

Children and Young Peoples' Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf 2008-2011



FFRAMWAITH

*Working Together for Children and
Young People in Rhondda Cynon Taf*

*Gweithio gyda'n gilydd er lles Plant
a Phobl Ifainc Rhondda Cynon Taf*

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Foreword

There is no doubting the challenge which is facing all of us in Fframwaith, the Rhondda Cynon Taf Children and Young People's Partnership, to provide the opportunities our children and young people need to fulfil their true potential.

We need to provide these opportunities, not just for the achievement of the personal aims and ambitions of the children and young people themselves, but also for the wider benefit of the communities in which they live, work, study and play.

Our children and young people are our future and we must be ambitious for them and for ourselves. We must ensure no stone is unturned, no interest is underdeveloped and no idea is lost in our determined efforts to improve the lives, and the life chances, of our children and young people.

We need to create a positive environment in Rhondda Cynon Taf that enables change to take place within our organisations and within each individual. We need to build a "can do" approach to the challenges facing us as we contribute to a more vibrant and sustainable economy.

Now a foreword is just a foreword, it's what's contained after it that really matters.

Even more important is that the words get translated into actions and that we convert our aspirations into positive outcomes for our young people.

I would like to thank everyone, adults, children and young people, who have worked hard to put together a vision of what we in Rhondda Cynon Taf, want to deliver in the coming months and years.

The Welsh Assembly Government have thrown down a challenge to all communities in Wales to show them just how imaginative, determined and ambitious we are for the future of our children and young people. In Rhondda Cynon Taf we are very ambitious, demanding and determined to convert those aspirations into practice.

Ellis Williams

Chair, Fframwaith Partnership



Introduction

This is the first Children and Young People's Plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf. It has been produced for and by members of Fframwaith, the Children and Young People's Partnership, with the help of local children, young people and families as well as the people who work with them.

There is an expectation across Wales that through the following 7 core aims, agencies and people will improve the way they work together to ensure all children and young people:

- Have the best start in life.
- Have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities.
- Enjoy the best possible health, are free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation.
- Have access to play, sporting, leisure and cultural activities.
- Are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised.
- Have a safe home and community, which supports physical and emotional well-being.
- Are not disadvantaged by poverty.

In addition the Plan must address Workforce Development across all service areas for children, young people and their families.

Rhondda Cynon Taf is the third most deprived authority in Wales, with the highest levels of deprivation to be found in the valley communities of Cynon and Rhondda. Deprivation and lack of employment or other opportunities combine to present real challenges to our communities. This is balanced by a strong sense of community that is also a distinctive and positive feature of our local area.



We will continue to build on the strengths of our local people and communities, to develop their personal skills and create supportive environments. Our communities already benefit from a range of services that aim to make a positive impact on the Welsh Assembly Government's aims and on the children, young people and families themselves.

Many children and young people are healthy and safe, achieve in schools and beyond, and enjoy living in Rhondda Cynon Taf. However, we still face significant challenges in ensuring that all children and young people benefit fully from all the opportunities and safeguards to which they are entitled.

How will this Children and Young People's Plan make a difference?

The purpose of this Plan is to describe how agencies and services for children and young people across Rhondda Cynon Taf will work together to achieve the Welsh Assembly Government's 7 core aims and to meet the needs of children and young people living in our communities as effectively as possible.

The Children Act 2004, The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services, The Common Assessment Framework and Information Sharing agenda and other key drivers provide the national expectations and standards. The Rhondda Cynon Taf Children and Young People's Plan has taken these, together with

locally identified needs, to develop a broad strategic vision for services and a set of priorities for improved outcomes that we can all work towards during the three years from 2008 to 2011.

Approval of this Plan is a pledge from the partners to local children, young people and families to deliver the vision and priority outcomes. Subsequent joint commissioning and operational planning undertaken by partner organisations can then respond to the agenda by describing how services will be developed or re-configured to achieve the strategic vision and priority outcomes described in this document.

The Children and Young People's Plan has replaced a number of other strategic Plans that partners were previously required to develop, including: The Single Education Plan and The (Social Services) Children's Services Plan. However, the duty to co-operate in the development of other high level strategic plans remains. It is important that the Children and Young People's Plan influences and takes account of three other high-level plans in particular.

These are:

- The Community Strategy
- The Community Safety Strategy
- The Health, Social Care and Wellbeing Strategy

"If we continue to develop our commitment to working together and ensure we put in place the mechanisms up and down and through our organisations across the breadth of the Partnership, we will start to see the true changes to the lives of our children, young people and their families"

Rhondda Cynon Taf Teaching Local Health Board

It will also have a strong influence on other local plans that will continue to be required, such as The Youth Justice Plan, and business plans for individual services, as well as the development of joint commissioning strategies for priority service development areas.

The relationship of the Children and Young People's Plan to other strategic plans and strategies is represented in the diagram below.

Partnerships within Rhondda Cynon Taf including: The Local Safeguarding Children Board, Bro Dysg, Health Social Care and Well Being Partnership, the Economic Regeneration Partnership, the Community Safety Partnership along with local partnerships such as Communities First, have worked with us to ensure this Plan reflects our shared priorities. We need to continue to work together, along with the new Local Service Board, to deliver our aspirations.



How have we developed this Plan?

The Plan has been developed with specific reference and existing commitments to the following principles:

- The Children Act 2004.
- The voices of children, young people and their families locally.
- The principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- The entitlements of children, young people and their families.
- The need to increase the priority given to shaping services for children, young people and families so they meet their individual needs and choices wherever possible.
- The need to respond to children and young people in greatest need or at greatest risk of becoming vulnerable.
- The need to ensure high quality universal services that meet the needs of all children, young people and their families.
- The standards in the National Service Framework and the need to improve quality.
- The existing local Commissioning Strategy for Preventative Services.
- The need to integrate safeguards for children and young people.



- The Partnership's commitment to valuing diversity and promoting equality of opportunity, including specifically our responsibilities under:
 - The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
 - The Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
 - The Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005
 - The Human Rights Act 1998

To agree the priorities for this Plan, eight working groups were formed to act as a reference point and sounding board for information and ideas. These groups examined local audits of need, information on current services, including audits and inspections and the requirements of national and local policies. Each group has worked together to produce a chapter for each core aim area and for workforce development that describes:

- The national agenda for change - what are we being asked to achieve?
- Where are we now - what do we know about needs and services locally?
- What children, young people and families have told us about what they want from local services.
- What priority outcomes we want to achieve and how do we think we can best achieve them?

Widespread consultation has taken place. This information and these ideas have been fully tested and checked with:

- Children
- Young People
- Parents and carers
- People who work with children and young people
- The wider community

We owe a big thank you to the children and young people from across Rhondda Cynon Taf, who have worked hard to ensure consultation has been real. They have produced bi-lingual child and young person friendly consultation, and final versions, of this Plan, including:

- Glenis 'n' Pal - a storybook of the Plan for young children
- A DVD for young people
- A poster and leaflet

"The DVD was really effective, really fun and I really enjoyed it."

Brynae Youth Club

Young people have been involved in planning and running consultation events ensuring the voices of children and young people have been heard. These events have taken place in nurseries, schools, youth clubs and with specific groups such as young carers, looked after children, disabled children and young people, and many others. In addition, young people have been involved in wider public consultation contributing to events for Communities First and the Rhondda Cynon Taf Public Health Forums.

The results of the consultation have been overwhelmingly positive in agreeing with the ideas, outcomes and priorities in this Plan, with 95% of responses agreeing with the priorities. All responses to the consultation have been taken into account and a number of amendments and changes have been incorporated in this final Plan. Many comments were made about priorities for particular areas or specific services, these will be used in the delivery plans to drive forward the changes outlined in the Plan.

We have also carried out an assessment on the likely impact of the contents of the Plan on children and young people at risk of discrimination because of their ethnicity, gender, language, disability, and other characteristics or experiences including poverty.

This has shown the Plan will have a positive impact on groups of children and young people at risk of discrimination, and will promote equality and diversity where possible.

How will we know we are making a difference?

From our consultation we know that children, young people, their families, the people who work with them and the public want us to make a difference. They want to know how we will do this and how we will know we have achieved this.

"Tell people about it and what you can do about it"

Young Carer

The Fframwaith Partnership understands that this Plan aims high and making it happen will not be easy. We know that this Plan needs to be a living Plan that responds to new and emerging needs, and to changes in national and local policies. Our delivery framework which supports making this Plan happen, will help people work together across services and partnerships, so people should know what to do and by when. The delivery framework is flexible to allow us to change and adapt our Plan as necessary. We will also need the support of each sector and agency to ensure these outcomes and priorities are included in their own business plans. We will need to communicate well and with each other.

Within the Plan are a range of measures and targets, which we will monitor and review on an annual basis to check progress. The measures and targets may change during the three years of this Plan as we learn from, and listen to the people who will make it happen. In doing so, we will specifically check the extent to which our policies and actions are impacting locally upon equality of access and opportunity with reference to:

- Gender
- Language
- Race
- Disability
- Poverty

Most importantly, throughout the three years of this Plan we will continue to involve children, young people and their families in telling us what it is like to live in Rhondda Cynon Taf and what we need to do to improve their well-being.



The Vision for Rhondda Cynon Taf



The vision of the Fframwaith Partnership is that children and young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf will be healthy, well educated, confident and creative individuals contributing to and living safely within their sustainable communities.

In order to achieve this vision, including the individual priority outcomes identified for each of the core aims, the Partnership acknowledges that it will need to drive forward and pay particular attention to the following three areas:

1. Better Access to Services for Children, Young People and Families

We will achieve this by working together to:

- Introduce and embed the Common Assessment Framework, including effective assessment of children, young people and their families' needs, recognising and building on their strengths.
- Improve information sharing and referral systems so that children, young people and their families get access to the right support at the right time.
- Improve information giving so that children, young people and their families are signposted to services that they need and that can help them.
- Improve access for children, young people and families to acceptable services and other opportunities within their own communities.

2. More Integrated Delivery of Services

We will achieve this by working together to:

- Improve our listening and communication with children, young people and their families, and between the people who work with them.

"Like the sound of it and want to see it happen"

Young Person, Treatment & Education Drug Services group

- Build on and improve our links between universal services, early intervention and prevention services as well as specialist services, delivered in the communities where children, young people and their families live.
- Ensure that children, young people and their families receive services delivered in a more integrated manner in our communities with skilled people working together.



3. Better Matching of Services to Local and Individual Needs

We will achieve this by working together to:

- Identify and promote the skill potential of the child, young person or family, ensuring services are organised around the child and family.

“This is a good idea because it gives children more opportunities and ability to learn in life”

Pupil, Cymmer Junior School

- Develop more effective prevention and early intervention family support services targeted at gaps and vulnerable groups or communities.
- Ensure systems are in place across agencies to identify those children and young people at risk of harm early and ensure action is taken to protect them.

The priorities contained in our Children and Young People’s Plan are complemented by a delivery framework, but four tools in particular are likely to be required to achieve our aims.

These are:

- Joint commissioning to achieve our priority outcomes, including consideration of aligned and pooled budgets, and other resources where this will make a difference.
- Joint working and promoting integrated service delivery where this will improve accessibility and acceptability of services.
- Implementing the National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services to improve the quality of what we do.

- A common approach to workforce development, including attention to:

- (i) Common core skills for the whole workforce, to include:
 - Assessment and signposting skills
 - Safeguarding
 - Participation and involvement of young people
 - The Partnership’s commitment to valuing diversity and promoting equality of opportunity
- (ii) Particular skills for professionals being asked to work in a different way (for example Flying Start, teachers delivering health promotion in schools, or other new models of working).



Have the Best Start in Life

Our vision is that every child, irrespective of race, gender, background or other circumstances is enabled to fulfil their potential and enjoy their early childhood, through the provision of quality services and timely support to both children and their families, however that family is constituted.

Children having the best start in life is a major priority for the Welsh Assembly Government. The Assembly has promoted and sponsored this area through a number of grant-funded programmes, including *Cymorth*, *Flying Start*, *Sure Start*, *the Foundation Phase* and legislation, for example the *Childcare Act 2006* and quality standards such as the *National Service Framework*.

Key Policy Drivers include:

- Childcare Act 2006
- National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services
- The Learning Country – Vision into Action
- Foundation Phase Guidance
- Special Educational Needs Code of Practice
- Flying Start Guidance
- Parenting Action Plan

Key areas for improvement nationally are:

- More and better quality pre-school childcare, in particular for those families living in disadvantaged areas or for children with highest needs.
- Improved antenatal and maternity services.
- Improved health outcomes for younger children.
- Improved access to parenting skills to support children's emotional, social and physical well-being.

"I think they should play and have fun while they can"

Student, Coleg Morgannwg





Where are we now? What do we know?

A consistent message from consultation with children and young people is that having the best possible start in life has a huge impact on the rest of that person's life.

Over the past decade both nationally across Wales and locally within Rhondda Cynon Taf, we have seen trends showing declining birth rates, however in recent years nationally we are seeing an increase in birth rates, including some areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Locally, children and their families have opportunities to access universal services, such as health visiting and health promotion services, good quality childcare, play, and early years education.

Additional services are also provided to support children living in circumstances that may make them more vulnerable, such as poor housing, disability, domestic violence or substance misuse. The aim for all services is to promote child and family strengths and reduce or eliminate risk factors to ensure good outcomes.

Key indicators of how we are doing for this population are as follows:

- Uptake rates for early immunisation of young children in Rhondda Cynon Taf are above the Welsh average.
- All three year olds in Rhondda Cynon Taf benefit from part-time or full-time nursery education, which is available in a variety of settings through the medium of English and Welsh.

"Parents need more guidance in how to nurture their children and this can often be a delicate matter"

Member of the public

- There has been a significant growth in the number of childcare places for pre-school children, particularly in deprived areas as a result of investment made through the Flying Start Programme.
- A significant investment has been made in improving the fabric of early years education settings across the County Borough since 2005.
- Through the Flying Start Programme, intensive health visiting support is now available to families living in Flying Start areas, including help with parenting.
- The Start Right Programme enables trained and experienced nursery nurses to work with small groups of nursery age children to support their social and emotional development.
- We have developed four Integrated Children's Centres in Abercynon, Llwynypia, Garth Olwg and Rhydyfelin. These deliver an extensive range of nursery education, childcare, clinics, parenting group work, and adult learning opportunities on the same site. The services operating will vary from centre to centre according to local need.



- A wide range of parenting support services are available across the County Borough, including parenting education programmes, parenting support specifically for fathers, support for families with disabled children, and additional support for parents experiencing difficulties in managing their child's behaviour. Support extends to parents with specific challenges such as alcohol or substance dependency or where domestic violence is a feature of daily life.

"Children need love, caring and warmth"

Teenage Mams project

- Dental care is promoted at all nursery schools and registered education and other early years settings and is supported through the provision of free tooth brushes, tooth paste, suitable drinking vessels and the advice of dental health experts.
- The Family Information Service continues to provide a broad range of information about what is available locally to parents, including details of all childcare, early years and family support services.
- Although over half of all mothers in Rhondda Cynon Taf are breast-feeding their baby immediately after birth, this proportion drops off significantly by 5 to 8 days after birth, when significantly fewer babies are being breastfed (38%) compared with nationally (43%).
- The highest proportion of children on the Child Protection Register in Rhondda Cynon Taf are aged 0 to 4 years. The number of local children on the Child Protection Register rose significantly between 2006 and 2007 and these numbers include an increasing proportion of children aged 0 to 4 years who are being registered for reasons of neglect. A significant number of these children live in families with three or more children, and where parenting is impaired because of substance misuse and, or, domestic violence.

"Yeah I agree, there should be services that every type of child will enjoy, without feeling unhappy or left out"

Young Person, Mountain Ash Comprehensive School

However:

- Significantly more infants are born with low birth weight in Rhondda Cynon Taf compared with the rest of Wales.
- The average number of decayed, missing or filled teeth in local children aged 5 to 12 are well above the national average, and are rising. Most local dentists accept new patients and community dentists, including mobile treatment is now available for some children. However, poor dental health is affected by a number of other factors including diet, oral hygiene, the existence of fluoride in local water supplies, and the willingness of parents to take their children to dental appointments.
- There are increasing numbers of children with autistic spectrum disorders being referred to specialist services, such as children's social care and specialist clinics.



What priority strategic outcomes do we want to achieve?

Priority Outcome	As a result, we will work in partnership and with a shared sense of purpose to:
<p>1. Fewer local children aged 0 to 8 at risk of significant harm, and fewer children who need to be looked after away from home.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide better access to a range of integrated early years services for vulnerable families and communities. • Increase the availability, quality and accessibility of advice and guidance to families who require it, through enhanced, non-stigmatised parenting programmes for parents of children aged 0 to 8 years. • Improve partnership working and transitional arrangements between children and adult services to improve the help available to parents whose parenting capacity is limited by physical or mental health challenges. • Ensure that early indicators of risk are responded to appropriately and the services provided are effective at reducing risk and preventing significant harm and potential family breakdown.
<p>2. Children and their families supported to prevent ill-health and achieve good health and well-being.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve dental health outcomes including reducing the average number of decayed, missing or filled teeth for children aged 5 to 12 years. • Reduce the drop out rate of breast-feeding mothers and encourage more prolonged breast-feeding. • Improve access to antenatal and post-natal services with the development of even more localised services. • Reduce the number of children born with low birth weight • Reduce the social isolation of parents and their very young children by improving the range of structured and non-structured pre-school activities that encourage healthy lifestyles for parent and child. • Contribute to the Healthy Schools agenda and ensure the principles are carried through in childcare settings and registered education providers. • Children and their families are supported at key times to aid the child's transition between different services.

Priority Outcome

As a result, we will work in partnership and with a shared sense of purpose to:

3. All children and their families are able to access the services they need to enable children to play, learn and grow.

- Improve access to, and the quality of, information provided on the full range of early years and family support services, ensuring it reaches those in greatest need.
- Improve access to inclusive childcare, play and leisure activities for all children and in particular disabled children.
- Increase childcare provision for parents who wish to work or take up training and learning opportunities.
- Support the learning needs of parents in order that they may better support the learning and developmental needs of their children.
- Contribute to the early identification of children experiencing difficulties and when appropriate, ensure that the child's and the families' needs are efficiently assessed and met.
- Provide sensitive and timely support to the families of children recently diagnosed with disabilities and those going through the emerging diagnosis process.
- Ensure that those children identified with specific difficulties, such as speech and language delay, behavioural difficulties, hearing loss are fast tracked to relevant agencies and, where appropriate, therapeutic support.
- Ensure that families in greatest need have access to the resources they need to support their child's play, safety and learning needs.
- Ensure that services are effectively coordinated for individual children and their families, so that support is managed and evaluated and duplication of activity is minimised.

"Children should be allowed to get dirty when they go out"

Pupil, Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg, Abercynon

Core Aim 1 - Have the best start in life

Priority Outcomes		Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA1.1	Fewer local children aged 0 to 8 years at risk of significant harm, and fewer children who need to be looked after away from home.	Number of children aged 0 to 8 in the Looked After Children System. Number of children in need supported through early years and family support services.	As a percentage of all children becoming looked after, 61% were aged 0 to 8 years for 2007/08. April 2007 - March 2008 1250 children in need supported through various Early Years and Family Support Services.	55.5% 0 to 8 year olds becoming looked after during 2008/09 reducing 5% each year to 2011. Sustain current levels.	Core Aim 1
CA1.2	Children and their families supported to prevent ill-health and achieve good health and well-being.	Levels of recorded dental decay in children. Improved breast - feeding statistics.	Dental decay in children aged 5 to 12 is within the national average. Over half of all mothers breast-feeding their babies at birth, which is compatible with the Welsh average. 38% of mothers locally sustain breast-feeding beyond 5 to 8 days compared with the Welsh average of 43%.	Continued implementation of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Dental Action Plan. Full implementation of Designed for a Smile scheme by 2009. 53% of mothers breast feeding by 2011. 41% of mothers locally to sustain breast – feeding beyond 5 to 8 days to be achieved by 2011.	Core Aim 1 and 3 Core Aim 1 and 3 Core Aim 1 and 3 Core Aim 1 and 3



Have a Comprehensive Range of Education and Learning Opportunities

Our vision is that the children and young people of Rhondda Cynon Taf are full and active citizens in sustainable communities where innovation is secured with improved outcomes for learners.

The Welsh Assembly Government drives the aims and objectives of services working to secure and develop education and learning opportunities for children and young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Key Policy Drivers include:

- The Learning Country – Vision into Action
- Extending Entitlement – Supporting Young People in Wales.
- Special Education Needs Code of Practice for Wales 2002.
- Inclusion and Pupil Support – National Assembly for Wales Circular 47/2006.
- The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services in Wales 2006.
- National Youth Service Strategy for Wales 2007
- School Effectiveness Framework for Wales 2007 (draft)
- 14-19 Learning Pathways – Welsh Assembly Government

The challenge set by the Welsh Assembly Government includes a number of strands and themes, including:

- Improving outcomes for all learners and more personalised learning opportunities.
- Enhancing the role of the learner, especially in making decisions about their own learning.
- Realising the benefits of bilingualism.
- Attention to the holistic needs of children and young people in school settings, including in particular the promotion of mental, physical and emotional health.
- Developing community learning and promoting positive engagement with education for a range of hard to reach or disengaged children, young people and families.
- Education for sustainable development and global citizenship.
- Promotion of the Foundation Phase curriculum, including concepts of child development, structured play, experiential learning and outdoor activities for children aged 3 to 7.
- Promotion of learning pathways, including enhanced vocational training for older children and young people.

