

# Children and Young People's Trust

Annual Event, 21<sup>st</sup> October 2016

Update Newsletter, December 2016



Following consultation with partners, it was agreed to hold an annual Children and Young People's Trust (CYPT) conference this year, replacing the previous meetings of the Children and Young People's Trust Executive Group and the Strategic Forum. More than 50 leaders and practitioners from across a wide range of partnership organisations attended the morning event including public health, district and borough councils, schools, colleges, housing, voluntary sector, police and fire services, local businesses and adult and children's social care services.



CYPT Event, Congress Suite, Eastbourne  
21<sup>st</sup> October 2016

## The aim of the event was to:

Engage with a wide range of partner organisations in relation to the six priority areas of the Children and Young People's plan

Review progress against the six priorities, highlighting challenges and seeking joint ideas to improve performance or help mitigate any challenges

Trial a new approach for partners of the CYPT and seek feedback on the morning to inform future annual events

Facilitators were able to shape the table discussions and share performance data for partners to review current positions and progress in terms of the six priorities, discuss what children and young people and other service users are telling us, highlight challenges and reflect on mitigations, and consider ideas for low cost or no cost activities.

Summary of table discussions:

1

### **PRIORITY ONE: Improving the school readiness of young children, particularly early communication, language development and numeracy**

In the 2015/16 academic year 76% of pupils, in East Sussex, achieve a good level of development at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) against a national average of 69%. This has been achieved through improved engagement with schools' senior leadership about the importance of EYFS. A range of successful strategies have been deployed which have made a significant impact. Data collected in the summer 2016 funding period records that 85.12% of eligible 2 year olds accessed a funded place with an eligible EY provider (6.84% above the national average).

The recent Village Project has targeted schools with either their own nursery or a pre-school on their site. The project has focused on the provision of seamless foundation stage. The shared vision between schools and pre-schools has made a significant impact on children's transitions and outcomes. This project enables earlier involvement with parents and children and having a planned learning approach has highlighted the importance of smooth transitions.



Participants felt that targeted work is having a clear impact on school readiness; but there is a need to look at what should be done to ensure sustainable impact for universal support for parents. School readiness is being increasingly impacted by the lack of a stimulating home learning environment. The home learning environment is one of the strongest support systems that can be provided for children; however changes in society and increased use of social media have meant that parents do not appear to be supporting learning, i.e. helping with reading and writing as they used to. Schools, Public Health and the Local Authority are working together to review the changing home learning environment and how best to support young children.

## 2

### **PRIORITY TWO: Helping more parents enter, sustain and progress in work**

106 (Troubled Families (TF) 1) and a further 30 (TF 2, from April 2015) adults moved from out of work benefits to paid employment under the government's TF programme. 93.2% of adults in East Sussex are in employment, this differs across the boroughs, with Hastings at 89.2% and Wealden, 94.4% against a national average of 94.1%.

There have been a number of major changes, for example: benefit reform and the introduction of universal credit. Participants felt that this priority is a fundamental area, but not automatically at the forefront when working with children. The table discussions covered a range of areas, including: the issue of transport across East Sussex being a problem for people looking for and sustaining work. It was felt that without the idea of work in a family there is not stability within that family life.

It was recognised that this priority area is supported by a range of agencies and groups: for example; Home Works and the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), but that not all parents are linked into this support, so do not necessarily get the help they need; and with reducing budgets this can be further challenging. Colleges, such as Plumpton offer extensive support, but it is the link into employment that can be harder particularly as many clients come from broken families and there are issues around aspiration and incentivisation. It was felt that there is a need to encourage employers to be more supportive and understanding of the background of the clients; and that parents are equipped to be able to enter or re-enter work.

The groups for this priority also discussed volunteering as a way to help people get into work. It was also felt that it was important not to assume that this priority only covers full time, paid employment. Creative approaches need to be explored, for example someone with mental health issues was encourage to join a book club to support her out of the house as a first step. Prevention services are key to support and upskill parents. The groups also considered the possibility of a single point of advice for employment and housing.

## 3

### **PRIORITY THREE: Improving the quality of life of low income families in other ways where possible**

At Quarter One (2016/17), 2501 households were in rent arrears. Between January and June 2016 we have also seen a rise in the number of families in temporary and emergency accommodation in Hastings, and in Eastbourne in the last quarter (April-June 2016) this may be indicative of more people seeking help in a crisis.

We now have county wide services to help people manage debt and queries about benefits (the Welfare Reform project in Hastings and Rother and Eastbourne, Hailsham and Seaford CCG areas and Benefits Advice in the High Weald Lewes and Havens CCG). Whole family personal budgets are also now available and workers can access small amounts of money for families. Although not directly targeted to young people, work with housing and health through East Sussex Better Together (ESBT) will help all members of a household including indirectly children and young people.

The participants recognised that there are an increasing number of families in Bed & Breakfast accommodation, however alternatives can be hard to find as private landlords are not taking people who are on benefits. Families who have to move out of the county for placements also risk losing the support they have. With fewer resources it is necessary to be creative with what we have.

For example, Kicks programme (Albion in the Community) is providing activities and support for qualifications; using football as a route to forget things that are happening in everyday lives, and offering a safe environment to learn skills. The East Sussex Housing Officers Group (Districts and Boroughs) are due to work with ESCC on how and where people are placed as lots of organisations potentially place people in the same building (for example Probation, Children’s Services, Adults Social Care), this approach would allow for a more joined up approach for individuals.

#### **4 PRIORITY FOUR: Maintaining and strengthening early help for vulnerable families; and ensuring effective safeguarding for all children and young people**

In 2015/16, ESCC was able to claim for 505 households having achieved “significant and sustained progress or coming off benefits” under the governments’ Troubled Families programme.

The Single Point of Advice (SPOA) now provides a more co-ordinated and consistent approach. It is recognised that we are now working with more complex cases with lower levels of need undertaken by the community and other projects. Early Help approaches are managing to keep the balance between prevention and intervention. The participants felt that the question is always how do we target the right people to the right service? The whole family approach, for example family group conferences, can prevent escalation; investing early and at the right time is



important. Health Visitors are now providing universal coverage as a pathway to identify families who need additional support. The possible Family Hub approach also needs further research.

The group also discussed the possibility of volunteer mentors, better linking up of services to fully utilise the resources we have, using common and more defined language and working together, across geographical areas, with the aim to improve community resilience.

#### **5 PRIORITY FIVE: Improving skill levels of young people 14-19, including through better access to a wider range of apprenticeship, vocational training and work experience opportunities as well as a strong academic route**

The number of young people now participating in education or training under the Raising Participation Age duty is above national and south east figures. The number of 18 year olds recorded as NEET (Not in Employment, Education, or Training) has also halved over the last 2 years, with 83% now in some form of EET (Employment, Education or Training). This has been achieved through proactive partnership working with colleges, schools, training providers, local employers and the array of dedicated support services and providers, including from the third sector, who work with young people across East Sussex.

Discussions for this priority recognised the pressure on financial resources and the consistent and ongoing changes to the education system. The stereotypes towards apprenticeships were also seen as a key barrier; with further education and university courses often seen and promoted as the only post 16 learning pathway. Government funding for apprenticeships in England is also changing, the apprenticeship levy will require all UK operating employers, with an annual pay bill of £3million plus, to make an investment in apprenticeships (0.5% of an annual pay bill). In return, employers will access funding to help to pay for training and assessment for apprentices.



Councillor Nick Bennett, Harvey Sharp (ESCC Apprentice) and Caroline McKiddie: Partnership Manager: EET at the event.

It was felt that working beside employers and understanding the economy was critical in successfully supporting apprenticeships. Transport in some rural areas was discussed as a further barrier, for example with Amicus, housing provider where they are developing in areas with poorer transport links. Sussex Police now have dedicated provision for work experience and are aiming to support young people in their cadets’ scheme with recognised qualifications as part of the opportunity. YMCA highlighted the fact that young people who are not in education, employment or training are six times more likely to present as homeless.

## PRIORITY SIX: Improving support to children, young people and families to help maintain and enhance emotional well-being and mental health

In relation to children and young people who cannot attend school due to physical or mental illness, 205 cases (67%) were referred to the Teaching and Learning Provision (TLP) due to mental illness including ASD related anxiety.

