



Making Social Care  
Better for People



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# Annual Performance Assessment and Joint Area Reviews

## Self-assessment

### Part 2: DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL May 2005

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When completing this form please refer to Part 1: Guidance on self-assessment for joint area reviews and annual performance assessment

**PART A Background Information**

<b>Name of Children's Services Authority:</b>	<b>Devon County Council</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>County Hall Topsham Road Exeter Devon</b>
<b>Name of Children's Services Contact:</b>	<b>Anne Whiteley Director of Children's Services</b>
<b>Address:</b>	<b>As above</b>
<b>Telephone:</b>	<b>01392 382364</b>
<b>Email:</b>	<b>anne.whiteley@devon.gov.uk</b>
<b>Partnership arrangements for the completion of this form:</b>	
<b>All members of the Children Trust Executive have been consulted .</b>	
<b>Date self-assessment submitted:</b>	<b>31 May 2005</b>
<b>Signed/agreed on behalf of the Children's Services' Authority</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>John Smith</b>
<b>Position</b>	<b>Executive Member for Children's Services</b>
<b>Signature</b>	

Devon is the largest and most populous local authority area in the south west. Its economic structure is one of high employment, but low wages. Gross Value Added (GVA) is only 76% of the England average and, at 19% below the national average, Devon has the fourth lowest average household income of any shire county. The percentage of children living in households in receipt of benefit is significantly above the south west average. In recent years house prices in Devon have risen rapidly and the average price of a house is eight times the average annual wage. The county is one of the most sparsely populated areas in England. Outside the city of Exeter, the pattern is of 30 scattered market and coastal towns, and dispersed villages and hamlets, a factor that has a significant impact on the cost and deployment of services, for instance, over 120 schools in Devon have fewer than 100 pupils. The County Council works with a complex group of partners, including eight district councils, six primary care trusts, five provider healthcare trusts, the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary and Connexions Cornwall and Devon. Expenditure on many services, particularly schools, is significantly below the shire county average. ([www.devonsp.org.uk/community\\_strategy/focus\\_on\\_devon.pdf](http://www.devonsp.org.uk/community_strategy/focus_on_devon.pdf))

Overall, the picture of the County Council's services for children and young people is one of sound and improving performance, the strengthening of capacity and much innovative practice. Nevertheless, some outcomes for children and young people are not as good as they should be and there is a legacy of past policies and under-investment in some key service areas, including Looked After Children, Special Educational Needs and support for behaviour in secondary schools, which needs to be tackled vigorously.

#### **Sound and Improving Performance**

- Attainment in Devon schools continues to be generally ahead of the national average and we have made headway in relation to statistical neighbours
- No secondary schools are below the national floor target of 25% 5A\*-C grades at GCSE with only two being below 40%. However, too many primary schools remain below the national floor targets at Key Stage 2
- Devon schools remain ahead of the field in Ofsted inspections – of 370 schools only one requires special measures, only three are designated as having serious weaknesses and only one as under-achieving. All but two secondary schools have obtained specialist status
- Exclusions from secondary schools have fallen significantly in 2004/5
- Despite recent improvement after a period of decline, attendance levels at secondary schools are still below what they should be
- The percentage of youngsters aged 16-19 not in education, employment or training is significantly below the national and peninsula average, but the percentage in full-time education is below that of neighbouring authorities
- Juvenile crime rates in Devon are low and the Devon Youth Offending Team's performance is consistently in the top ten nationally
- In 2004/5 there was a 10% fall in the number of Looked After Children (LAC) and the Council will meet its related LPSA target in full for North Devon and in part for Exeter. Placement stability for LAC remains in the top band and adoption of LAC has moved to band 3
- Health outcomes for LAC improved in 2004/5 but are still not in line with similar authorities
- Educational outcomes for LAC at KS2 and KS4 are not good enough although there has been encouraging improvement in the percentage of care leavers in education and training in 2004/5
- Teenage conception rates are falling and are well below the national average across the county and in all but one district council area
- In the first half of 2004/5 there was a dip in performance for the completion of child protection reviews, but 100% compliance was achieved in the second half of the year. A number of other child protection PAF indicators show top band performance
- There was very high participation in the UK Youth Parliament elections in Devon with 23,500 votes cast.

#### **Strengthening Capacity**

- The County Council leads a Children's Trust, which from the outset has had an ambitious programme. The Children's Trust is seen as the mechanism for delivering the Local Area Agreement (Devon is the only shire county with a LAA) and relates directly to the Devon Strategic Partnership
- Below the strategic level, the Children's Trust has a network of six Children's Trust Local Forums. At market and coastal town level, schools form Local Learning Communities based on feeder systems and these are seen as the essential building blocks for linking universal and targeted services, for a wide range of development activity and potentially as a mechanism for delegating Local Authority responsibilities. Much remains to be done but there has been a promising start
- The Children's Trust is building on a solid foundation of partnerships (eg Joint Agency Teams) but has given added impetus to tackling long standing service deficiencies, eg the recently agreed county CAMHS strategy

- Children's Social Care services are undergoing a thorough process of modernisation including a re-investment strategy
- The County Council has appointed a lead member with responsibility for all children's services. Children's social care and education services for vulnerable children have been brought together in a single management structure (Sept 2004). A single Children's Directorate will be formalised by April 2006.
- The County Council has demonstrated its capacity to effect change on a large scale. The re-organisation of the school system in Exeter (which was driven by the need to raise standards) involves a change to the age range in all 37 schools in the system and the rebuilding of thirteen schools, including all five secondary schools, as part of a £94m PFI scheme. In May 2005 this scheme won a prestigious national award as 'deal of the year'
- The County Council has supported a very effective Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and, from a very low base, has overseen the rapid expansion of early years education and childcare opportunities in the county. The development of Sure Start, Mini-Sure Start and Early Excellence Centres (now in the process of re-branding to Children's Centres) gives every confidence that the government's ambitious targets for establishing a further 24 Children's Centres will be met
- The Vision for Learning consultation in 2004 has established a sense of common purpose with schools
- Despite the many positive developments, there are some significant capacity challenges, in particular recruitment and retention of the social care workforce, the need to provide greater support to secondary schools in behaviour management, the resources required to develop and support complex partnerships, and the issues presented by the large number of small schools in the county
- There is the need further to develop the mechanisms for capturing the voice of young people.

### Innovation

- Devon is pioneering the use of direct payments to 16 and 17 year olds with special needs
- The County Council has led the way in establishing the model of parent key workers
- The Bideford Learning Community Pilot is developing an approach to embedding common assessment and referral systems within a school cluster and linking the service integration agenda to school improvement activity
- The cross agency review of primary school catering has led to the banning of junk food and the phased extension across the county of menus which contain healthy options only
- The Exeter PFI project has involved many cutting edge , eg the commissioning of 14-19 accommodation for Exeter College of FE in each of the five new 11-16 schools in the city
- In 2004 the County Council took the bold step of recasting its music service by ceasing directly to provide instrument tuition, concentrating its efforts on broadening classroom participation and supporting the establishment of an instrumental tutor co-operative.

### Assessment

Our self evaluation grades provide four 'Grade 3' assessments. That evaluation is based on

- Thorough analysis of the evidence contained in the dataset, PANDA and Form 4
- The generally satisfactory level of pupil attainment and standard of schools and the recent improvement in key social care indicators as a result of management action
- Progress in responding to the last Ofsted and CSCI external inspections
- Progress made in the management of increasingly integrated County Council services and the development of effective partnership arrangements through the Children's Trust.

### Priorities

The County Council has recognized that the task of producing a comprehensive and effective Children and Young People's Plan, in which all the relevant partners are engaged, and which incorporates existing work, is a considerable one. To that end, it has produced a *Transition Plan for Children and Young People in Devon 2005-2006* setting out its approach to the production of the CYPP and a 19 point programme for transforming the County Council into a fully fledged Children's Services Authority. From this process we will agree a coherent set of priorities using a multi-agency needs analysis to refine the existing priorities of the Children's Trust (which has so far concentrated on vulnerable youngsters), the Local Area Agreement and the Vision for Learning. The existing priorities are:

- support for parents and children in the early years
- children with special needs
- vulnerable adolescents (including housing)
- promoting physical and mental health
- raising aspirations
- school organisation in rural areas
- information sharing and assessment
- developing preventive services

Please provide the following self-assessment grades

**For the joint area review only:**

Areas for judgement	Being Healthy	Staying Safe	Enjoying and Achieving	Making a positive contribution	Achieving economic well-being
The contribution of <b>publicly funded services collectively</b> in maintaining and improving this outcome for children and young people.					

Areas for judgement	Overall
The contribution of <b>the local authority's children's services</b> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	
The contribution of <b>the local authority's social care services</b> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people	
The contribution of <b>local authority's education services</b> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	

Areas for judgement	Council services	Publicly funded services
Capacity to improve		

**For the annual performance assessment only:**

Areas for Judgement	Contribution overall
The contribution of <b>the local authority's social care services</b> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people	<b>3</b>
The contribution of <b>local authority's education services</b> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	<b>3</b>
The contribution of <b>the local authority's children's services</b> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	<b>3</b>
Capacity to improve of council services for children and young people	<b>3</b>

**Show how your current priorities for action are founded on an analysis of need.**

For 2005-06 the work and priorities for Devon Children's services will continue to be built on the solid foundations of needs analysis, targeted investment and partnership working that we have been developing over the past few years.

Following wide ranging consultation and a face to face survey of over 1000 citizens, the 2003 Devon Strategic Plan<sup>1</sup> set out the values, goals and priorities for the County Council.

Values	Goals	Priorities
People & community centred	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting a healthy and caring Devon</li> <li>Creating safer &amp; stronger communities</li> </ul>	Improving life opportunities for younger & older people
Working together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promoting achievement through learning</li> <li>Improving travel and communication</li> </ul>	Regenerating Devon's most disadvantaged wards
Valuing people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieving a prosperous Devon</li> <li>Looking after Devon's environment, culture and heritage</li> </ul>	Improving access for people in Devon
Improving & innovating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring the county is a well managed local authority</li> </ul>	Delivering improvement

These priorities, set alongside the national delivery targets, key performance data (e.g PAF & PANDA), best value reviews, inspection and service user feedback relating to individual service areas have been extensively used to inform and update the Education, Arts and Libraries (EAL) and Social Service Strategic Programmes<sup>2</sup>.

Some examples of reports feeding into this process are:

- Ofsted inspection report 2001. Major tasks within the Action Plan included reorganisation of education in Exeter, including capital works / PFI project; formulating and implementing the inclusion policy; formulating and implementing a special educational needs development plan, and improving support to schools and pupils from the EP, behaviour support and EWO services.
- CSCI inspection of children's services 2003. Major tasks within the Action Plan included improvements to child protection, investigation, assessment, allocation and casework recording processes, improvements to information, advocacy, complaints and participation arrangements for looked after children.
- analysis of attainment, attendance, exclusions and other data at the whole LEA level in the EDP audit and similar data available within the DIS reporting
- recommendations of the Commission for Exeter, an investigating body under independent chairmanship charged with examining the case for reorganisation of schools in Exeter and examination of the options
- recommendations of the Best Value report on services for Care Leavers
- the views emerging from consultative machinery, in particular: the Vision for Learning consultation, the partnership board for policy issues, and stakeholder board for evaluation and planning of LEA support services.

Following these specific Action Plans have been approved by members<sup>3</sup>.

In late 2002 members began planning the systematic development of children's services. Following a series of members and senior officer visits to Beacon Authorities and externally facilitated planning sessions, members prioritised the need to move towards service integration based on an incremental approach that protected service continuity and existing best practice. This emphasis on managing change while maintaining service quality and standards is re-iterated in the recent proposals initiating the first steps towards integration of children's services<sup>4</sup>.

The need to drive change in order to overcome service shortfalls and weaknesses and better meet the priorities identified in these strategies has been met corporately and at directorate level through the modernisation process. This unifies service planning and performance monitoring into Medium Term Financial Plans<sup>5</sup> which direct investment shifts and workforce remodelling. In addition to the needs analysis described above, use has been made of evidence based best practice in determining key service design decisions<sup>6</sup>. While this is still a comparatively new way of working within the council, considerable learning has already been gained, particularly in social services, which suggests that our weaknesses is less around our ability to generate and interpret needs information and more to do with the project skills

<sup>1</sup> Working for a Better Devon Strategic Plan 2005

<sup>2</sup> Achieving Excellence a vision for learning, June 2004. Social Service Directorate Strategic Programme 2004-08.

<sup>3</sup> Executive reports – need dates etc

<sup>4</sup> Exec proposal to establish a children's services division July 2004

<sup>5</sup> Exec reports on Modernisation and MTFP

<sup>6</sup> find references to evidence – from Exec reports, CSMB papers etc

and capacity available to carry through the work. This work and our assessment of progress is reflected in Part E of this report.

In 2004 the Devon Strategic Partnership published a comprehensive analysis of need<sup>7</sup> which uses key facts and figures as well as substantial consultation and quality of life survey information to further describe the needs and priorities of people in Devon. This additional analysis has informed the priorities and goals set out in the 2004 Community Strategy<sup>8</sup>

- Homes for all: Building for the future
- Improving life chances of children and young people
- Protecting and improving our outstanding environment
- Working for sustainable wealth creation
- Making Devon an even safer place to live
- A county for everyone
- Promoting a healthy and caring Devon

Taken as a whole, this iterative process has served to focus our understanding on a number of strategic areas for improvement:

- Strengthen multi-agency & multi-disciplinary delivery arrangements aimed at improving health and education outcomes.
- Support independence, aspiration and social inclusion through better access to advice, information & support for parents, families and communities.
- Focus on prevention and reduction in inequality through improved local access to early identification and intervention for children, young people and families with additional needs.
- Strengthen corporate responses to improve outcomes for looked after children.
- Overcome inconsistency of services available across Devon through the development of strategic planning, commissioning, performance and quality monitoring arrangements.
- Putting in place a framework to undertake Equality Impact Assessments – a statutory requirement under Race legislation

This has in turn served to inform our strategic planning around our work with school clusters and communities, the Pathfinder Children's Trust, the second round LPSA and the pilot Local Area Agreement. As a very large two tier authority the potential benefits and difficulties of taking forward effective and efficient partnership arrangements are an ever present challenge. Discussion on our progress in this work is reflected in Part G of this report.

These challenges and goals are now being developed within the framework set out in the Transition Plan<sup>9</sup> to reflect: the changing role of the local authority as it takes on the accountabilities required by the Children Act 2004; the strengthening partnership working within the Children's Trust and; the priorities set out within the ECM:CfC outcomes framework. Our analysis of strengths and weaknesses in meeting these goals as well as some of the key data and needs analysis that has informed it is developed in Part D of this report.

Devon County Council and the Devon Strategic Partnership have taken a number of steps to involve children and young people in the needs assessment and planning process. The Mori citizen opinion polling includes views of children and young people which have been fed into the Community Strategy for Devon. At the same time individual services have involved children and young people in improving our understanding of in-service quality and performance issues. However, we see this area as one still requiring improvement, further details of progress and development are contained in Part F of this report.

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<sup>7</sup> Focus on Devon, Devon Strategic Partnership, June 2004

<sup>8</sup> A community Strategy for Devon, Devon Strategic Partnership

<sup>9</sup> Transition Plan for Children and Young People in Devon 2005-06

Outcome	DSP Programme Goal	DSP Challenge	Strategic Responses within Children's Services
<b>Be Healthy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homes for all</li> <li>• Improving life chances for children and young people</li> <li>• A county for everyone</li> <li>• Promoting a healthy and caring Devon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring homes are built and maintained in a way that creates healthy communities</li> <li>• Support parents and carers</li> <li>• Improve physical and mental health and promote healthy lifestyles</li> <li>• Improve partnership working, leadership and organisational capacity</li> <li>• Improve access to services for excluded people</li> <li>• