

East Sussex Children and Young People's Plan Annual Review 2007

Introduction by Councillor Keith Glazier, Lead Member for Adults and Children's Services and Matt Dunkley, Director of Children's Services.

Welcome to this review of the East Sussex Children and Young People's Plan.

The first Children and Young People's Plan for the County was published on 31 March 2006. Its preparation brought together many different people: children and young people themselves, parents and carers, professionals and people working in many different organisations, in different parts of the county. They were united in commitment to the vision for children and young people set out at the beginning of the Plan. The new Children's Trust arrangements provided a way for people to work together to translate the vision into actions to address our key joint priorities.

This first review of the Plan, one year on, shows that there are many areas where services are having a strong impact on improving outcomes for children and young people. There is the prospect of more opportunities – for example, new vocational training options for teenagers and better local play facilities. By working together we are making better use of our resources. Outcomes for some of the most vulnerable children are improving – for example, better GCSE results by children who are looked after. There are also many challenges still to be faced and more work to do. We are confident, however, that Children's Trust partners in the County have the commitment, the organisation and the skills to build on what we have achieved and to make more real progress next year towards making our vision a reality. The children and young people of East Sussex deserve no less.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Glazier'.

Councillor Keith Glazier
Lead Member for Adults and Children's Services



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Dunkley'.

Matt Dunkley
Director of Children's Services

<p style="text-align: center;">East Sussex Children and Young People's Plan Annual Review 2007</p>

Introduction and vision

1. In March 2006 the first Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) for East Sussex was published. This set out the actions which the partners in the County's Children's Trust arrangements planned to take to improve outcomes for children and young people. The Plan is a two year plan. All Children's Trust partnerships are required, however, to review their CYPP in any year in which they are not publishing a new plan. This document sets out the results of the 2007 review by the partners in East Sussex of their plan.
2. The CYPP published in 2006 set out a shared vision for children and young people, which set the context for identifying priorities for improving outcomes. The review reaffirmed the commitment of all partners to this vision, which remains unchanged. It can be seen, with the full version of the CYPP, at www.eastsussex.gov.uk/youngpeoplesplan

Structure

3. This review is organised as follows:

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| Section 1: | Describes how the review was undertaken – who was involved and how. |
| Section 2: | Sets out some examples of how children and young people, and other stakeholders, have been consulted and involved during 2006/7 and what they have said. These examples supplement information in the separate DVD "Young Voices of East Sussex" which has been produced so that the views of children and young people can be heard at first hand. |
| Section 3: | Sets out some of the data and performance information which has been used to inform the assessment of need which underpins the review of the CYPP. |
| Section 4: | Reports on progress in 2006-2007 on developing integration between different services - Children's Trust arrangements – at all levels, and plans for developing arrangements further in 2007-2008. |
| Section 5: | Describes progress in strengthening the participation of children and young people (and their families) at all levels from individual support to strategic planning and democratic involvement, and plans for building on this work in 2007-2008. |
| Section 6: | Sets out progress in promoting equality of opportunity and access to support for all children and young people, and plans for continuing work in 2007-2008. It also includes commentary on the Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) of the CYPP |
| Section 7: | Identifies in broad terms the resources associated with the action plan set out for 2007-2008 (where they are separately identified) |
| Appendix 1: | Reports on progress against each of the priorities for improving |

outcomes for children and young people identified in the CYPP last year.

Appendix 2: Sets out key actions for 2007-2008 in relation to each outcome priority, building on what has been achieved in 2006-2007. In a very few cases the wording of the outcome priority has been slightly changed. In addition a new section has been added, setting out actions to improve outcomes for black and minority ethnic children and young people, including those of dual heritage. The information includes links to underpinning strategies and plans, which include more detail on key targets and milestones

Section 1: How the review was carried out

4. The review was carried out over March and April 2007. The activities involved included:
 - (i) Discussion with the newly elected East Sussex Youth Cabinet. Progress against key aspects of the Plan, and priorities for 2007-2008, were discussed with the Youth Cabinet at its first meeting on 3 March. In the time available it was not practical to carry out a consultation with large numbers of young people similar to the exercise undertaken for the production of the Plan. The meeting on 3 March was also followed by a further meeting on 1 April, focusing specifically on bullying. The meeting included discussion about developing a regular survey of young people's views about the incidence of bullying and how it was dealt with, as a means of assessing the impact of current anti bullying strategies. The survey will include views on bullying taking place travelling to and from school; the Youth Cabinet recommended that action to address this issue should be included in the CYPP action plan for 2007-2008.
 - (ii) Discussions within the County Council involving members and officers, involving all departments. These included discussion of the issue of bullying at the County Council meeting on 27 March (as part of discussion of the Council Plan).
 - (iii) An invitation to all members of the Stakeholders Forum (which brings together all members of Children's Trust partnerships and a number of other stakeholders) to contribute suggestions or comments on the success or otherwise of actions taken to date as part of the Plan, and on priorities for 2007-2008.
 - (iv) Wide distribution of this invitation across the voluntary and community sector in the county, through the East Sussex Council for Voluntary Youth Services. The review was also discussed at the first liaison meeting on 29 March between a new steering group for the voluntary and community sector and the senior management team of the Children's Services Department.
 - (v) Consultation with groups working with the black and minority ethnic communities, particularly around a new section of the Plan setting out actions to improve outcomes for children and young people from minority ethnic backgrounds.
 - (vi) Consultation with the newly nominated strategic lead officers for children and young people in each of the five East Sussex districts and boroughs.
 - (vii) Consultation with local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, through the new county wide Safer Communities team.
 - (viii) An invitation to all schools to contribute comments and suggestions.
 - (ix) Discussion of the review at each of the Children's Trust age related partnerships and the area Children's Services Planning Groups
5. As with all reviews of plans, our review of the CYPP has inevitably been a snapshot exercise, capturing and reflecting strategic and service development in a wide variety of areas which takes place on an on-going basis. All development is underpinned by regular assessment of the outcomes and needs of children and young people in the County, based both on consultation activity and on the analysis of data. The following two sections illustrate some of the consultation which has been undertaken in the last year, and some of the data which have been taken into account in the review of the Plan.

Section 2: Messages from consultation with children young people and other stakeholders

- 6. Since the first CYPP was originally published children and young people have played a pivotal role in shaping the development of our services at all levels. It is for this reason that we felt it important, for this review, to capture their views first hand in the DVD which we have produced, "Young Voices of East Sussex".



- 7. We are proud of what we have achieved in promoting participation; the way we promote the outcome "positive contribution" was rated as excellent in the 2005/6 Annual Performance Assessment of the Children's Services Authority. But we recognise that there is much still to do. Section 4 describes how we will continue to develop the participation of children and young people across the Children's Trust partnership.
- 8. This section gives some further examples of consultation activity in 2006-2007 - in addition to that featured in "Young Voices of East Sussex" - which has shaped the development of services and strategies. It is not completely comprehensive, but gives an indication of the scale and range of consultation, with a wide range of stakeholders, designed to improve support for children and young people across the Children's Trust partnership.

The Youth Cabinet; consultation through the Big Vote

- 9. More young people than ever (39% of eligible young people) took part in the Big Vote for elections to the national Youth Parliament and the local East Sussex Youth Cabinet. On the basis of the 2005 results this turn out would be the sixth highest of all authority areas in the UK. In addition to members representing different areas of the County, the Youth Cabinet has co-opted members. Its profile is representative of a wide range of young people, including looked after young people, people from minority ethnic backgrounds/dual heritage and young people with disabilities.
- 10. The Big Vote was also used to obtain young people's views on what they were most concerned about; over 8000 responses were received. The top three issues of concern were Bullying, Safety and Exams; the results of the consultation are shown in the table below.

Issue	Number of young people for who it was the top issue
Bullying	3,024
Exams	2,076
Safety	1,873

- 11. Bullying was the subject of in depth discussion at the second meeting of the new Youth Cabinet in April this year. The views of the Cabinet informed the 2007-2008 CYPP action plan in relation to bullying, for example a proposed focus on bullying experienced by

young people on their way to and from school, and a campaign, which the Youth Cabinet will be involved with, to persuade all schools to sign up to the Government's anti bullying charter.

Developing the children's services workforce

12. As part of drawing up our multi agency workforce development strategy we explored with groups of children and young people their idea of an ideal Children's Services worker. An artist worked with the Participation Unit to develop an engaging and creative tool through which young people could think about this.
13. For this exercise we worked mainly with groups of potentially vulnerable young people, including those with disabilities, looked after children, young offenders, young people supported by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and young people at a Pupil Referral Unit. A wider youth population was also consulted through primary schools and youth centres. The work was presented at the series of annual seminars for all staff in the Children's Services Department. It will be used in training programmes, particularly those looking at the common core skills for all children's services workers.



The Youth Opportunity Fund

14. The Youth Opportunity and Youth Capital funds involved over 90 young people as decision makers allocating £350,000 to 163 positive activities for young people across East Sussex for local projects. One of the funded projects, XTRAX, won the National YOF award (Actions Speak Louder) for the impact of their work in relation to working with vulnerable young people around the issues of teenage pregnancy, sexual health, smoking and substance misuse in Hastings.



(Young people from XTRAX and 2 from YOF Steering Group [on left] receiving the award from Janey Lee Grace [author and broadcaster])

Local Play Strategies

15. Children and young people have been consulted in a variety of ways by district and borough authorities in East Sussex, to help develop local play strategies. Questionnaires have been used to identify priorities for the development of local facilities and other schemes.

Developing mental health services

16. Young people supported by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service have played a significant role this year in developing plans for the Service. At a very tangible level, young people were given a leading role in the refurbishment of the Service headquarters, making them as young people friendly as possible.

Review of information, advice and guidance

17. As part of a review of information, advice and guidance services for young people we consulted over 2000 young people, including young people not in education employment or training, using a questionnaire which young people designed. Parents were also consulted, including a number of parents currently being given support with parenting by the voluntary organisation, Crime Reduction Initiatives (CRI), following statutory parenting orders. Other stakeholders – schools and managers of current services – were also involved.
18. The views of young people varied with some stating that existing services were very helpful and others valuing them less highly. A clear message was the importance young people attach to good information, advice and guidance. The Connexions and Youth Services are widely recognised as having an important role to play. On careers education, parents were keen for young people to be given more practical insights into different occupations. They also felt children's services, including schools, sometimes needed to be better at listening to young people in order to understand better their needs and tailor the advice they give accordingly.

Health care and other support for looked after children

19. Looked after children made a significant contribution this year to the review of health care and the development of the Healthy Care action plan which is part of the Children and Young People's Plan in relation to this group. They also gave views on the arrangements for contact with family members. They were involved in developing activities, for example setting up and running an allotment in Hastings and successfully bidding to the Youth Opportunities Fund to purchase a static caravan for supervised use. A group of looked after children have also run a training programme in listening to young people, "Total Respect" attended this year by all members of the Children's Services Department Senior Management Team.

Services for children and young people with autism

20. Parents of children and young people with autism have been involved this year in the development of a strategy for improving the support they receive. A number of parents are now actively involved in three Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) monitoring groups, which are overseeing the development of services in different areas of the County. Their contribution continues to be extremely valuable, in keeping a clear focus on the experience of children with autism and what practical steps need to be taken to improve their lives.

Funding arrangements for children and young people with special educational needs

21. Schools and a number of other stakeholders (the NHS, the Learning Skills Council, Unions, the Diocese, other authorities with children placed in ESCC schools, MPs, and Council Members) are currently being consulted about changes to the funding formula for special educational needs, designed to provide more flexibility for schools to use resources creatively, across their local partnership areas, rather than funding being, as now, very tightly linked to individual children and young people. Views on this so far are mixed with some seeing opportunities and others anxious about change.

Children Centres and Extended Schools

22. Local consultation is an important aspect of the development of Children's Centre and extended school services. Themes emerging from this work include parenting and family support, behaviour, mental health and well being, substance misuse and school attendance.

Maternity Services

23. An important public consultation has just been launched on the future of maternity services in the county. This follows pre consultation discussion events held over the last three months.

Section 3: Data analysis and Performance Information

Updated Demographical Information

24. East Sussex has a population of almost 0.5 million and covers an area of 1,725 km² (666 miles²) which includes the districts of Eastbourne, Hastings, Lewes, Rother and Wealden. Of this population, around 92,000 are aged 0-15. The resident population increased by 27,700 people (5.9%) between mid-1991 and mid-2004. The number of 0-15 year olds fell over the same period by around 800, with the largest change (reduction) in the Hastings area.
25. Despite being in the South East of England, East Sussex is a poor county with pockets of high deprivation. In 2002, only three other counties in England (Durham, Northumberland and Cornwall), had a GVA (Gross Valued Added measure) per head that was lower than East Sussex. GVA per head in East Sussex is only 68% of the UK average.
26. In 2005, the average gross weekly wage earned by all full-time employees working in East Sussex was £436 and, with the exception of the Isle of Wight, employees in East Sussex received the lowest average weekly earnings of any county or unitary authority in the South East. There are also clear differences in earnings between districts, with the highest average wage of £467 per week found in Lewes, contrasting with the lowest average wage of just £399 in Hastings. Although the earnings gap between East Sussex and the rest of the South East Region has closed slightly, from 22% in 2002, in 2006 it was still standing at 17%.

Significant areas of deprivation

27. There are 327 Super Output Areas (SOA) in East Sussex, and based on the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2004), 13 of these fall amongst the 10% most deprived in England. Of these, 12 are in Hastings and one in Eastbourne. Altogether, just over one-third of all SOAs in Hastings are amongst the most deprived 20% in England, and the Borough contains the highest proportion of deprived SOAs of any area in the South East.
28. With significant levels of deprivation concentrated in the coastal towns (and particularly in Hastings), East Sussex ranks as the most deprived county in the South East.

Child poverty

29. Over 26,000 children in East Sussex (28%) live in low income households. Hastings is the most deprived Borough with nearly 8,000 children living in households dependent on means-tested benefits. This represents 46% of all children in the Borough and accounts for nearly one third of all children living in low income households in East Sussex. Eastbourne is the second most deprived area in this respect with more than 6,000 children (39%) living in income deprived households.
30. Hastings Castle is the fifth most deprived ward within the South East in terms of the percentage of children (72%) living in low income households. Central St. Leonard's is the ninth most deprived with 68% of children living in low income households.
31. The number of children experiencing poverty is greatest within Langney in Eastbourne (1,915) which represents the fourth highest number in any ward within the South East.

The six wards with highest number of deprived children	
Langney (Eastbourne)	1,915
Hollington (Hastings)	995
Hampden Park (Eastbourne)	862
West St. Leonards (Hastings)	810
St Anthony's (Eastbourne)	778
Sidley (Rother)	697

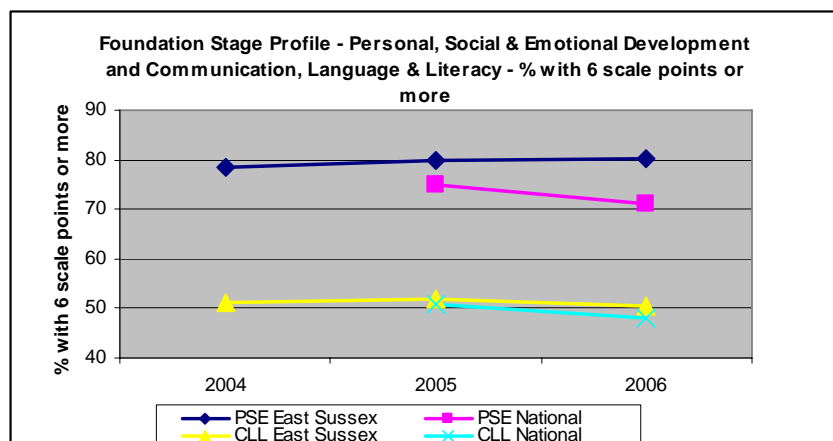
32. Hailsham East in Wealden also has over 500 children living in income deprived households. Comparison with national figures reveals that the two most deprived wards within East Sussex, in percentage terms, Castle and Central St. Leonard's (Hastings), contain similar concentrations of child poverty as some wards in the northern metropolitan authorities of Sheffield, Rochdale and Bradford and inner London boroughs of Tower Hamlets and Haringey, where over 70% of children live within income deprived households.

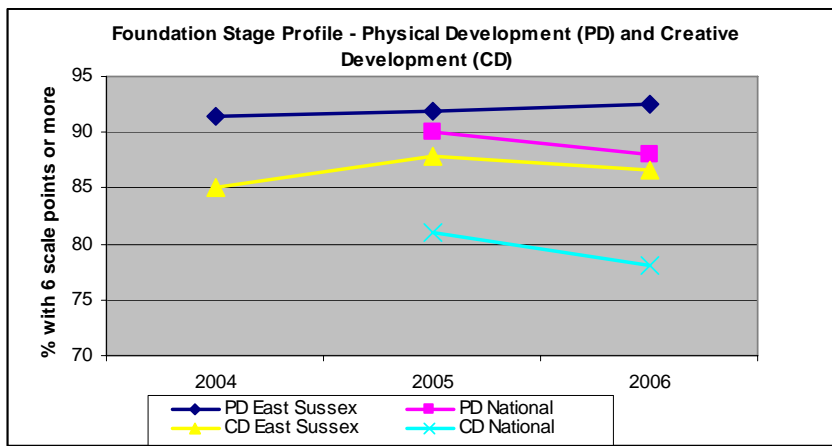
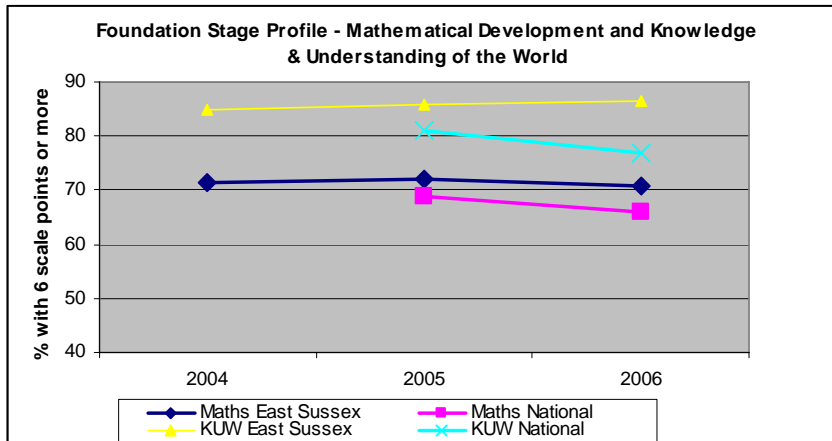
Our progress: some key outcome indicators

Positive progress

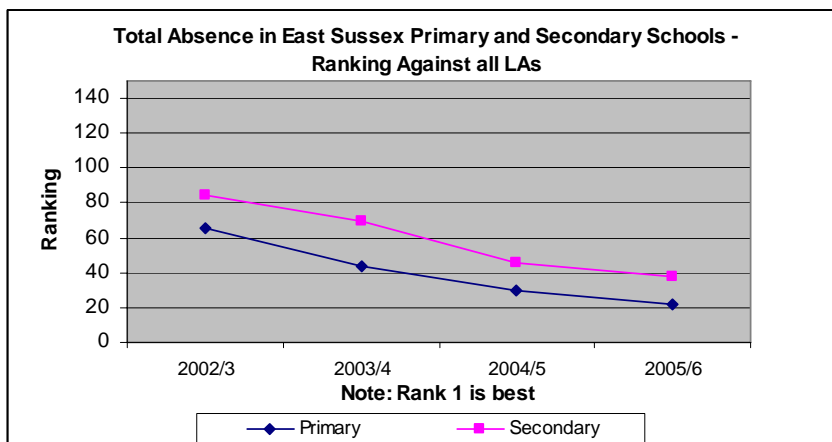
33. There are a number of key indicators where recent information in relation to East Sussex is encouraging. In particular:

- (i) Skill levels of five year olds as measured by the Foundation Stage Profile did not follow the national pattern of decline in 2006. In three areas (personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development) standards improved. In the other areas while there was a decline it was less sharp than nationally, so that overall our national rating (already above the average) has improved. These patterns can be seen in the set of diagrams below.



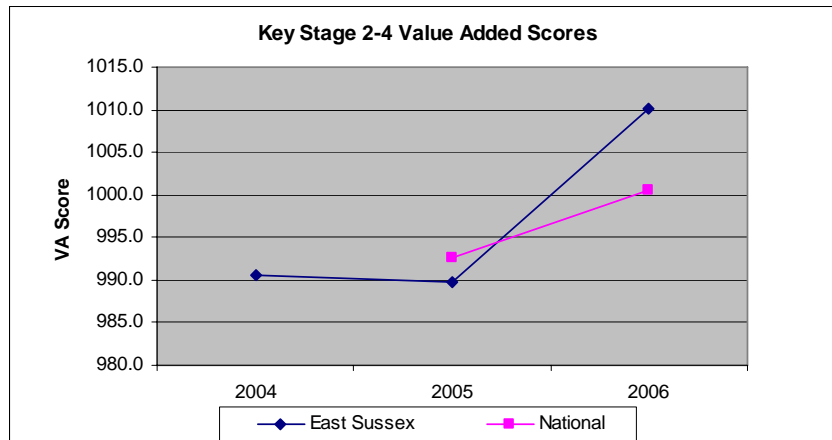


(ii) Our national ranking in relation to attendance at both primary and secondary school has continued to rise, from 66th to 22nd position for primary schools and from 84th to 38th position for secondary schools

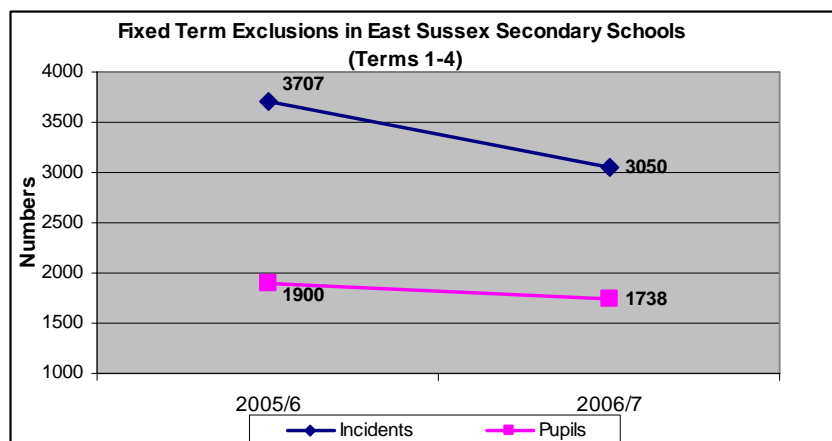
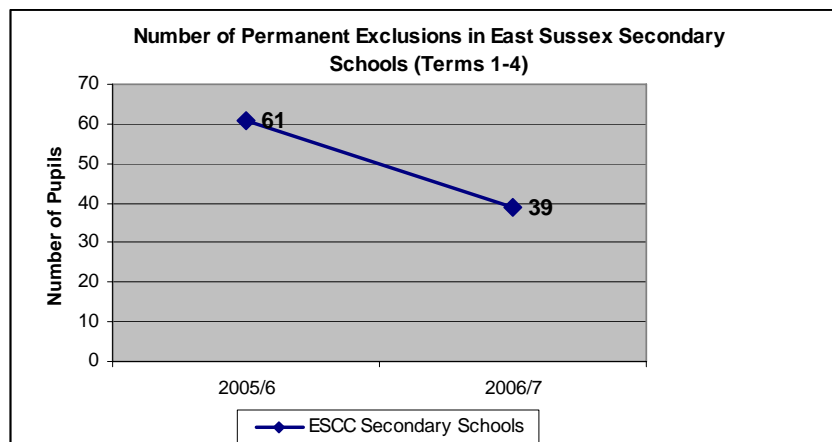


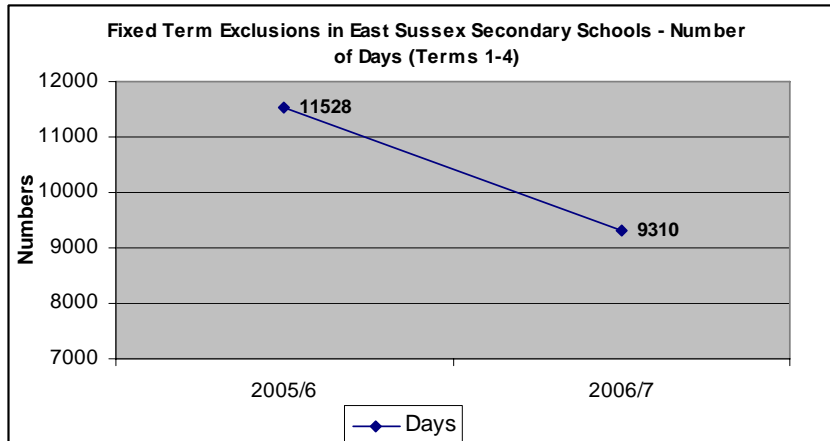
Note – 1 is best. Therefore our downward slope is good news

(iii) The “value added” by our secondary schools rose from just below in 2005 to comfortably above the national average in 2006. “Value added” relates to the improvement young people make between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 assessment

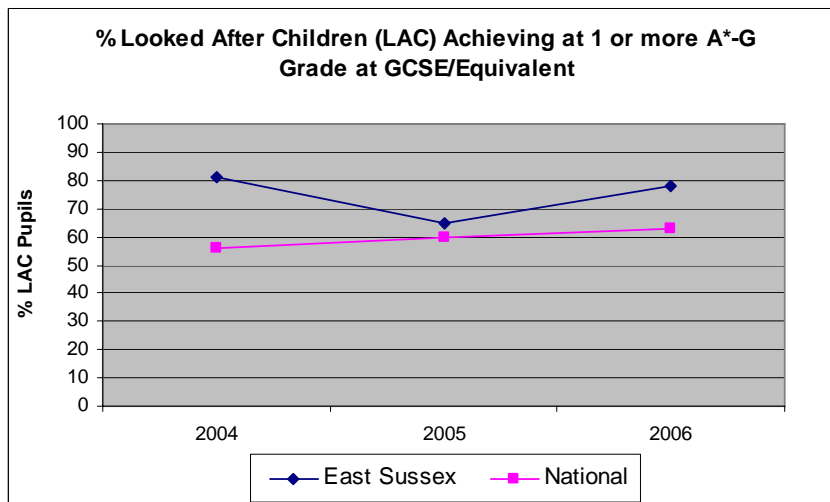


(iv) Levels of permanent exclusion fell by 17% in 05/06. Although there was a 6% increase in levels of fixed term exclusions, the average number of days lost per exclusion fell to 3.1. In the first four terms of the 06/07 academic year, whilst in the primary phase fixed term exclusions have increased, there has been a 37% decrease in permanent exclusions and a 20% decrease in fixed term exclusions in the secondary sector over the comparable period for 05/06.

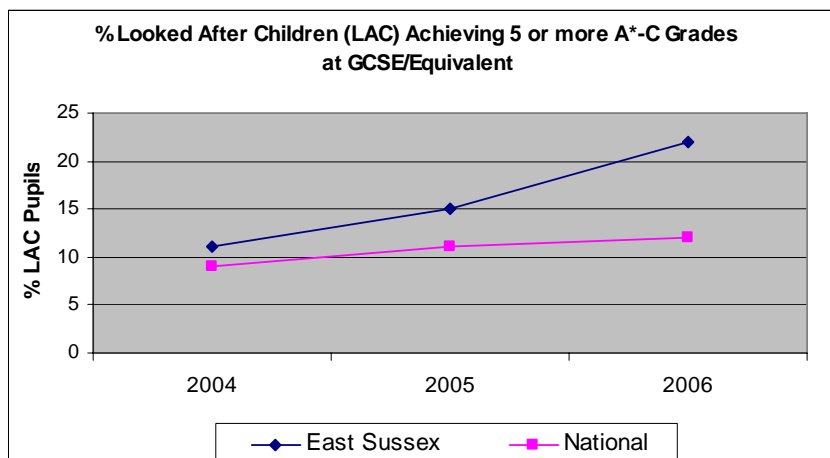




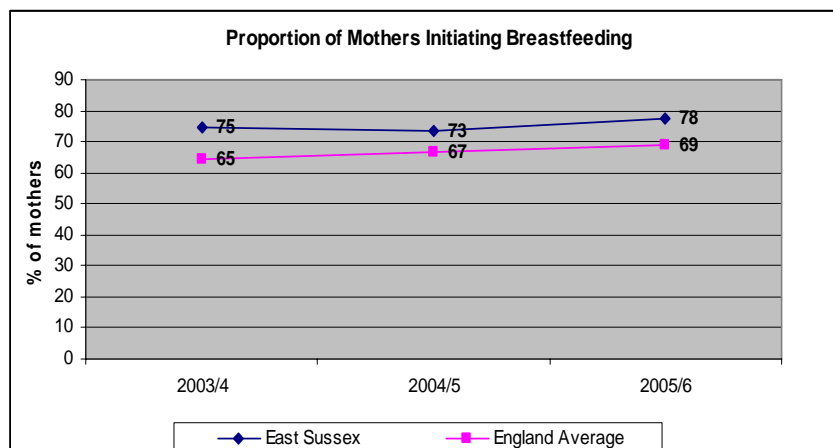
(v) 22% of looked after children achieved 5 A*-C grades at GCSE in 2006, our highest figure ever and above the national target of 15%, 78% of looked after children achieved at least one grade A-G; significantly above the national figure of 56%



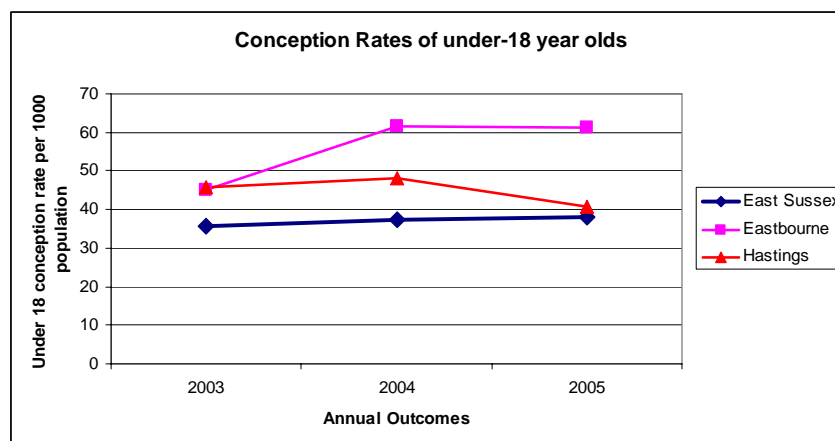
(Figures from the OC2 return – for children looked after continuously for at least 12 months at 30 September)



- (vi) The percentage of mothers initiating breastfeeding in East Sussex increased slightly in 2006 (to 78%), a little more steeply than the national rise to 69%



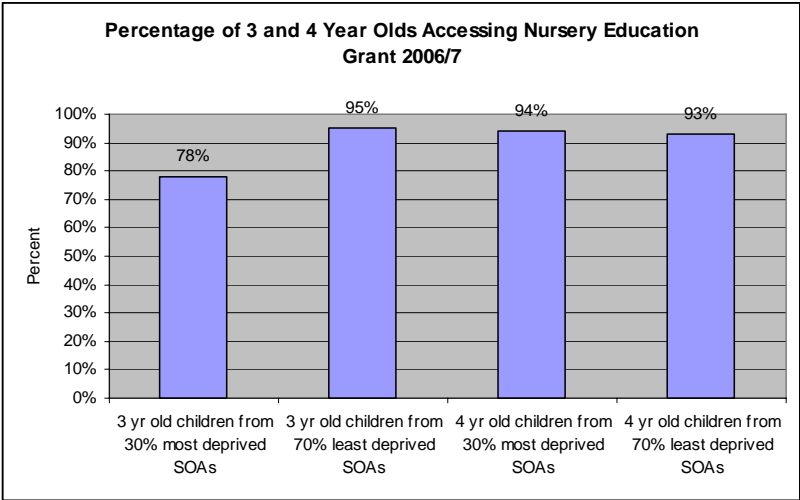
- (vii) The waiting time for the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service reduced significantly; the waiting time for an appointment is now within 12 weeks with many young people seen much more quickly
- (viii) Waiting times for speech and language therapy for young children, previously high, have also reduced significantly following the development of the new integrated Early Years Communication Team
- (ix) The number of children requiring statements of special educational need in Years Reception and 1 at primary school has fallen significantly, as support for transition into primary schools has improved
- (x) The conception rate of under 18 year olds in Eastbourne fell in 2005 (the latest year for which information is available) and was static in Hastings against a slight overall rise for the county as a whole (clearly a cause for concern) and a greater rise for the South East region



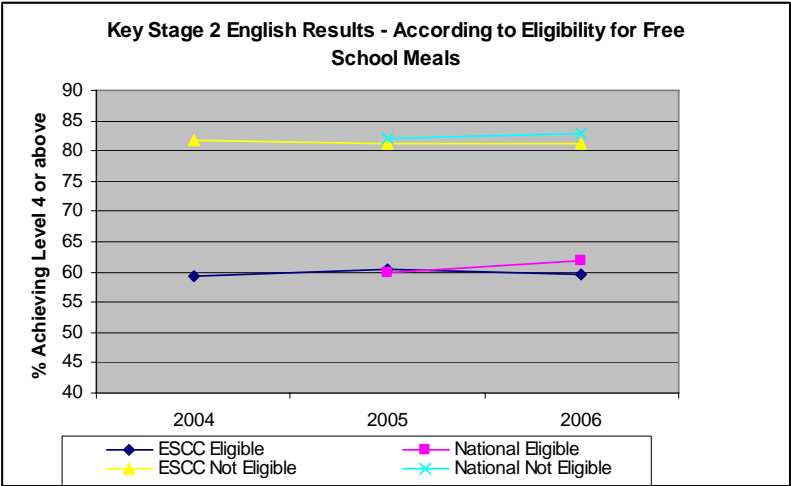
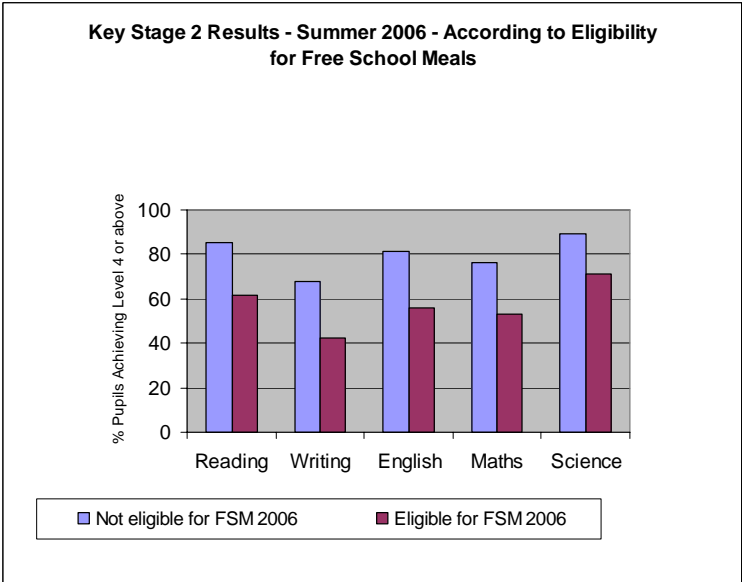
Continuing challenges

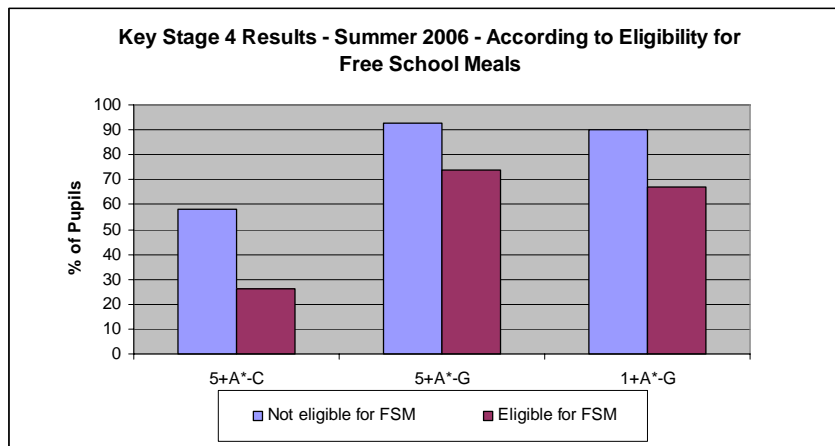
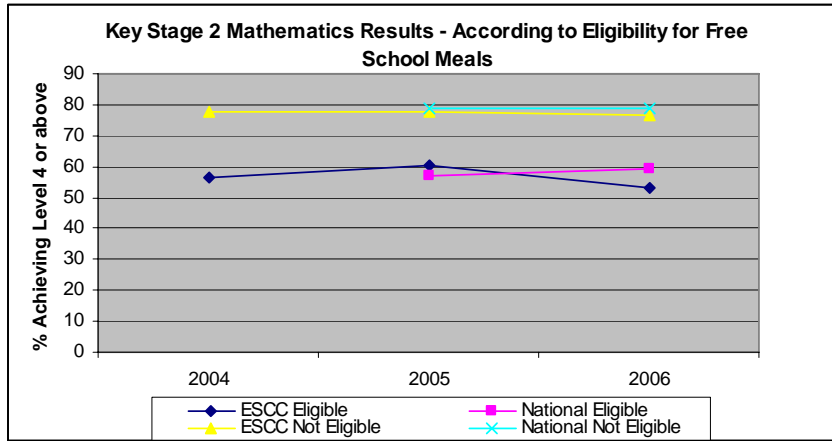
34. There are other areas where more progress needs to be made. In particular:
- (i) The gap in skill levels between five year olds in our 30% most deprived super output areas and those in our 70% least deprived areas remains as it was in 2005,

as does the gap in the take up of nursery education places (only 78% of children took up nursery education grant in 2006 in the most deprived areas compared with 95% in the least deprived areas)

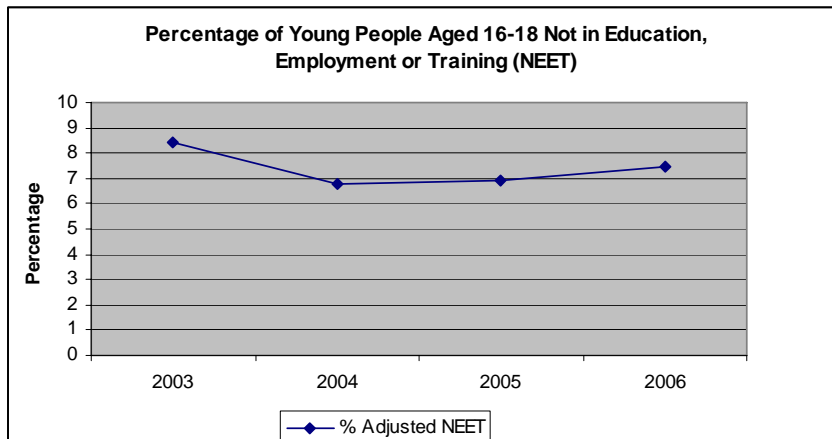


(ii) Significant gaps in attainment between children eligible for free school meals and those not eligible also continued, at all Key Stages.





(iii) The percentage of 16-19 year olds who are not in employment, education or training rose in 2006, as they did nationally and regionally



(iv) We need to explore further the most recent patterns in under 18 conception rates to target hotspot areas in addition to Hastings and Eastbourne.

Section 4: Working better together: Children's Trust arrangements in East Sussex

35. This section looks at progress and plans in relation to Children's Trust arrangements at all levels.

Joining up/integrating the practical delivery of services and support

36. The first level is that of the day to day delivery of services. We have made progress in 2006-2007 in the integration of a range of different services to different groups of children and young people, as set out below.

Services for disabled children

37. Key multi agency integrated services now include the key worker service of the Early Support programme (extended to 160 families, whose feedback is very positive), the Early Years Communication Team (comprising ESCC learning support services and NHS speech and language therapy) and the new monitoring and support groups for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

38. In addition the Children's Services Authority and the Primary Care Trusts have established a pooled budget for equipment. Within the Children's Services Authority, services for children with special educational needs and for disabled children now also have integrated management; this has improved planning for children with the most complex needs, coordination of services for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and integration of service delivery with special schools.

39. In 2007-2008 a key priority will be to explore options for integrating therapy services.

Services for looked after children

40. A new integrated service for looked after children was established this year, including education support, CAMHS and dedicated health professionals. In 2007-2008 we will be focusing on consistent implementation of the national Healthy Care standards, and on continuing to improve the educational opportunities available to all looked after children and young people, including care leavers

Children's Centres

41. Plans for 18 new integrated children's centres for 0-5 year olds and their families in Phase 2 of the programme are on track, including detailed plans for new buildings. A strategy has been agreed for the extension of children's centre services across the whole county, working with the 22 Local Partnerships for Children (which bring together schools and agencies working with children at local level). Detailed work has been carried out on the health component of the services, to ensure a consistent approach to the targeting of resources. We have also reviewed home visiting services by agencies working through the children's centres, and developed a consistent, tiered approach to outreach across all areas avoiding duplication and gaps in services. Within the Children's Services Department a significant restructuring of early years services has been carried out to enhance multi-disciplinary working and maximise efficiency.

Extended schools services

42. We met the target set for us by the DfES of 30 schools providing the core extended

services offer by September 2006. A detailed work plan for the buildings programme associated with extended schools was developed. Investment in expanded central staffing capacity was, agreed with the multi agency steering group. In 2007-2008 we will be working with a number of Local Partnerships for Children to develop a range of extended services from schools, linked to targeted youth support, integrated family support teams, and strategies for extending access to sports and the arts.

Integration of family support

43. In 2006-2007 we established area teams to support the families of 0-11 year olds, directed by multi agency management teams for the west and east. We established arrangements whereby from April 07 there will be a named link social worker within family support teams for primary schools in each LPC area. The review of home visiting led to agreement on a new integrated model of outreach services for children's centres across the county. We also implemented a new specialist multi agency integrated service for families with adults who have substance misuse problems and are developing integrated family services for other groups facing particular challenges. Coordination of local parenting support continued including through dedicated staff funded through the Children's Fund. Finally, we began consultation on a refreshed version of our multi agency family support strategy. The new strategy will provide the focus for work in 2007-2008. (For more detail on parent and family support priorities see the section on supporting families in appendix 2).

Youth support services and teams

44. As part of the restructuring of the Children's Services Department we created Youth Support Teams covering the whole county. These link with wider youth services including the Youth Development Service, the behaviour support and integration services, Connexions services and act as a bridge to access specialist services including CAMHS and the multi agency Under 19s Substance Misuse Service. Each secondary school has a social worker member of the local Youth Support Team based in the school for part of the week; we already have feedback from schools that this is making a tangible difference to the range of support accessed by young people. We are supporting more young people than ever, but in different ways; while the identification of need has increased, the number of young people who have to be accommodated by social care services is slightly reducing. For young people with complex needs who need the support of a number of different services, we have begun to create youth access centres, where staff can be co-located and a streamlined service provided.

45. In 2007-2008 we will develop further our model of youth support, including information, advice and guidance, through consultation with stakeholders, taking into account national guidance on targeted youth support. We will communicate the model widely and engage with a wide range of stakeholders in its practical implementation.

Developing common systems

46. During 2006-2007 we agreed local guidance on common assessment and the lead professional role based on national guidance and the experience of local pilots. We launched this local guidance at four conferences for managers of services including senior managers from all schools, establishing clear expectations around the role of managers in leading and implementing change. We then began a twelve month programme of practitioner training in common assessment and the lead professional role. Initial feedback from practitioners about the training has been very positive.

47. As part of the wider Information Sharing and Assessment Programme we also drew up a

strategy for transition from the local East Sussex Children's index to use of the national information sharing index, Contact Point.

48. In 2007-2008 we aim to tackle remaining obstacles to the effective use of the local Children Index to aid the sharing of information and joint working. We will plan in more detail for transition to Contact Point in 2008, with high quality communications extending to all potential users of the new system and focused training as required. Our programme of training for practitioners in common assessment and the lead professional role will continue, adjusted as necessary in the light of experience and evaluation. We will also provide support for practitioners in the daily implementation of common assessment and the Lead Professional role ensuring that it is well embedded within practice.

Deciding on common policies and strategies

49. During 2006-2007 progress has been made on developing and agreeing policies and action plans in a number of areas. These include:
- (i) developing aspects of a "graduated offer" of services from Children's Centres, for example reviewing home visiting policies and services;
 - (ii) reviewing information, advice and guidance for young people. Detailed proposals are due to be published for final consultation in May with recommendations planned to be considered by the Children's Trust Executive Group and the East Sussex Cabinet in July 2007;
 - (iii) developing comprehensive mental health services, on which a detailed action plan has been agreed and in part delivered;
 - (iv) agreeing local play strategies, with two district/borough authorities having completed their strategies and others well underway;
 - (v) restructuring support for schools to improve behaviour;
 - (vi) refreshing our family support strategy. We are currently consulting on a refreshed version of the 2004 strategy agreed by the previous Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership;
 - (vii) agreeing a multi agency workforce development strategy.
50. As set out in the 2006 plan, a strategy has been agreed for promoting effective commissioning by Children's Trust partners. This sets out agreed commissioning standards, including the expectation that joint commissioning will be undertaken where appropriate, with integrated services and pooled budgets considered where these will improve outcomes for children and young people. The Strategy sets out the roles of different parts of the governance structure in relation to commissioning and expectations in relation to activity within each partnership group over the next year and beyond. Reviewing the use of resources, overall and in specific areas, is an important aspect of this and one where we expect practice to develop over the next year (for more information see section 7 on resources).
51. In 2007-2008 our key priorities for further joint policy development will be:
- (i) To develop a county wide strategy to reduce and respond effectively to youth homelessness. This will involve improving our joint understanding of need and developing a co-ordinated and consistent response to youth homelessness, using

the Supporting People programme to support particularly vulnerable groups of young people.

- (ii) To develop a clear well informed local public health promotion programme for children and young people with priorities reflecting the issues raised by children and young people themselves including smoking cessation support and education and drug and alcohol abuse
- (iii) To work further on models of early identification and prevention, particularly within the context of universal services, including through children's centres and extended schools
- (iv) To continue to address the need to close gaps in educational attainment, in part through refining and implementing our 14-19 education and training strategy
- (v) To promote good understanding across the Children's Trust partnership of the principles and expectations set out in the agreed commissioning strategy

Clear structures for driving integration

52. The governance structure for children's trust arrangements has a number of levels. At local level, much progress has been made in developing the work of the 22 Local Partnerships for Children (LPCs). A wide range of initiatives have been undertaken by partnerships from parenting support, to promoting mental health and support for children transferring from primary to secondary schools. Examples of these initiatives can be seen on the Children's Trust web pages on the ESCC website. The LPCs are currently also key vehicles for the implementation of common assessment and the lead professional role, with training being provided to staff in LPC groups and LPC meetings used to confirm common understanding of these key developments.
53. The area planning groups have driven collective decision making in a number of ways, from allocating Children's Fund resources for preventative work, to re-commissioning some Connexions services, and facilitating local action to deal with anti social behaviour. They have acted as key vehicles for bringing managers at area level together to review key issues for children. Recently the structure has been changed so that the groups reflect the boundaries of the five districts and boroughs rather than the previous four Primary Care Trusts. We believe the change will mean that better links can be made with the work of the districts and boroughs (which have each appointed a strategic lead for children and young people), and with community safety work. The contribution of the NHS to the partnerships has remained strong, throughout the local restructuring of primary care trusts.
54. The work of specialist partnerships is critical to promoting integration for children and young people with particular needs. The CAMHS Commissioning and Development Partnership has made good progress in jointly commissioning services to ensure a comprehensive CAMHS service is provided. The Disabled Children's Development Group has overseen key initiatives such as the development of out of school activities/child care for children with special needs.
55. The three age related strategy groups have overseen key strategic developments such as the children's centre programme (0-5), the refreshing of the family support strategy (5-11) and the development of targeted youth support (11-19).
56. The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has developed seamlessly from the Area Child Protection Committee during 2005/6. The East Sussex LSCB has an authoritative

and independent voice working within the Children's Trust. It raises performance issues regarding children's safeguarding directly with individual partner agencies and through the Children's Trust structures. The Chair of the LSCB provides regular reports to the Children's Trust Executive Group. Achievements during the year include producing Sussex-wide Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures that are Working Together 2006 compliant; briefing almost 1,000 staff on the new procedures across a very wide range of agencies including the voluntary sector; establishing a pilot Child Death Review Panel by April 2007 which has been chosen to be part of the national pilot of these schemes; undertaking a review of child community safety arrangements across East Sussex resulting in a safety action programme for 2007/8; and organising an audit by all LSCB agencies of their compliance with Section 11 of the Children Act 2006.

57. The Children's Trust Executive Group (CTEG) has benefited from significant input from the three East Sussex Members of the national Youth Parliament, who have prepared reports for the group on specific issues of concern to young people including drugs and alcohol education, transport and sex and relationships education. These led to further work with the young people's sub group of the Drug and Alcohol Action Team, the Executive Best Value Review of transport and the Personal, Social and Health Education team. The work of the Group has also been enhanced by increased co-terminosity with other structures, for example the creation of an East Sussex Division within Sussex Police, and of a single senior management structure for the two new Primary Care Trust areas within the county. Decisions taken by the CTEG include agreeing strategies on Participation, Equalities, Common Assessment and the Lead Professional Role, and the implementation of the information sharing index, ContactPoint; the reorganisation of the area planning structure; and adopting the charter "Every Disabled Child Matters". The Group has been an important forum for linking the plans of individual Children's Trust agencies and ensuring that they reflect the priorities of the CYPP as appropriate.

Section 5: Strengthening the participation of children and young people and their families.

58. The Children's Trust Participation Strategy, agreed in 2006, sets out how Children's Trust agencies in East Sussex will work together to ensure that children and young people are consulted and involved in the design, delivery, monitoring and evaluation of services affecting them. We are committed to making this a reality; our DVD "Young Voices of East Sussex" shows the progress we have made in the last year, on which we are determined to build

59. During 2006/7 children and young people have been actively involved in shaping services at 4 distinct levels:

- individual
- local service development
- specialised service development
- countywide strategies

62. The Participation section of the progress report at Appendix 1 includes a detailed account of the progress that has been made so far against the priorities set out in the 2006-2008 Children and Young People's Plan. It described what has been done and the impact it has had. Similarly the action plans at Appendix 2 set out key priorities for 2007-2008. These include extending the Hear By Right initiative into the primary school age range; developing peer inspection; supporting the Youth Cabinet and young people who participate directly in Children's Trust governance; consolidating the network of Participation Champions across the Children's Trust partnership; and encouraging to get young people engaged in local democratic processes, for example by running "Do Politics" workshops in schools and a "Sofa Challenge" project in Local Democracy Week through which young people can engage with councillors from the five district and borough councils.

Section 6: Equality and Diversity
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63. We have made good progress in understanding diversity and promoting equality. The key overall priorities have been shared across the Children's Trust and three areas for joint actions have been agreed for 2007/8:

- improving data collection according to equality categories;
- improving leisure opportunities for disabled children and young people; and
- improving engagement with minority ethnic groups, particularly around addressing the needs of mixed heritage children and young people

64. The report of progress in Appendix 1 includes a detailed account of the progress that has been made to date against the equalities priorities set out in the 2006-2008 Children and Young People's Plan. The action plans at Appendix 2 similarly set out key priorities for 2007-2008. The key areas of focus both last year and next year are set out below.

(i) Ensuring good quality data is collected and used to ensure services meet the needs of minority groups.

65. There has been greater awareness about the need to collect good equality data, including in relation to ethnic origin, disability, gender, language, religion and sexual orientation. For example, the Children's Centres and CAMHS service now monitor equalities data.

66. We have produced a pilot equality data report bringing together different strands of the equality data across the Children's Services department. This helps to identify patterns and trends for a coordinated approach to addressing equality issues. Sophisticated pupil attainment reports by vulnerable groups have informed the development of strategies to "close the gap".

(ii) Improving access to services and developing more inclusive services.

67. To improve the way we communicate with minority groups we have developed a multi agency contract for translation and interpretation with a local provider. We are building on this to develop similar joint protocols for improving our communication with children and families with sensory impairments and learning difficulties. We continue to provide guidance and training to services, schools and our providers, which include the new disability and gender equality duties.

68. Children and young people from minority ethnic and mixed heritage backgrounds including gypsies and travellers, face particular challenges in terms of their social marginalisation, exclusion and discrimination. We are ensuring that culturally sensitive support is provided to minority ethnic and mixed heritage children and families, including training on building resilience.

(iii) Building a better understanding of minority groups

69. We have improved our networking with voluntary and community groups that work with minorities in order to understand better our diverse communities, including minority ethnic, disabled, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender; gypsies and traveller groups. We have mapped the vulnerable groups in East Sussex to develop strategies to improve their engagement. We recognise that promoting good race relations is an essential element of the race equality duty, which has been highlighted as an area of development by many minority ethnic groups. The Connection Communities Plus programme – a partnership project with Sompriti and public agencies – enables us to work better with minority ethnic people to develop more inclusive services.

(iv) Developing effective commissioning and procurement

70. We have used Equality Impact Assessments to develop services that better reflect the needs of our community. We plan to work with external providers of services to develop their understanding of our key equality commitments; we will produce a toolkit for providers which gives clear guidance on the standards that need to be met in terms of providing services equitably and in terms of ensuring equality for employees. All contracts for Children's Services include a section on equality.

(v) Tackling harassment and discrimination

71. We have developed a project to prevent and respond to issues around homophobia, within our schools and services. The findings of an independent review of the experiences of a minority ethnic worker have been incorporated into the Equality Strategy for Children's Services. We will look for opportunities to share the materials and outcomes from these two projects with our partners. We have better supported schools with recording and reporting racist incidents, in line with our statutory duties. We are now working with young people to review our race equality guidance for schools.

(vi) Developing a workforce that is aware of key equality issues

72. Staff development is crucial to underpin progression on equality priorities. We have provided guidance and training, including special events, in relation to understanding statutory duties and supporting the needs of children and young people vulnerable to social exclusion and underachievement. We have ensured that minority ethnic and specifically mixed heritage issues are included in equality training programmes. We run an annual conference on equality for all Children's Trust partners. The annual conference in 2007 focuses on "Identity and belonging" and the new gender equality duty. The Children's Workforce Strategy prioritises the need for staff development in relation to Equality and Diversity. Specific training in the following areas has been given priority: how to conduct equality impact assessments; the gender equality duty; building resilience among mixed heritage children and young people; and an understanding of working with minority community groups.

Equalities Impact Assessment of the CYPP

73. The key priorities for equality and diversity in the initial CYPP were identified through equality impact assessments carried out separately by the former Education and Social Services departments. These have now been brought together into one Children's Services Equality Strategy. Managers, frontline staff, voluntary organisations, and the public were involved in helping to set the priorities and identifying actions to meet those priorities. These assessments took into account the race and disability equalities duties, and also reflected issues around gender, sexual orientation and religion.

74. The revised CYPP section on equality, which sets priorities to cut across the whole of the plan, further develops our commitment to meeting equality duties, particularly the new gender equality duty and the new regulations on sexual orientation and religion. It points to three key areas where CYPP partners can collaborate in 2007/8: improving data collection; improving leisure opportunities for disabled children and young people; and improving engagement with minority ethnic groups. In response to an independent assessment of the over representation of minority ethnic children in our looked after children population, we have now included a new section which focuses on improving outcomes for minority ethnic and mixed heritage children and young people.

Section 7: Resources

The resources devoted to achievement of the outcomes priorities come from across the Children's Trust partnership. The budget of the Children's services Authority and of schools, being devoted entirely to children and young people, are both very significant contributors and straightforward to quantify. Quantifying contributions of other agencies is less easy. In the NHS, the completion of the health mapping exercise in June (for the first time undertaken across the county) will be very helpful. In the meantime the table below sets out the CSA budget information.

It is our intention to build on the child health mapping exercise by looking at how information could be collated across both the CSA and the NHS, and across other partner agencies, against key outcome priorities in the CYPP (not necessarily each outcome priority but across broad areas). The process for doing this, drawing on information already held (such as CAMHS) will be discussed at the CTEG this summer.

Joint-Commissioning

A number of joint funding arrangements currently exist, which reflect partnership working and integrated planning of service delivery. A strategy for promoting effective commissioning, including joint commissioning was agreed by CTEG recently and is currently being disseminated through the Children's Trust governance structure. This establishes a set of commissioning standards, and the roles of different groups within the Governance structure to ensure they are met. The strategy covers the involvement of a range of providers including the voluntary and community sector (VCS).

The creation recently of a steering group for VCS organisations working with children & young people and regular liaison between that group and the CSA, provide an opportunity both to ensure the sector is involved in the development of good commissioning at all levels and also to consider how through joined-up working alternative external funding might be attracted into the county to meet CYPP priorities.

ESCC Medium Term Financial Plan

The County Council operates a medium term planning framework which aligns resources to policy priorities and ambitions. The County Council budget for Children's Services in 2007/8 is £54m (net of grants, fees & charges), with gross expenditure totalling £143m. Maintained schools in East Sussex will receive a total of £229m in 2007/8 from Dedicated Schools' Grant.

The Children's Services Department has a robust process for reviewing specific services in relation to achieving value for money which has particular focus on high value services, such as SEN. Attention to Value for Money is further supported by the Children's Services Scrutiny committee which has a programme of service reviews which bring a further level of challenge and review.

The budget planning process is strengthening year on year; with increased emphasis on joint discussions and integrated planning. The development in understanding of the ECM agenda in schools is evidenced in the significant decision made at Schools' Forum to allocate headroom funds, totalling £2.3m to the "combined services budget" to address cost pressures on joint issues for 2007/8 through to 2009/10.

There is increasing emphasis and commitment to identify and deliver efficiencies across all outcome areas, both through integration and more effective commissioning. Over the next 3 years there will be further investment in the development of business and financial modelling, linking data and performance information which will further strengthen and inform strategic improvements and the planning process. In the past 12 months there has been a strong record, within ESCC, of bidding for additional resources, and particularly in relation to invest to save initiatives which are expected to mitigate against expected cost pressures in the future and in some cases deliver cashable savings to support the 3-year medium term plan.

The key areas of expenditure within Children's Services department are set out in the budget statement below:

	2007/08 Budget (ex capital charges)
	£'000
Children and Families	
Looked After Children	10,296
Behaviour and Attendance	2,613
Children's Integrated Services	13,584
Youth Justice	1,030
SEN and Disability	15,388
Information Sharing and Assessment	180
	43,091
Learning and School Effectiveness	
Early Years and Childcare	8,900
Inclusion Support Services	4,781
Planning and Admissions inc home to school transport	11,400
School Improvement Service	1,843
Standards Fund contribution	916
Other services inc 14-19 development, school improvement partners, sports development and music	383
	28,223
Planning and Performance Management Division	1,606
Resources Division	11,760
Dedicated Schools Grant funding central services	-30,679
Total Net Budget	54,001