There has been a year on year increase in referrals since 2010/11 to TLP. The majority of children who are referred to TLP are in Key Stage 4, and the majority of those have an anxiety-related illness. One of the key areas of focus for the service over the next year is to support schools in identifying children with mental health concerns earlier and making reasonable adjustments to accommodate their needs in school.

Currently a mental health resilience toolkit for secondary schools is being developed, with a youth lead from start to finish, drawing together all other ESCC work around mental health. Emotional well-being courses around cognitive behavioural therapy and self-help are funded now throughout the CCG's in Hastings. We are also working with colleagues in the specialist mental health services (CAMHS) to strengthen the response to children and young people who have early needs in relation to their emotional wellbeing.

Participants felt that equity across the county, however, can sometimes be seen as a postcode lottery, with support available not always being communicated well and consistently. It was recognised that it is important to make sure the right resources are directed to the right family in a timely way.



**The event received lots of positive feedback, a selection of comments are added here:**

*“The best part of the discussion, for me, was hearing Harvey’s [ESCC apprentice] views of an apprenticeship and his future career choice.”*

*“It’s important to bring partners together to share ideas for joint work.”*

*“It often seems to boil down to communication and money. This event helped me and others understand about changes and how we can use what we have.”*

*“Much better than sitting in a meeting”*

*“The table discussions were focussed with tangible solutions discussed with real actions that can be taken forward.”*

*“People often don’t appreciate fully the link between housing and issues such as safeguarding and employment, so it was helpful to be able to add that perspective to the discussion.”*

*“If a report is created that influences a higher discussion, then this is an invaluable forum to understand what’s happening on the ground.”*

**All respondents were also positive about the format of the event with 100% saying that they would recommend a colleague.**



what's  
next?

Many ideas, across all the CYPT priority areas, also came out of the morning and we will be exploring these further with relevant partners using the group's virtual forum.

Ideas included:

**(Partners were asked to suggest low or no cost ideas that could be taken forward using existing resources)**

**Priority One: Improving the school readiness of young children, particularly early communication, language development and numeracy**

- Talking to young and new parents about the cultural impact of the world of social media , through focus groups or review of research and consideration of strategies to address
- Engagement with young people around this (idea of digital native – any one born post 1995/7)
- Engage more directly with parents about home working the partnership between home and school

**Priority Two: Helping more parents enter, sustain and progress in work**

- Discussions with employers to be more receptive and supportive of vulnerable young people
- Being positive about the importance of work and routine on mental health
- Further promote volunteering as a strategy to get people back to work

**Priority Three: Improving the quality of life of low income families in other ways where possible**

- East Sussex Housing Officers Group to work with partners to look at where people are placed in housing to ensure an appropriate placement is made through a joined up approach
- Ensure low income families are accessing things they are entitled to or supporting them to challenge the things that aren't right with housing with their landlords.
- Making every contact count – Public Health

**Priority Four: Maintaining and strengthening early help for vulnerable families; and ensuring effective safeguarding for all children and young people**

- Health Visiting and Children's Centres to offer opportunities to and awareness of support services in their local areas, through sign posting and in turn building community resilience.
- Fire Service to investigate how they can further support families, keeping them safe within the home

**Priority Five: Improving skill levels of young people 14-19, including through better access to a wider range of apprenticeship, vocational training and work experience opportunities as well as a strong academic route**

- Share with partners the new ESCC apprenticeship programme which offers a supported recruitment and induction process
- Public Health and Sussex Police will look to offer up more work experience to inform work chances/choices, by linking to ESCC work experience team
- Targeted and careful marketing of apprenticeships with parents and carers and communities to let them know about the different types of apprenticeships and the opportunities they offer, including higher and degree level apprenticeships.
- Investigate opportunities to utilise the Chambers of Commerce as broker to help apprentices link to employers



**Priority Six: Improving support to children, young people and families to help maintain and enhance emotional well-being and mental health**

- Consider a whole family approach around both adults and young people's mental health, rarely one without the other especially around building resilience
- Look at greater use of social media and apps and share experience of use
- Use governors training as forums to share ideas and update on new initiatives
- Resilience based work, linked to a multi-agency approach



**A date for your diary, following the successful event in October we are planning to hold the next CYPT annual conference on the morning of Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017 at the International Lawn Tennis Centre, Eastbourne.**