“There should be a variety of ways in which to teach and learn”

Young Person, Porth County Community School



- Additional learning needs must receive appropriate attention.
- Securing a vibrant and varied youth support service.

Where are we now? What do we know?

A consistent message from consultation with children and young people was that education and learning should be available to everyone, no matter what their age, in English or Welsh and in settings where they feel comfortable.

- Estyn inspection of our schools show that close to three quarters of our schools achieve an average of Grade 2, good features with no important shortcomings, or better for all 7 Key Questions, and no school in Rhondda Cynon Taf has been placed in special measures.

“You shouldn’t stop learning when you stop going to school”

Pupil, Hafod Primary School

- Attendance in our primary and secondary schools is below the Welsh average.
- Permanent exclusions are rare in contrast with other authorities. Fixed term exclusions are considerably below the Welsh average, although there is recent evidence of increased use of this sanction.
- Key Stage 1 teacher assessments show that children achieve at or close to the Welsh average and girls already out-perform boys by at least 10%.
- Key Stage 2 teacher assessments show that children achieve at or just ahead of the Welsh average and girls out-perform boys by just less than 10%.
- Looked after young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf are now exceeding the target set by the Welsh Assembly Government for two GCSEs or better with 82% of looked after young people achieved or exceeded this target in 2007 compared with 55% in 2005.
- A range of support is in place locally for children and young people at risk of poor attainment in school, including learning support classes, school-based project work, work-based learning, and multi-agency support for looked after children.
- Our Community Focused School programme has already had a positive impact on the lives of local children and young people, including increased pupil motivation and self-esteem, improved pupil behaviour, increased access to out of school activities of sports and cultural activities, increased opportunities for adult and community learning, improved referral to specialist support to meet pupil needs.
- Recent Estyn Local Education Authority Inspection has judged Strategic Management of Education and Lifelong Learning to be good with promising prospects for improvements.



However:

- Key Stage 3 teacher assessments show that young people achieve below the Welsh average and girls out-perform boys by at least 10%.
- The performance of our young people in GCSE and equivalent examinations is below the Welsh average and girls outperform boys in line with the picture across Wales.
- Average points score for young people studying two or more A levels or equivalent is below the Welsh average.
- Families and professionals are reporting evidence of growing demand for innovative, flexible and cohesive support for children with additional learning needs.
- Analysis of achievement and attainment by young people has revealed significant under-performance by vulnerable groups, including, looked after children, children from black and minority ethnic groups, young people who get into difficulties with the police, young carers, boys and those educated at home.
- The major challenges for Rhondda Cynon Taf identified by Estyn are to continue reducing surplus places and improve school buildings in order to make them fit for purpose in the 21st Century.



"We are encouraged that there is a specific commitment to improve early intervention responses for those affected by autism"

National Autistic Society

What priority strategic outcomes do we want to achieve?

Priority Outcome	As a result, we will work in partnership and with a shared sense of purpose to:
<p>1. Children and young people with additional learning needs are supported to overcome barriers to learning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide early identification of and appropriate, well-resourced responses for children with additional learning needs, particularly for children with pre-school speech and language delay and autistic spectrum disorder. • Ensure that young people receiving education in Special Schools have enhanced access to out of hours activities in their communities, to careers advice and transition support. • Improve multi-agency working to support the transition into adulthood for young people with additional learning needs including Special Educational Needs.
<p>2. Vulnerable groups are supported to overcome barriers to learning and achievement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify as early as possible those children at risk of poor attendance, learning and academic achievement and intervene appropriately to support them and their families. • Develop innovative strategies including outdoor education and work-based learning to counteract disengagement and underperformance, particularly with reference to boys. • Continue to identify and disseminate good practice about how to engage successfully with challenging children and young people to improve behaviour, self-esteem and raise aspiration.
<p>3. All children and young people are supported to achieve better attainment levels at each key stage, and in particular key stage 3.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support learning providers to deliver continued improvements in attainment, in the context of a period of curriculum change which addresses the National Curriculum Review, the Foundation Phase, 14-19 Learning Pathways and the focus on improved transition between education phases. • Focus our resources for school improvement on areas of greatest need. • Use assessment for learning, the development of skills-based curriculum, vocational learning, support for the more able and talented, and access to impartial information advice and guidance to promote effective teaching and learning.



Priority Outcome	As a result, we will work in partnership and with a shared sense of purpose to:
4. Children and young people are able to access education in schools and other facilities that are fit for purpose.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to review and remodel our primary and secondary school provision to ensure it meets changing population needs, linguistic preference and accessibility.• Continue to review resources and services, such as information and communication technology and transport, in order to meet developing and changing needs.• Develop innovative approaches to the configuration of services for life-long learning with schools and all contributing agencies.
5. Children, young people and families have access to a good range of services within communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to support evidence-based initiatives that are provided in or alongside schools to meet the holistic needs of children and young people.• Continue to develop our local models of integrated delivery of services to ensure they are complementary and work together to achieve the best possible impact.• Develop improved access to youth services, lifelong learning and community provision.
6. Children and young people have access to an improved range of health and health promotion services in schools and other settings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promote evidence-based initiatives, such as healthy schools and anti-bullying programmes.• Promote co-ordinated delivery of substance misuse education, sexual health education, and counselling services, seeking to connect these with harder to reach children and young people.• Ensure that children and young people are directed to appropriate mental health services.

Core Aim 2 - Have a Comprehensive Range of Education and Learning Opportunities

Priority Outcomes	Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 2.1 Children with additional learning needs are supported to overcome barriers to learning.	Number of schools achieving Grade 3 and above in Key Question 4 of Estyn Inspection programme.	2006/07 Academic Year: 95% Grade 3 or above. 90% Grade 2 or above in 2006-07 academic year.	100% Grade 3 or above by 2011. 95% Grade 2 or above by 2011.	Core Aim 2
CA 2.2 Vulnerable groups are supported to overcome barriers to learning and achievement.	The average external qualifications point score for 16 year old looked after children, in any local authority maintained learning setting. Number of young people leaving school without an approved external qualification.	98 is the average external qualifications point score for 16 year old looked after young people. 113 young people left education, during the 2006/07 school year, without an approved external qualification, 8 of which were looked after.	An average points score of 125 for 16 year old looked after young people by 2011. 20% reduction in number of young people leaving school without an approved external qualification by 2011.	Core Aim 2 Core Aim 2
	Number of children and young people excluded permanently from school.	No children or young people were permanently excluded from either primary or secondary schools in 2006/07.	Continue to ensure no permanent exclusions.	Core Aim 2
	Percentage of children and young people's attendance in school.	93% in primary schools and 90% in secondary schools in 2006/07.	94.5% in primary schools by 2011. 91.5% in secondary schools by 2011.	Core Aim 2

Core Aim 2 - Have a Comprehensive Range of Education and Learning Opportunities

Priority Outcomes	Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 2.3 All children and young people are supported to achieve better attainment levels at each key stage, and in particular at key stage 3.	<p>Percentage of children achieving teacher assessed National Curriculum level 4 Core Subject Indicator at the conclusion of Key Stage 2.</p> <p>Percentage of young people achieving teacher assessed National Curriculum level 5 Core Subject Indicator at the conclusion of Key Stage 3.</p> <p>Percentage of young people achieving level 2 threshold at the conclusion of Key Stage 4.</p> <p>Percentage of young people achieving level 1 threshold at the conclusion of Key Stage 4.</p> <p>Average point score for young people studying 2 or more Advanced Levels or equivalent.</p>	<p>Key Stage 2 teacher assessment results show that 71.5% of children achieved level 4 or above in the Core Subject Indicator in 2007.</p> <p>Key Stage 3 teacher assessment results show that 50.5% of young people achieved level 5 or above in the Core Subject Indicator in 2007.</p> <p>52% of young people aged 15 who were on roll in January 2007 achieved the Level 2 Threshold.</p> <p>82% of young people aged 15 who were on roll in January 2007 achieved the Level 1 Threshold.</p> <p>The average point score for young people entering 2 or more A/AS levels is 17.7 at the start of the 2007 academic year.</p>	<p>75% of children achieve level 4 or above by 2011.</p> <p>53.5% of young people achieve level 5 or above by 2011.</p> <p>55% of young people achieve level 2 threshold by 2011.</p> <p>85% of young people achieve level 1 threshold by 2011.</p> <p>Average point score of 20 for young people entering 2 or more A/AS Levels is 20 at the start of the 2011 academic year.</p>	<p>Core Aim 2</p>

Core Aim 2 - Have a Comprehensive Range of Education and Learning Opportunities

Priority Outcomes		Outcome Measures		Current Performance		Local Target(s)		Responsibility	
CA 2.4	Children and young people are able to access education in schools and other facilities that are fit for purpose.	Percentage of our schools that have more than 25% surplus places.	28% of all schools have more than 25% of their capacity surplus at July 2008.	2% reduction of schools which have capacity surplus of more than 25% per annum with a target of 22% by 2011.	Core Aim 2				
CA 2.5	Children, young people and families have access to a good range of services through community focused schools.	Number of children and young people accessing E3+ activities.	Young people take up over 700 E3+ activity opportunities in each of 6 geographical school clusters. 4 new cluster schools will deliver E3+ activities from Sept 2008.	800 activity opportunities a week across all 12 geographical school clusters by 2011.	Core Aim 2				
CA 2.6	Children and young people have access to an improved range of health and health promotion services in school settings.	Number of schools engaged in the Healthy Schools scheme.	Healthy Schools Scheme rolled out to 122 schools, final phrase taking in place in April 2009.	100% schools engaged by 2011.	Core Aim 2 and 3				

Health, Freedom from Abuse And Exploitation



Our vision for Rhondda Cynon Taf is that children, young people and their families will be informed and supported to improve their emotional, spiritual, physical, sexual and social health and well-being, and will be protected from abuse, victimisation and exploitation.

- Health, Social Care & Well-Being Strategy.
- Substance Misuse Strategy.
- All Wales Child Protection Procedures.
- NHS Commissioning Guidance.
- National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidelines.
- Annual Operating Framework 2008/09.

Improving the health and well-being of our children and young people involves work across a number of services, not just the National Health Service.

The overarching vision for this core aim is informed by a number of national and local strategies which impact on children, and young people's health and well-being.

Key Policy Drivers include:

- Designed for Life.
- The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services.
- The All Wales Children and Adolescent Mental Health Strategy 'Everybody's Business' and our local strategy and action plan.
- The National Service Framework for Adult Mental Health Services.



Where are we now? What do we know?

Consistent messages from consultation with children and young people were:

- That the priorities for health, freedom from abuse and exploitation should not just be about preventing ill-health, they should also focus on the general well-being of all children and young people.
- That the needs of children and young people with a disability or additional health needs, commonly highlighted were those suffering from complex health needs and autistic spectrum disorder need to be prioritised.
- The need to address the imbalance and lack of regular access to school nursing services across Rhondda Cynon Taf.

