organisations' independence, and role as voice for children, young people and families, is particularly important. The local authority should also ensure that representation is sensitive to the diversity and complexity of the sectors and representatives are selected in an appropriate and transparent manner. This includes the representation of faith groups.

Associated guidance:

Every Child Matters: Change for Children – Working with voluntary and community organisations to deliver change for children and young people, Department for Education and Skills, (2004)
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>

Compact on Relations between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector in England, Home Office, (1998). <http://www.thecompact.org.uk>

Local Compact Guidelines – getting local relationships right together. Working Group on Government Relations & Local Government Association, (2000). <http://www.thecompact.org.uk>

The private for profit and not for profit sectors

2.37 Private and not for profit sector providers are present in housing (e.g. Housing Associations), education, childcare, children's social services, health and service provision and have an important contribution to make in strategy development, service planning and commissioning.

2.38 Where co-operation arrangements include private sector partners the local authority should ensure that representation upon strategic partnership bodies is sensitive to the diversity and complexity of this sector and that representatives are selected in an appropriate and transparent manner.

Greater London Authority

2.39 London local authorities may wish to consider discussing with the GLA how the authority can best be represented in strategic partnership arrangements.

Immigration Service and National Asylum Support Service

2.40 Large numbers of children arrive through the UK's ports of entry every year. The Immigration Service will have a significant impact on the lives of some of those children and would therefore need to be included in the children's trust arrangements in the areas around the major ports. Similarly NASS, which has responsibility for housing asylum seeking families, would need to be included in areas where large numbers of families have been placed.

Jobcentre Plus

2.41 Jobcentre Plus provides essential support services for families with children and individual young people who are seeking employment or are in receipt of benefits. By supporting parents in finding work, Jobcentre Plus makes an important contribution to children's wellbeing through helping lift children out of poverty. Economic wellbeing is mentioned specifically within the five outcomes and is a key determinant in avoiding social exclusion. Jobcentre Plus is central to the Government's effort to modernise welfare delivery and tackle child poverty. It aims to work with a wide range of partners to deliver work for those who can and support for those who cannot.

Associated guidance:

Combating Child Poverty – Partnership accord between the Department of Work Pension, HM Treasury, Inland Revenue, Department for Education and Skills and the Local Government Association, (2004)

http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/taxation_work_and_welfare/tax_index.cfm

CAFCASS

2.42 The Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) is a national Non-Departmental Public Body for England and Wales. It is independent of the courts, social services, education and health authorities and all similar agencies.

2.43 The functions of CAFCASS are set out in the Criminal Justice and Court Services Act 2000. They relate to family proceedings where the welfare of children is or maybe in question. CAFCASS functions are to: safeguard and promote the welfare of the child; give advice to the court about any application made to it in such proceedings make provision for children to be represented in such proceedings; and provide information, advice and support for children and their families.

2.44 The main types of cases in which the courts ask CAFCASS to help are when: parents are separating or divorcing and have not reached agreement about arrangements for their children; social services have become involved and children may be removed from their parents' care for their safety; and children could be adopted.

Other related partnerships

Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs)

2.45 Local Strategic Partnerships are single non-statutory, multi-agency bodies, which match local authority boundaries and aim to bring together at local level the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. They tackle deep-seated, multi-faceted problems needing a range of responses from different bodies. LSPs are expected to act strategically to deliver decisions and actions which join up partners' activities across a range of issues, enabling them to meet their own targets and goals, and tackle cross-cutting issues more effectively.

2.46 LSPs are about the new ways of working envisaged within the section 10 co-operation arrangements: improving the delivery of services to local people across the whole of England. LSPs can bring together the key partners in an area and can address children's wellbeing in a cross-cutting way.

Associated guidance:

LSP Government Guidance, Department of Environment Transport and the Regions (2001).
<http://www.neighbourhood.gov.uk>

Pooling Resources Across Sectors – a report for local strategic partnerships, Health Development Agency, (2004). <http://www.publichealth.nice.org.uk/>

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs)

2.47 The Crime and Disorder Act 1998, as amended by the Police Reform Act 2002, sets out statutory requirements for responsible authorities to work with other local agencies and organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors to develop and implement strategies to tackle crime and disorder and misuse of drugs in their area. These statutory partnerships are known as Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRPs). The responsible authorities are: local authorities, fire and rescue authorities, police authorities, Primary Care Trusts and Health Authorities in Wales.

2.48 CDRPs are required to undertake an audit of crime and disorder and misuse of drugs in their area every three years. The audit process includes consultation with the public on the findings and what matters locally. This will shape priorities for inclusion in the crime and disorder and misuse of drugs reduction strategy published in April 2005.

2.49 Local strategies published and implemented from 2005 should be aligned with the developing Children and Young People's Plan. Much of the CDRP's work involves young people in many initiatives such as tackling anti social behaviour, providing diversionary activities, dealing with truancy and measures to reduce youth re-offending and youth nuisance. Tackling domestic violence, which is a priority in many CDRPs also, involves children and young people as victims and witnesses.

2.50 CDRPs are 'virtual' partnerships, reliant upon the individual partners for the quality and quantity of resource available to them. Their work is largely co-ordinated by staff employed by local authorities. This may be supplemented by seconded or dedicated police officers and officers from other responsible authority agencies. CDRPs do not hold budgets; external funding tends to be handled by one of the 'responsible authorities', typically the local authority. Other resources are drawn from the partner agencies.

2.51 All CDRPs were required to integrate with Drug Action Teams in unitary local authority areas and to work more closely with their county DAT in two tier authorities. Responsible authorities for different CDRP areas can work together as a single partnership through formal merger into a combined area subject to the approval of the Secretary of State. This is conditional on all the responsible authorities agreeing to the merger and the Home Secretary being satisfied that such a merger is in the interest of reducing crime and disorder, and combating the misuse of drugs.

Planning documents and other associated guidance:

A list of the responsible authorities, co-operating bodies and invitees to participate in CDRPs can be found at: <http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/aud02.htm>

The crime reduction website: <http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/>

Guidance and a revised audit and strategies toolkit was published in March 2004 to provide partnerships with guidance and signposts to further information about the audit and strategy process: <http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/aud00.htm>

The Home Office guidance to partnerships on CDRP/DAT integration in November 2003: <http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/integration.htm>

Guidance on CDRP mergers was also published in November 2004 on the Crime Reduction Website: <http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/cdrpmergers.doc>

Drug Action Teams

2.52 Drug Action Teams (DATs) are local partnerships charged with responsibility for delivering the National Drug Strategy at a local level, with representatives from local government (education, social services, housing), health, police, probation, the prison service and the voluntary sector.

2.53 Partnerships delivering the National Drug Strategy (DATs or integrated DAT and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships) have well developed joint commissioning arrangements for the delivery of substance misuse education, prevention, early intervention and treatment for children and young people, supported by a centrally pooled partnership grant. Directors of Children's Services and Drug Action Team Chairs (or their equivalent in merged drugs and crime partnerships) should jointly agree local priorities and targets for the development and operation of responses to children and young peoples' drug use, and include them in both the Children and Young People's Plan and Drug Action team plans.

2.54 Local authorities with a duty to co-operate under the Children's Act have statutory responsibilities to work in partnership to develop and implement joint strategies to reduce crime and disorder and tackle drugs. In developing the children's trust arrangements partners should take into account the existing map of partnership working and existing joint commissioning arrangements.

Planning documents and other associated guidance:

Every Child Matters: Change for Children – Young People and Drugs, HM Government, (2005).
<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk>

Audit and Strategy Toolkit, Regional Government Offices, The Research Community, Home Office.

[http://www.drugs.gov.uk/WorkPages/
CoreDocuments/AuditandStrategyToolkit](http://www.drugs.gov.uk/WorkPages/CoreDocuments/AuditandStrategyToolkit)

Updated Drugs Strategy, Drug Strategy Directorate, (2002). [http://www.drugs.gov.uk/
ReportsandPublications/YoungPeople](http://www.drugs.gov.uk/ReportsandPublications/YoungPeople)

Young People's Substance Misuse Partnership Grant Guidance, Drug Strategy Directorate, (2004).
[http://www.drugs.gov.uk/
ReportsandPublications/YoungPeople](http://www.drugs.gov.uk/ReportsandPublications/YoungPeople)

Behaviour and Education Support Teams (BESTs)

2.55 An example of multi-agency working with schools are the Behaviour and Education Support Teams. Guidance on this form of co-located multi agency working can be found on <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/best>

You can download this publication or order copies online at
www.teachernet.gov.uk/publications and
www.everychildmatters.gov.uk

Search using ref: 1680-2005DOC-EN

Copies of this publication can also be obtained from:

DfES Publications

PO Box 5050

Sherwood Park

Annesley

Nottingham NG15 0DJ.

Tel: 0845 60 222 60

Fax: 0845 60 333 60

Textphone: 0845 60 555 60

email: **dfes@prolog.uk.com**

Please quote ref: 1680-2005DOC-EN

D00/0000/0000/

ISBN: 1-84478-546-7

© Crown copyright 2005

Produced by the Department for Education and Skills

Extracts from this document may be reproduced for non-commercial education
or training purposes on the condition that the source is acknowledged.