"If someone is disabled they should have the same as everyone else"

Pupil, Brynna Primary School

The amount of information available to us on the health and well-being of children and young people is limited and unfortunately much of what does exist is not available on a local authority level. Much of what we know is drawn upon national data. The high levels of deprivation in our local area are likely to have a significant impact on the extent to which children and young people are achieving good health.

Much of the following information and data has been taken from the National Public Health Service for Wales (2006) Health Needs Assessment 2006: Rhondda Cynon Taf.

In Rhondda Cynon Taf:

- There are 38% of primary school-aged children who are currently considered to be achieving the required levels of physical activity. This figure drops from 38% to 26% between primary and secondary school, and then further to 11.4% for young people aged 15 to 24.
- For secondary school aged young people, gender differences are clearly emerging in the proportions of young people participating in the recommended amount of physical activity, with half as many girls (16%) than boys (32%) are sufficiently active at this age.
- Local children and young people are supported by a range of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services with differing levels of need across universal and specialist services.
- There are gaps in provision to promote children and young people's mental health and emotional well-being nationally and locally. Gaps include: Mental Health Services for children and young people with learning disabilities, autism and other associated disorders, forensic psychology, psychology, family therapy and transition from Child and Adolescent Mental Health to Adult Mental Health Service.
- Across a number of local strategies it has been highlighted that there are significant imbalances in service provision for children and young people with complex health issues, learning disabilities and behaviour problems.





- Fframwaith have commissioned a wide range of services available locally to support children and young people's health and well-being.
- The rate of teenage conception is higher in Rhondda Cynon Taf compared to the rest of Wales, although recent figures suggest that it may be falling.
- Historically there has been a significantly higher level of child protection registration in Rhondda Cynon Taf than the Welsh average, in 2006 to 2007 this has increased by 28%.
- As of June 2008 there were 462 looked after children and young people in the care system in Rhondda Cynon Taf, of which approximately 100 were placed outside of the local authority area.
- There is a counselling service available, although this is not provided across all schools and community settings.
- There are gaps in service provision for school nursing services resulting in difficulties in delivering the Public Health agenda.

"A school nurse or someone to speak to should be available everywhere family planning should be open everyday in a clinic too"

Young person, Mountain Ash Comprehensive School

Across Wales:

- The proportion of 15 year old young people who regularly use cannabis is lower in Wales than in England or Scotland.
- The prevalence of smoking in 15 year olds is higher in Wales than England or Scotland for girls but lower for boys.
- Over 50% of 15 year old girls and almost 60% of boys drink alcohol on a weekly basis in Wales, the highest proportion of all the countries included in the Health Behaviour in School-age Children survey.
- The proportion of pre-obese and obese 13 year olds in Wales is higher than in Scotland and England.

"Obesity is beginning to be a problem. Health issues should be addressed in schools to show the dangers"

Young person, Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun - Sbardun Project

- The proportion of girls and boys in Wales eating breakfast every day and consuming sweets and soft drinks is comparable with England and Scotland.
- Fruit and vegetable consumption in Wales is lower than in England and Scotland, with approximately 20% of 13 year olds eating them daily.
- Recognition of the above the Welsh Assembly Government has developed a guidance document 'Appetite to Life' and the 'Food and Fitness' action plan for children and young people to drive the healthy lifestyle agenda.
- The incidences of sexually transmitted infections are rising across Wales.



“Improved access should mean community based services as part of an integrated team rather than “clinically based”

Member of public

- A recent national report on Sex and Relationship Education in Wales identified that only a minority of schools teach sex and relationships education to high standards through Science, Personal and Social Education, Science and Religious Education lessons.
- Following a School Nurse Review across Wales the Welsh Assembly Government has recognised that there is inconsistency in service provision across Wales.
- The National Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service strategy, ‘Everybody’s Business’ has been implemented in different ways across Wales, leading to inconsistent service developments across authorities.
- The Welsh Assembly Government has proposed that each local authority will be required to develop local mental health promotion action plans, which will contribute towards aspects of the Suicide Prevention Strategy.



What priority outcomes do we want to achieve?

Priority Outcome	As a result, we will work in partnership and with a shared sense of purpose to:
<p>1. Children and Young People are helped and supported to develop and maintain a physically healthy lifestyle.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide accessible information about healthy lifestyles that meets the appropriate age and need. • Create the environment to ensure there is improved access to appropriate sustainable services suitable to the needs of the individual child or young person. • Develop and implement a local nutrition, food and health action plan for children, young people and families. • Further develop a targeted education programme for alcohol, smoking prevention and cessation and substance misuse.
<p>2. Children and young people with complex or additional health needs are supported to access and receive services according to need.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement the learning disabled children and young people's action plan following the local review of learning disabilities services across Rhondda Cynon Taf for children and young people. • Develop and implement plans to improve access to services and support for individuals affected by Autism and other associated disabilities. • Increase multi-agency transitional arrangements for young people with complex health needs. • Consider opportunities for developing a community paediatric nursing team across Rhondda Cynon Taf for children and young people with complex health needs. • Develop action plans to implement out of hospital care model for children and young people in line with other services.
<p>3. Children and young people are helped and supported to improve or maintain their emotional and mental health well-being.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a local mental health promotion action plan to help improve and increase individual's emotional literacy and resilience. • Develop and implement an effective multi-agency training programme to increase the awareness and skills of a range of staff in supporting children and young people. • Increase the level of help and support for schools around early prevention and intervention for children and young people's emotional and mental health. • Increase the joint working practices across Children and Adolescent Mental Health and Adult Mental Health Services to strengthen the transitional process. • Develop and implement plans to support the children affected by imprisonment of parents and or family members.

Priority Outcome

As a result, we will work in partnership and with a shared sense of purpose to:

4. Children and young people are helped and supported to make informed choices regarding sexual health.

- Develop and implement our Teenage Pregnancy and Sexual Health action plan.
- Implement the Welsh Assembly Government School and Family Nurse Programme.
- Ensure that the appropriate services are available and accessible to manage the expected increase in demand on services.

5. Children and young people are safeguarded from abuse and exploitation.

- Contribute to and deliver the priorities set out within the Local Safeguarding Children Board business plan.
- Enhance the skills and capacity of parents and families to support, care for and protect their children.
- Ensure that individuals who pose a risk to children are effectively monitored and managed through the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements process.
- Develop and implement a sexual exploitation action plan following the young person sexual exploitation review completed by Barnardos.



Core Aim 3 - Health, Freedom From Abuse And Exploitations

Priority Outcomes	Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 3.1	Children and young people are helped and supported to develop and maintain a physical healthy lifestyle.	<p>38% of primary school aged children are achieving moderate activity 5 days a week (5 x 60 minutes) during 2007/08.</p> <p>26% of 11 to 15 year olds are achieving moderate activity 5 days a week (5 x 60 minutes) during 2007/08.</p> <p>11.4% 16 to 24 year olds are achieving moderate activity 5 days a week (5 x 30 minutes) during 2007/08.</p>	<p>Targets to increase levels by: 5% of primary school aged children achieving moderate activity 5 days a week by 2011.</p> <p>5% of 11 to 15 year olds achieving moderate activity 5 days a week by 2011.</p> <p>3 - 6% of 16 – 24 year olds achieving moderate activity 5 days a week by 2011.</p>	Core Aim 2, 3 and 4
	Numbers of children and young people having access to substance misuse education appropriate to age level of need and setting.	<p>2953 - pupils at primary school through local Substance Awareness for Everyone Programme over last year.</p> <p>2289 - Treatment & Education Drug Services Primary Schools/Crucial Crew .</p> <p>7731 - Secondary Schools .</p> <p>38 - Teachers</p> <p>86 - Special Educational Needs .</p> <p>26 - Tai Centre</p> <p>208 - Colleges/Uni</p> <p>189 - Youth Clubs</p>	Maintain current levels.	Core Aim 3 and 6
	Number of substance misuse related incidents in school, youth service and Coleg Morgannwg.	<p>Schools September 2006 to July 2007 45 incidents</p> <p>Youth service and College 8 incidents during 2007/08.</p>	Increase numbers of establishments reporting incidents routinely to ensure accuracy of information.	Core Aim 3 and 6

Core Aim 3 - Health, Freedom From Abuse And Exploitations

Priority Outcomes	Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 3.2 Children and young people with complex or additional health needs are supported to access and receive services according to need.	Numbers of children and young people with complex or additional health needs.	No baseline information available.	Develop a local baseline data set for children and young people with complex and / or additional health needs and the services they receive and set appropriate targets.	Core Aim 3
CA 3.3 Children and young people are helped and supported to improve or maintain their emotional wellbeing.	<p>Numbers of tier 1 professionals attending Primary Mental Health Team training sessions.</p> <p>Numbers of tier 1 professionals who contacted the Primary Mental Health Team for advice.</p> <p>The numbers of young people transferring from Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service to Adult Mental Health Service.</p>	<p>Approximately 400 tier 1 professionals attended Primary Mental Health Team training sessions 2007/08.</p> <p>Approximately 1000 tier 1 professionals accessed advice from the Primary Mental Health Team 2007/08.</p> <p>No information available as currently no suitable system in place to measure and track transitions.</p>	<p>Increase to 30% by 2011.</p> <p>Increase to 30% by 2011.</p> <p>Develop a baseline data set for those young people transferring from Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service to Adult Mental Health Service.</p>	<p>Core Aim 3</p> <p>Core Aim 3</p> <p>Core aim 3</p>

Core Aim 3 - Health, Freedom From Abuse And Exploitations

Priority Outcomes		Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 3.4	Children and young people are helped and supported to make informed choices regarding sexual health.	Sexual Health and Teenage Pregnancy strategic action plan in place.	Strategic Action Plan currently under development.	Adoption of the strategic action plan by Fframwaith by June 2009 and development of appropriate targets.	Core Aim 3
CA 3.5	Children & young people are safeguarded from abuse and exploitation.	Local Safeguarding Children's Board Business Plan in Place across Rhondda Cynon Taf.	Business Plan currently under development.	Adopt the Local Safeguarding Children's Board.	Core Aim 3
		Young People Sexual Exploitation action plan for Rhondda Cynon Taf in Place.	Research in relation to Young People Sexual Exploitation complete.	Adoption of the Young People Sexual Exploitation action plan by Fframwaith in 2009.	Core Aim 3



Play, Leisure, Sport and Culture

Our vision is that all children and young people should be able to have fun, enjoy their childhood and youth, pursue learning and life skills through having access to, and opportunities to participate in high quality, and wide ranging play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities which celebrate diversity of interest and needs.

In order to secure optimum physical and emotional health and well-being of all children and young people so they may become well-rounded individuals, they need access to a range of play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities. By “cultural activities” we mean the arts, libraries, museums and the Welsh language. Play, leisure, sport and culture are essential elements of personal growth and well-being, increased self-esteem and raised aspirations. Participation in, and an appreciation of the arts in particular also add to an individual’s understanding of their own and other cultures, the world and their place in it.

Key Policy Drivers include:

- Welsh Assembly Government Play Policy and Implementation Plan 2002
- Rhondda Cynon Taf Play Strategy 2002
- Well-being and Woodlands for Wales 2003 Forestry Commission
- Welsh Assembly Government Walking and Cycling Strategy for Wales 2003
- A Framework for the Delivery of Dragon Sport 2005 Sports Council Wales

- Climbing Higher: The Welsh Assembly Government Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity 2005 and Next Steps 2006
- Food and Fitness: Promoting Healthy Eating and Physical Activity to Children and Young People in Wales 2006
- The Stephens Review on The Arts in Wales 2006 Welsh Assembly Government
- Arts in Health and Wellbeing – Benefiting Wales 2007 Arts Council of Wales
- Welsh Assembly Government Youth Strategy for Wales 2007

“Not nice to have nothing. Parks should have swings, monkey bars, slide, climbing frame and muddy puddles”.

Pupil, Brynna Primary School

Where are we now? What do we know?

A consistent message from consultation with children and young people is that enjoying life is a vital element of success and should be encouraged.

- There is a wide and growing range of opportunities for children and young people to participate in play, leisure, sport and cultural activities across the County Borough, including through youth clubs, school-based activities, holiday play schemes, play provider organisations and play parks, community recreation centres, dance and drama societies, arts and crafts groups, sports centres and

clubs, museum workshops, library services, digital media, music and literature development initiatives and youth services. These opportunities are funded and provided by a wide range of organisations, staff and volunteers.

- A Play Strategy exists and is being reviewed. New commissioning arrangements in Rhondda Cynon Taf have resulted in increased play provision, including Welsh language across the County Borough.
- Young people at risk of becoming involved in crime or anti-social behaviour have access to additional play, leisure, sport and culture activities.
- Recent and significant investment has enabled disabled children and young people to attend open access play, holiday care, leisure, sport and cultural opportunities, as well as specific training for play workers and sports coaches.
- Community Focussed Schools and the E3+ programme provide children and young people with easy access to leisure, sport and cultural opportunities. The Foundation Phase uses play to encourage learning and safe routes to schools have been implemented across the County Borough.
- The '5 x 60' initiative in Rhondda Cynon Taf is tackling the drop off in participation in sport and physical activity after primary school, with ten schools currently participating.
- A Local Authority Partnership Agreement is being implemented in the area in partnership with the Sports Council for Wales.
- Funded by the Arts Council of Wales, the Rhondda Cynon Taf Youth Arts Strategic Partnership is creating a Youth Arts Strategy to develop innovative, exciting, adventurous and high quality arts experiences for young people, including for those with no previous experience in the arts.

- Cultural Services' Arts Development officers are working with the Youth Service and Corporate Policy team to develop Porth Plaza as a town centre based creative industries hub for young people, in response to the identified need for town centre youth service provision.

"More facilities and activities are needed in each individual area, as young people are quite territorial – this means more investment, joined up working with neighbouring areas. This is happening, but needs to be encouraged"

Pontygwaith Regeneration Partnership

However:

- Play, leisure, sport and cultural provision has built up over the years in a relatively ad hoc fashion, so there are still gaps, in particular the provision for disabled children and young people, older young people, and at certain times of the year.
- Natural play spaces have been lost to building and traffic, and open play or outdoor adventure play spaces have not been developed to take their place.
- The views of children and young people are not yet informing planning decisions on major new developments affecting their lives.
- Children and young people can be at their most vulnerable to exploitation and abuse when participating in play, leisure, sport and cultural activities and appropriate safeguarding measures need to be put in place to address this.
- There is a lack of appropriate play training and a shortage of qualified play workers, Welsh-speaking artists to lead arts activities in Welsh, specialist sports coaches and dance tutors locally.

- A number of children and young people cannot access out of school play, leisure, sports and cultural opportunities locally because of the cost of activities, transport and availability. Some children and young people need more support to achieve the same level of access.
- Links need to be made between providers and the Parenting and Flying Start programmes and providers of play, leisure, sport and culture.
- Traditional play, leisure, sport and cultural activities provided in many areas may not be what the majority of children and young people want.
- Many children and young people enjoy, but have difficulty finding out how they can get involved in certain cultural activities, most would choose to find out about these activities through e-mails, social networking sites and text messages.

“Thanks to this project I'm becoming an integral part of the whole scene, able to go to great events to see great bands, and most of all get my work seen. The best moments of the project for me consist of having a long conversation with my favourite band Reel Big Fish backstage ... or maybe the time also at the Full Ponty I helped to secure the Pennie interview. That was a very proud moment.. It's been an experience as a whole, and will continue far beyond this for me”.

Young participant, Plugged In magazine project



What priority strategic outcomes do we want to achieve?

Priority Outcome	As a result, we will work in partnership and with a shared sense of purpose to:
<p>1. Ensure children and young people experiencing poverty, disadvantage or other geographical, physical or social barriers to participation have better access to play, leisure, sport and cultural activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and overcome barriers for disabled children, young people and their families and carers, enabling them to take part in open access mainstream provision. • Identify areas and populations with limited access to provision. • Address transport issues where they represent a barrier to access including consideration of walking and cycling routes. • Increase awareness within children, young people, their families and carers of the provision that is available. • Promote greater understanding, amongst professionals and volunteers working with children and young people of the barriers to participation.
<p>2. Offer children and young people a broader range of high quality participatory activities, including digitally based, that meet their demand and needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcome the drop in participation during key transition periods, e.g. primary to secondary school and leaving school. • Provide innovative approaches, including in the Welsh language, by active digital participation and through supporting cultural entrepreneurs, to engaging populations of children and young people not currently participating. • Identify and maintain an accurate picture of the play, including open access, natural and adventure, leisure, sport and cultural, opportunities available.



Priority Outcome

As a result, we will work in partnership and with a shared sense of purpose to:

3. Ensure that children and young people benefit from a wider and greater awareness, amongst families, agencies and communities, of the value, importance and benefits of play, leisure, sport and culture in their lives.

- Enable children and young people to influence the development and implementation of local and national policies, urban planning and any local authority processes, including school grounds development and Planning Gain that have a direct or indirect impact on play, leisure, sport and cultural provision.
- Develop a process for celebrating children and young people's achievements.
- Promote the message that it is acceptable that play, leisure, sport and cultural activities can be 'noisy and messy' as play in particular is a fundamental part of children's development and combat parents' and carers' fears on letting children play outside.
- Develop and extend the range of partnerships in the sector and build on the work of the Play Association.
- Promote the benefits of walking and cycling to school.



"My son is hugely introverted in every social situation but displays confidence when singing or playing music".

Parent of young person with Aspergers Syndrome

Core Aim 4 - Play, Leisure, Sport and Culture

Priority Outcomes		Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 4.1	Children and young people experiencing poverty, disadvantage or other geographical physical or social barriers to participation have better access to play, leisure, sport and cultural activities.	<p>Number of disabled children and young people accessing play, leisure, sport and cultural provision.</p> <p>Number of disadvantaged children and young people accessing play, leisure, sport and cultural provision.</p> <p>Number of children and young people, their families and carers aware of provision available.</p>	<p>Baseline to be set based on the number of young people on the Disabled Children's Index accessing play, leisure, sport and cultural provision.</p> <p>Baseline to be set based on the number of disadvantaged children and young people accessing play, leisure, sport and cultural provision.</p> <p>Children and young people are being consulted on what provision is available.</p>	<p>100% participation amongst those wanting to participate by 2011.</p> <p>10% increase in the number of children and young people accessing play, leisure, sport and cultural provision.</p> <p>60% of those consulted report awareness of provision available.</p>	Core Aim 4
CA 4.2	Children and young people offered a broader range of high quality participatory activities, including digitally based, that meet their demand and needs.	<p>Number of children and young people participating at key transition periods (primary to secondary and school leavers).</p> <p>Number of young people supported to become cultural entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Children and young people, their families and carers report a good range of provision available.</p>	<p>Currently no overall baseline information available.</p> <p>Baseline of young people supported as cultural entrepreneurs not yet established.</p> <p>Surveys have been carried out on provision available.</p>	<p>Establish baseline for numbers of children and young people participating at key transition points.</p> <p>Establish baseline of young people supported as cultural entrepreneurs and increase by 10% by 2011.</p> <p>60% of those surveyed reporting good provision available.</p>	Core Aim 4

Listened to and Treated with Respect

Our vision is that children and young people will influence the planning and delivery of services within Rhondda Cynon Taf.

This core aim is universal, based on the rights and entitlements of all children and young people, to have a voice and to identify and shape the services they need. It underpins all services for children and young people aged between 0 and 25 years. The Welsh Assembly Government's vision is that Wales should be a place where children and young people are treated as valued members of the community, whose voices are heard and whose needs are considered.

Key Policy Drivers include:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005
- The Sex Discrimination Act 1975
- The Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- The National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services (2005)
- National Standards for Participation 2006 Welsh Assembly Government

The national agenda includes a drive for:

- Improved involvement of children and young people in their local communities as active citizens in their own right, having a say in how their locality needs to develop.
- Evidence that the voice of children and young people has directly influenced the direction of planning, policy development and service delivery.
- Routine involvement of children and young people in evaluation and review of all services.
- Access of children and young people to relevant, accurate and current information to assist their participation and their choice of service.

“Adults don’t listen to kids, and we live here too”

Young Person

- Access to a responsive, relevant advocacy service that support the voice of children and young people to be heard, particularly the voice of the most vulnerable, which is often the weakest.
- Complaints procedures and processes that children and young people can easily access and that the issues raised by complaints are taken into account in reviews of services.

The Fframwaith Partnership understands that achieving these ambitions involves a step-change in the practice of all those responsible for the planning and delivery of services, to avoid tokenism and a developing cynicism in our children and young people. The respect of the children and young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf must be earned, by showing them respect and taking their views seriously.

Where are we now? What do we know?

A consistent message from consultation with children and young people is that being involved plays a large part in raising young people’s self-esteem.

As a Partnership, we have already prioritised the development of improved co-ordination of participation activity locally, as a result of the Commissioning Strategy for Preventative Services 2006.

There are already many and various mechanisms in place to seek and represent the views of children, young people and families across Rhondda Cynon Taf including: schools councils, youth forums, youth councils, parent

and carer networks, advocacy services and student parliaments.

The Fframwaith Partnership has a Participation and Involvement Officer to co-ordinate participation of children and young people, set quality standards, and develop expertise locally.

“There is a need for unbiased advice, guidance and support from people who know and are trusted by the members”

Young Person, Wattstown Youth Centre

Work has begun on the development of child-friendly information and guides to meaningful participation.

A Children and Young People’s Network is planned to ensure that the voice of children and young people is heard when high-level strategic decisions are made by the Partnership in Rhondda Cynon Taf.





"The attitude towards children and young people can be almost intolerant"

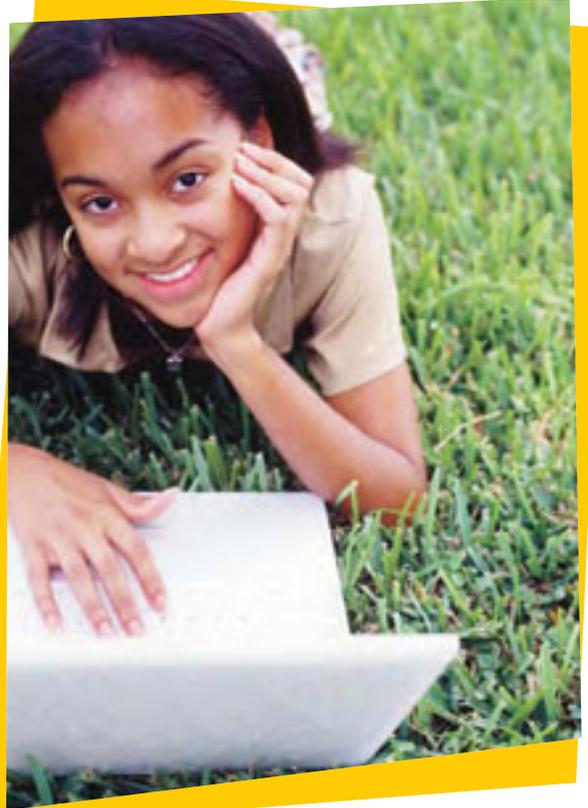
Penderyn Sports and Social Association

"There is a need to disseminate positive stories to the media so that a true representation of contemporary youth is seen as opposed to the continued relentless negative stereotyping prevalent in the media"

Pontygwaith Regeneration Partnership

However:

- There are gaps in local opportunities for children and young people to participate in particular, for children and young people with disabilities.
- We still need to work hard to ensure that future participation of children and young people, particularly those who are disengaged from education, training or employment, is:
 - Routine, undertaken regularly and across all services.
 - Undertaken using information and language that is easy to understand.
 - Fun.
 - Able to give all children and young people the chance to be involved through different ways of talking to and understanding them.
 - Meaningful, we must listen to what children and young people tell us, and give feedback on how their views are making a difference.
 - Transparent, so that children and young people see how they have made a difference. If we cannot do something, we will explain why as soon as we can.



"Do we spend enough time asking children and young people what they want"

Adult Public Health Forum

What priority outcomes do we want to achieve now?

Priority Outcome	As a result, we will work in partnership and with a shared sense of purpose to:
<p>1. Children, young people, families and organisations are involved in the development, implementation and review of a multi-agency participation strategy in Rhondda Cynon Taf.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Participation and Involvement Strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf.
<p>2. Children and young people influence the planning and delivery of services they receive in Rhondda Cynon Taf.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a first step, prior to the implementation of the Participation and Involvement Strategy, develop a forum for children and young people who are disabled. • Expand and enhance existing complaints processes for children and young people in a range of settings. • Develop a responsive, relevant advocacy service to support the voice of children and young people, particularly the most vulnerable.
<p>3. Children and young people from different racial and cultural groups feel respected, accepted and valued.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map current participation and other services in relation to race, gender, disability, language, culture, religion and sexuality. • Identify barriers to participation to inform the Participation and Involvement Strategy. • Undertake awareness training with children and young people in a co-ordinated manner to raise awareness of differences in race, gender, disability, language, culture, religion and sexuality.
<p>4. Children and young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf are shown respect and in return respect others.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an understanding of respect for children and young people across all services within Rhondda Cynon Taf. • Increase the use of restorative approaches, repairing the harm caused by lack of respect.

“Respect is probably the most important issue in the local area, mutual respect is crucial for all aspects of life”

Young Person, Porth County Community School

Core Aim 5 - Listened to and Treated with Respect

Priority Outcomes		Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 5.1	Children, young people, families and organisations are involved in the development, implementation and review of multi-agency participation strategy.	<p>Participation strategy for Rhondda Cynon Taf in place.</p> <p>Child and young person friendly version of the participation and involvement strategy in place.</p> <p>Numbers of children and young people involved and consulted on the strategy.</p> <p>Number of Fframwaith partners that have adopted the participation strategy.</p>	<p>Partial participation strategy being reviewed through Core Aim 5 working group.</p> <p>Children and Young People group is established in order to develop Children and Young People version.</p>	<p>Adoption of strategy by Fframwaith partnership by September 2009.</p> <p>Child and young person friendly participation strategy in place by September 2009.</p> <p>Partners adopt the participation strategy by March 2010.</p>	<p>Core Aim 5</p> <p>Core Aim 5</p> <p>Core Aim 5</p>

Core Aim 5 - Listened to and Treated with Respect

Priority Outcomes	Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 5.2 Children and young people influence the planning and delivery of services they receive.	Numbers of children and young people who are satisfied that they influence the planning and delivery of services they receive from Fframwaith commissioned services.	Fframwaith commissioned services are required to report satisfaction levels of children and young people.	Of those surveyed, 80% of children and young people express satisfaction with each Fframwaith commissioned service by September 2011.	Core Aim 5
	Number of children and young people's participation groups.	Current range of participation groups involved in strategic participation for children and young people in place including: Blueprint Forum for Looked After Children, Black Minority and Ethnic Forum, Rhondda Cynon Taf youth council.	Forum for disabled children and young people in place by June 2009. Comprehensive network for the participation and involvement of children and young people in place by September 2011.	Core Aim 5
	Number of partners that have processes in place to enable children and young people to influence the planning and delivery of services.	Statutory complaints and compliments processes in place where required. Baseline information of young people who are asked their views on issues that affect them-60% asked sometimes and 40% rarely asked.	All statutory complaints processes in place. 80% of children and young people asked their views on issues that affect them. Reduction to 20% who are rarely asked their views.	Core Aim 5
	Number of children and young people accessing Advocacy services.	Multi-agency group set-up to address recently issued guidelines to enable a jointly procured service to be established.	Jointly commissioned Advocacy service in place and to commence service delivery in 2009.	Core Aim 5

Core Aim 5 - Listened to and Treated with Respect

Priority Outcomes	Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 5.3 Children and young people from different racial and cultural groups feel respected, accepted and valued.	<p>Numbers of Black Minority Ethnic children and young people who feel respected, accepted and valued.</p> <p>Numbers of disabled children and young people who feel respected, accepted and valued.</p> <p>Numbers of children and young people who are Welsh speakers who feel respected accepted and valued.</p>	Currently no baseline information.	Of those surveyed, 80% of children and young people feel respected, accepted and valued by 2011.	Core Aim 5
CA 5.4 Children and young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf are shown respect and in return respect other.	Numbers of children and young people who feel they are respected, accepted and valued.	Initial consultation responses indicate children and young people do not feel they are shown respect.	Of those surveyed, 80% of children and young people feel they are shown respect.	Core Aim 5



Safe Home and Community

Our vision is to create an environment where all children, young people and families are empowered to achieve their potential through equitable provision of quality services, are given a sense of belonging and are able to feel and be safe within their homes and communities.

Key Policy Drivers include:

- All Wales Youth Offending Strategy
- Youth Crime Action Plan 2008
- Code of Practice for Victims of Crime
- Welsh Assembly Government All Wales Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Welsh Assembly Government Road Safety Strategy for Wales
- Local Safeguarding Children Board – Working Together
- Homelessness Act 1985 Amended 2002
- Delivering Safer Communities (Home Office 2007)
- Welsh Assembly Government Substance Misuse Strategy
- Fulfilled Lives, Supportive Communities

We want every young person in Rhondda Cynon Taf to live in a family and community which is safe and which recognises the need to protect its children and young people. We want to ensure that they do not become victims of or suffer the consequences of domestic abuse, substance misuse, anti-social behaviour,

accidents or crime. Children and young people of Rhondda Cynon Taf should be able to contribute to and play their part in making their communities safe for everyone.

Where are we now? What do we know?

A consistent message from consultation with children and young people is that everyone should have access to somewhere they feel safe, whether it be in their home, community or school.

Themes from consultation with children and young people include:

- Concerns about the level of substance misuse in our communities.
- Need for child focussed substance misuse services.
- Availability of counselling.
- Ease of access to information and advice.

“Some people don’t have a safe community, but things have changed and there is someone who can sort out things in every community”

Young Person, Mountain Ash Comprehensive School

- Services are co-ordinated and delivered locally across a range of partnerships, including the Local Safeguarding Children Board, the Substance Misuse Action Team, the Community Safety Partnership, some of which work to improve services for adults as well as children.
- A number of services locally contribute to providing children and young people with a safe home and community, including a specialist domestic violence court, services to prevent youth offending and work with offenders, housing services, anti-bullying and restorative justice work in schools, community-based services to divert young people from anti-social activities and entry into the criminal justice system, and services for looked after children and young people.
- The number of reported crimes committed by young people in Rhondda Cynon Taf has decreased from 3,419 in 2002/03 to 886 in 2006/07, a reduction of 74.1% over four years.
- Compared with the rest of Wales, very few young people are subject to Anti-Social Behaviour Orders in Rhondda Cynon Taf.



- The recent inspection of youth offending services in Rhondda Cynon Taf found that the service is well-managed, committed to improvement, and offering a good service to children, young people and families. The service is well-resourced, with partners demonstrating their commitment.
- Children in need, including looked after children, have access to a good range of services, many of which are provided on the basis of partnership.
- The number of children killed or seriously injured on our roads has fallen by almost 40%, reflecting a number of initiatives in schools to promote safe and responsible road use.

"School Council asked for "Buddy benches" when you feel sad or alone you can sit on the bench and a buddy comes to sit with you "

Pupil, Brynna Primary School

- Compared with the rest of Wales, very few parents are subject to compulsory Parenting Orders made by the courts. Most parents whose children are beginning to engage in anti-social or criminal behaviour are able to work with services to improve parenting on a voluntary basis.



However:

- Young people, particularly those aged 18 to 24 years, are far more likely to be a victim of crime, including violent crime than other children or adults.
- Some wards still have higher rates of youth offending than others.
- Stakeholders acknowledge that there are still some gaps in the way services engage with families to support good parenting.
- The number of looked after children in Rhondda Cynon Taf has reduced slightly in the last twelve months, but the number of these children and young people experiencing three or more placement moves in one year has increased slightly over the same time period.
- The vast majority of our housing fails to reach the Welsh Quality Housing Standard.
- The percentage of households which are overcrowded (4.8%) is higher than the Welsh average and there is not enough space for children to play and learn.
- Above average number of households in the County Borough are in temporary accommodation, which includes families with children or pregnant women.

"I would be dead by now if I hadn't had a Detention Training Order and help from the Youth Offending Service. They helped me see what I was doing to myself. They are helping me get accommodation and a place in college"

Comment from Young Person during Youth Offending Service Inspection

What priority outcomes do we want to achieve?

Priority Outcome	As a result, we will work in partnership and with a shared sense of purpose to:
1. Fewer children and young people are engaged in offending and anti-social behaviour.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the number of first time entrants to the youth justice system. • Reduce the number of young people re-offending. • Increase the number of young people being effectively dealt with without recourse to statutory orders.
2. Fewer children and young people are misusing substances, and fewer children and young people are affected by the substance misuse of those with responsibility for them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the number of children and young people having access to substance misuse education appropriate to age, level of need and setting. • Increase the number of parents and carers accessing services, which provide support for parents and carers involved in substance misuse.
3. Children and young people are safer from bullying, discrimination and harassment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a culture of safe communities whereby children, young people and families are able to feel and be safe. • Ensure good practice is disseminated and the use of anti-bullying policies are monitored and reviewed.
4. Children and young people witnessing or suffering domestic abuse are protected and supported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote a culture of safe communities whereby children, young people and families are able to feel and be safe. • Increase the number of children and young people accessing services, for those suffering or witnessing domestic abuse.

Priority Outcome

As a result, we will work in partnership and with a shared sense of purpose to:

5. Children, young people and their families are living in appropriate and accessible accommodation, which meets their needs.

- Improve the availability of good quality and appropriate accommodation for vulnerable young people living independently, young people leaving care, homeless young people, young people who are substance misusers, homeless families and young people who offend.
- Develop a wider range of housing options available to all children and young people with high support needs, including provision of emergency accommodation for young people in crisis.
- Develop a wider range of supported placements to enable vulnerable children and young people to sustain their living arrangements.
- Develop a range of appropriate support and accommodation to improve outcomes for looked after children.

6. Fewer children and young people are road casualty victims.

- Reduce road casualties for children and young people in line with national reduction targets.
- Increase the number of children and young people involved in Children's Traffic Club, Kerbcraft and Pass Plus Cymru courses.



Core Aim 6 - Safe home and community

Priority Outcomes	Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 6.1 Fewer children and young people are engaged in offending and anti-social behaviour.	<p>Number of first time entrants to the youth justice system.</p> <p>The number of young people re-offending.</p>	<p>Baseline data not available. Baseline will be set when new Youth Justice Board targets are determined.</p> <p>Baseline data not available. Baseline will be set when new Youth Justice Board targets are determined.</p>	<p>To reduce year on year the number of first entrants into the criminal justice system by 5%.</p> <p>The rate of proven re-offending by young people who offend. (the average number of proven further offences committed by the cohort of Jan to March 08 within 12 months of the initial substantive outcome).</p> <p>(2008-9 interim target).</p>	<p>Core Aim 6</p> <p>Core Aim 6</p>
	<p>The number of young people being effectively dealt with, without recourse to statutory orders.</p>	<p>2 Anti Social Behaviour Orders 2007/08.</p>	<p>Increase numbers of young people receiving Anti Social Behaviour interventions at ABC level by 2011.</p>	<p>Core Aim 6</p>

Core Aim 6 – Safe home and community

Priority Outcomes		Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 6.2	Fewer children and young people are misusing substances, and fewer children and young people are affected by the substance misuse of those with responsibility for them.	Numbers of children and young people having access to substance misuse education appropriate to age level of need and setting.	2953 pupils at primary school through local Substance Awareness for Everyone Programme over last year. Treatment & Education Drug Services Primary Schools and Crucial Crew 2289. Secondary Schools 7731. Teachers 38 Special Educational Needs 86. Tai Centre 26 Colleges and Universities 208 Youth Clubs 189	To maintain current levels.	Core Aim 6 and 3
		Number of substance misuse related incidents in school, youth service and Coleg Morgannwg.	45 incidents in schools 8 incidents in youth service and college during September 2006 to July 2007.	To increase numbers of establishments reporting incidents routinely to ensure accuracy of information.	Core Aim 6
		Numbers of young people in contact with Youth Justice system screened for substance misuse and referred into treatment.	87.5% young people assessed April 2007 to March 2008.	95% of young people to be assessed for substance misuse by 2011.	Core Aim 6

Core Aim 6 - Safe home and community

	Priority Outcomes	Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 6.3	Children and young people are safer from bullying, discrimination and harassment.	<p>Ensure good practice is disseminated and the use of anti-bullying policies monitored and reviewed.</p> <p>Numbers of children and young people who report that they feel safe in their communities.</p>	<p>No formal recording system currently exists and no mechanism in place for dissemination of information across agencies.</p> <p>Of those children and young people surveyed in 2008, 75% reported feeling safe or very safe in their communities.</p>	<p>Develop systems to facilitate information sharing and monitor anti-bullying policy and practice.</p> <p>80% of those children and young people surveyed report that they feel safe or very safe in their communities by 2011.</p>	Core aim 6
CA 6.4	Children and young people witnessing or suffering domestic abuse are protected and supported.	<p>Number of children considered by Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements who are referred to other agencies for services and the outcome.</p>	No baseline information available.	Baseline to be established and appropriate target set.	Core Aim 6

Core Aim 6 - Safe home and community

Priority Outcomes	Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
	<p>The number of homeless young people who have used other forms of temporary accommodation during the year.</p> <p>The percentage of young people formerly looked after with whom the local authority is in contact know to be in suitable non-emergency accommodation at age 19.</p>	<p>14 young people aged 16 to 17 years used other forms of temporary accommodation during 2007/08.</p> <p>32 young people aged 18 to 24 years used other forms of temporary accommodation during 2007/08.</p> <p>92.6% of young people (aged 19) formerly looked after were living in suitable non-emergency accommodation as at 31st March 2008.</p>	<p>Maintain existing levels of performance.</p> <p>Maintain existing levels of performance.</p>	<p>Core Aim 6</p> <p>Core Aim 6</p>
CA 6.6	<p>Fewer children and young people are road casualty victims.</p> <p>Number of child casualties for all road users.</p> <p>Number of young people who are casualties for all road users.</p>	<p>9.37 % of Looked After Children had three or more placements during 2007/08.</p> <p>125 children were road casualties in 2006/07.</p> <p>271 young people were road casualties in 2006/07.</p>	<p>Maintain existing levels of performance.</p> <p>To reduce road casualties in line with national targets.</p> <p>To reduce road casualties in line with national targets.</p>	<p>Core Aim 6</p> <p>Core Aim 6</p> <p>Core Aim 6</p>

Are not Disadvantaged by Poverty

Our vision is to raise aspirations and create opportunities to reduce poverty for children, young people and their families through sustained targeted activity in the most deprived areas of Rhondda Cynon Taf.

Key Policy Drivers include:

- A Fair Future for Children, Welsh Assembly Government Strategy to reduce poverty.
 - National Child Poverty Implementation Plan, Welsh Assembly Government.
 - Communities First Programme.
 - Cymorth, the children and youth support fund.
 - Flying Start Programme.
 - Genesis Wales.
 - 14 – 19 Learning Pathways.
- The Welsh Assembly Government's strategy covers three main aspects of child poverty. These are:
- Income Poverty, the strategy considers access to employment. It brings in the work of the Wales Spatial Plan, which aims to ensure that jobs are created in the part of the country where they are needed. It also considers financial inclusion, tax, benefits and grants for education.
 - Participation Poverty, the aim is to ensure that disadvantaged children are not left out of leisure and social activities, are not discriminated against or bullied, and the voices of disadvantaged young people are heard.
 - Service Poverty, the aim is to ensure that all sections of society have equal access to public services.



“Not nice if you can't play in the parks or have not got money to buy things”

Pupil, Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg, Abercynon

Other chapters within this Plan deal with the extent to which disadvantaged children and young people are able to participate in and have equal access to services and activities, and have an opportunity to be heard. This chapter focuses on the extent of income and service poverty across Rhondda Cynon Taf, and access to training, jobs and employment opportunities for young people and families.

Those at most risk of being disadvantaged by poverty, include:

- Children living in households without working parents.
- Children who have more than one generation of their family unemployed.
- Families with children who have a disability.
- Children living in families where a parent has a disability.
- Children from black and other minority ethnic groups.
- Children in lone parent families.
- Children living in larger families of more than three children where the rate of unemployment is higher.
- Young people who are homeless.

Where are we now? What do we know?

A consistent message from our consultation with children and young people is that employment is the best protection against poverty and that young people and adults need the right skills and qualifications to get jobs. The need for additional support for those young people known not to be in education, employment or training was raised. Another strong message from consultation is the importance in providing accessible and affordable services, including transport to our most disadvantaged people and communities.

“Price of bus and train tickets not of help to the “no poverty campaign”

Young Person, Porth County Community School

- Most young people in year 11 stay in learning, and the majority of 16-18 year olds are in education, employment or training, although this rate is lower than the average for Wales. Rhondda Cynon Taf's collaborative 14–19 Learning Pathways strategy is continuing to develop well, and good progress is being made.





However:

- Rhondda Cynon Taf still ranks as the 3rd most deprived Authority in Wales.
- Approximately 30% of children in the Rhondda Cynon Taf live in workless households.
- There are higher than average rates of adults with no qualifications (16.7% compared to a Welsh average of 15.4%), restricting access to more challenging and better paid jobs.

“Yes – lots of jobs”

Young Person, Porth County Community School

“Schools and colleges to work more closely with local employers to make sure young people have the right skills for work”

Member of the public, Public Health Forum

- The work of the Economic Development Partnership and Bro Dysg is creating opportunities by improving the skills our young people have to match those employers need. This is improving prospects for securing employment.
- There is a good range of high quality childcare provision across the County Borough, and as jobs become available, it will be important to make sure the number of childcare and childminding places meets local demand.

- Approximately 26% of working age people are economically inactive, compared to 24.5% across Wales. This increases to more than 50% in our most deprived areas.
- Approximately 15% of working age people are in receipt of incapacity benefit and more than 6% claim income support, of which approximately 41% are lone parents compared to 38% across Wales. For children, this increases the likelihood that they will live in low income households.

What priority outcomes do we want to achieve?

Priority Outcome	As a result, we will work in partnership and with a shared sense of purpose to:
<p>1. More children and young people from Rhondda Cynon Taf continue their education or training, and are able to get jobs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand and improve curriculum choice for young people, particularly those from disadvantaged groups, ensuring that it meets employment needs. • Improve the availability of information, advice and guidance to enable young people, parents and carers to make informed choices. • Improve young peoples employability by providing access to work placements, apprenticeships and employment. • Develop the quantity, quality and range of employment and vocational training opportunities for young people not in education, employment or training.
<p>2. Children, young people and their families live in households free from low income and financial exclusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to improve the basic skills and educational attainment of adults through the provision of learning opportunities to improve chances of employment. • Continue to provide enough childcare places to allow parents to return to work. • Develop programmes to assist economically inactive parents, carers and family members, including those on incapacity benefit, income support and lone parents back into work. • Pilot projects to maximise income for families through advice and guidance on childcare, benefits, training and employment. • Develop programmes to support young people and families to improve financial literacy as part of a wider debt management strategy. • Continue to improve the time taken to process housing benefits applications, particularly those from disadvantaged groups.
<p>3. Children, young people and their families can participate fully in all aspects of life.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop programmes to eliminate stigmatisation of children and young people due to their background or circumstances, through the development of targeted child poverty initiatives. • Continue to improve accessibility and affordability of transport for those children and young people at most risk of being disadvantaged by poverty. • Develop programmes to increase access to a range of out of school hour activities to improve opportunities for informal learning and emotional and physical health for those children at most risk of being disadvantaged by poverty.

Core Aim 7 - Are not Disadvantaged by Poverty

Priority Outcomes	Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 7.1 More children and young people from Rhondda Cynon Taf continue their education or training, and are able to get jobs.	The number of young people aged 16 to 19 years not in education, employment or training.	518 young people aged 16 to 19 years known not to be in education, employment or training, which is 1 in 12 of school leavers in summer 2007.	1 in 13 of school leavers by summer 2011.	Core aim 7
CA 7.2 Children, young people and their families live in households free from low income and financial exclusion.	% of children living in workless households.	29.9% of children dependant on workless benefits.	To improve performance to at least the Welsh average by 2011.	Core aim 7
	% of lone parents in employment.	56% of lone parents in employment.	To improve performance to at least the Welsh average by 2011.	Core aim 7
	The average time for processing new housing benefit claims.	On average 30.88 days were taken to process new housing benefit claims in 2007/08.	30 days on average for processing new housing benefit claims by 2011.	Core aim 7
	The average time for processing notifications of change of circumstances.	On average 12.62 days were taken to process notifications of change of circumstances in 2007/08.	10 days on average for processing notifications of change of circumstances by 2011.	Core aim 7
	The numbers of families and young people that benefit from welfare and debt services.	Baseline yet to be established.	Target to be established following calculation of baseline.	Core Aim 7

Core Aim 7 - Are not Disadvantaged by Poverty

Priority Outcomes	Outcome Measures	Current Performance	Local Target(s)	Responsibility
CA 7.3 Children, young people and their families can participate fully in all aspects of life.	<p>The number of children and young people, at most risk of being disadvantaged by poverty, that benefit from new initiatives to eliminate stigmatisation due to their background circumstances.</p> <p>The number of children and young people at most risk of being disadvantaged by poverty that benefit from new programmes to increase access to a range of out of school hour activities to improve opportunities for informal learning and emotional and physical health.</p> <p>The number of children, young people and their families at most risk of being disadvantaged by poverty that benefit from new initiatives to reduce child poverty.</p>	<p>Baseline yet to be established.</p> <p>Baseline yet to be established.</p> <p>Baseline yet to be established.</p>	<p>Target to be established following calculation of baseline.</p> <p>Target to be established following calculation of baseline.</p> <p>Target to be established following calculation of baseline.</p>	<p>Core Aim 7</p> <p>Core Aim 7</p> <p>Core Aim 7</p>

Workforce Development

Our vision is that the workforce in Rhondda Cynon Taf will be qualified, safe, competent and confident to meet the need, support and build on the individual strengths of children, young people and their families to promote and safeguard their well-being and development.

The key national priorities and actions for workforce development are mainly common to all organisations involved in the delivery of services to children, young people and families. These include elements relating to:

- More recruitment and retention of the right kind of people.
- Continuous improvement of the skill base and quality of practice of all staff, including volunteers, carers, and self-employed providers as well as paid professionals.
- New ways of working and strengthening inter-agency and multi-disciplinary working.
- The development of common core competencies for the children and young people's workforce.
- The strengthening of leadership, management and supervision skills.
- The development of a common data set, providing information on the children and young people's workforce across health services, the local authority, voluntary and independent sectors.

"Police, nurse, teacher, doctor, dentist, fireman - they are people who help us - be healthy, be friends, play, they give nice lessons"

Pupil, Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Abercynon

However, there is also the need to recognise national initiatives in terms of specific careers for sectors and individual agencies.

The kinds of service areas principally used by children, young people and families, and which need to be included in our plans for workforce development, include:

- Early Years and Childcare.
- Play, Leisure, Sport and Culture.
- Health.
- Schools and Learning Providers.
- Children's Social Care and Family Support.
- Youth Work.
- Youth and Criminal Justice.
- Specialist Services.

Where are we now? What do we know?

- A consistent message from consultation with children and young people is that the attitude and the way in which people work with them is as important as their skills and knowledge.
- We have an existing children and young people's workforce in excess of 20,000 in Rhondda Cynon Taf.
- For ongoing services and individual new programmes, audits are undertaken on a regular basis locally to inform the workforce development agenda.



- A broad range of appropriate qualifications and training can be accessed locally, such as BTEC National Diplomas, Foundation Degrees and National Vocational Qualifications at levels 2, 3 and 4, and a comprehensive range of Council for Awards in Children's Education Certificates and Diplomas.
 - Recent recruitment and retention initiatives in Children's Social Services have led to an increase in the number of social workers employed by the authority and a drop in the level of unfilled vacancies for social work and allied staff to 5%, below the Wales average of 10%.
 - The Early Years and Family Support Training Team has recently become an accredited National Vocational Qualification training centre in order to increase the availability and quality of training opportunities. An additional 50 National Vocational Qualification level 3 and 4 training places will be available annually as a result.
 - During 2007, we piloted the new P3 training programme for play workers.
 - In the past year, 150 individuals have been recruited through Flying Start to early years, play, and childcare training courses. Over 100 individuals are still waiting for training places.
 - In 2007/08, £144k was invested in Foundation Phase training, focusing on: Introduction to the Foundation Phase, Child Development and Experiential Learning. The training was available to all early years registered education providers.
 - The Health Service is undergoing a major workforce change programme, focusing on modernising the whole of the workforce and improving access to community based services to avoid the need for patients to come into hospital for treatment. This programme has led initially to an intention to increase the number of Community Children's Nurses, Nurse Practitioners, and Nurse Specialists working locally.
 - Our Youth Service has a franchise arrangement with North East Wales Institute of Higher Education to deliver training leading to professional youth work qualifications. The Youth Work Training Grant 2006/07 funded 30 places for voluntary and statutory staff and volunteers to gain National Open College Network level 3 certificates. Over a three-year period, 180 youth workers have gained qualified status however, there is still a waiting list for youth work courses.
 - We have some very good examples of integrated children and young people's services already in operation locally including: the Youth Offending Service, Early Years and Family Support, and the Hub and Spoke model. However, this model of integrated team work requires further development and embedding. The model presents additional training needs for a wide spectrum of the workforce.
- However:
- We will need to continue to recruit significantly more staff in key growth areas such as early education, child care, play, creative industries, youth work and health services, in order to deliver existing and important new programmes and services locally and to keep up with a projected growth in population over the next three years.

Workers in existing services require ongoing, and in some cases, more child and young person-specific training or other development activity to continuously improve the quality of the service being offered.

Some smaller organisations within the voluntary sector in particular, struggle to fund courses for staff and may also have difficulty in funding replacement staff to cover for workers attending training.

The introduction of the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the related legal requirements concerning the vetting and barring of individuals, together with work originating from the Local Safeguarding Children Board, will also impact on workforce development in respect of both recruitment and training across all sectors.

The implementation of the Common Assessment Framework across all services working with children and young people is critical to improving outcomes for children, young people and families. However, implementation will require a significant and comprehensive multi-agency training and embedding programme for a broad range of organisations and their staff.

All sectors report significant difficulties in recruiting Welsh speaking staff who are confident and competent to deliver services through the medium of Welsh.

“More Welsh speaking staff for activities in the Welsh language for children”

Ysgol Gyfun Rhydywaun, Sbardun Project

There are ongoing challenges with the play workforce. Many of the people recruited to carry out play work are students, who then move on to take up careers in other fields. There is a need to balance the investment made in training for a transient workforce, with the need to provide good quality play experiences for children and young people.

With the development of Community Focused Schools, there is an expectation that Head Teachers will manage a much bigger and more diverse staff group than usually associated with running a school. This presents training challenges in ensuring that Head Teachers are equipped with the leadership and management skills to effectively manage and develop these new, multi-disciplinary teams of staff.

We do not currently have a collaborative, whole-system approach to gathering information about our children and young people’s workforce, including trends and needs.





"I think you need someone who knows what they are doing"

Young Person, Mountain Ash Comprehensive School

What are our priorities for the next three years?

Key Outcomes:

- More of the right people recruited into the children and young people's workforce, ensuring the work is attractive and the workforce valued and respected.
 - Promotion of good practice and continuous professional development.
 - Effective implementation of the Common Assessment Framework.
 - People already in the workforce developed and trained to improve their skills and qualification levels, including the promotion of joint training.
 - Inter-agency and multi-disciplinary working re-modelled and strengthened to deliver where appropriate, services in integrated multi-agency teams.
 - Leadership, management and supervision skills strengthened and developed.
 - Make best use of our most talented and experienced staff enabling the sharing of best practice.
- We will achieve this through:**
- The development of a Rhondda Cynon Taf Workforce Development Strategy is our overriding priority. A number of Workforce Plans have been developed within individual services but these need to be brought together, to reflect the wider perspective for children and young people's services described by the Welsh Assembly Government.
 - Considerable, in-depth, longer term work and inter-agency collaboration will be required to develop the strategy. It is critical that in the meantime, we address current workforce demands and continue with local recruitment campaigns to encourage more people into the field and to match them with appropriate training courses.
 - Improvement and development of effective cross sector data set systems, to ensure the collection of accurate information about workforce needs locally. Strategic collaborative agreement between agencies will be required to drive forward this priority.
 - The model of integrated service delivery, focusing on the holistic needs of children, young people and those of their families, will be driven forward. Organisations will be required to agree the critical path for transforming the workforce and enabling staff to work across traditional boundaries. This priority action will require an agreed information sharing protocol together with training for staff.

What priority outcomes do we want to achieve?

Priority Outcomes	As a result, we will work in partnership and with a shared sense of purpose to:
<p>1. Develop a workforce development strategy across all children and young people's services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring together existing workforce plans for individual services. • Develop and improve effective cross data set systems, to ensure the collection of accurate information about workforce needs locally. • Address current workforce demands and recruit more people into the children and young people's workforce, ensuring the work is attractive and the workforce valued and respected. • Develop and train the existing workforce to improve their skills, qualification levels, and where appropriate, to deliver services in integrated teams. • Ensure the workforce is able to meet the diverse needs of children, young people and their families. • Strengthen and develop leadership, management and supervision skills.
<p>2. Support the model of integrated service delivery, focusing on the holistic needs of children, young people and their families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the transformation of the workforce to enable people to work across traditional boundaries. • Re-model and strengthen inter-agency and multi-disciplinary working. • Implement effectively the Common Assessment Framework. • Develop and agree information sharing protocols, supported by appropriate training and guidance for staff.

"A lot of work went into this. I hope it will make a difference"

Young Person, Y Pant School

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*Working Together for Children and
Young People in Rhondda Cynon Taf*

*Gweithio gyda'n gilydd er lles Plant
a Phobl Ifainc Rhondda Cynon Taf*

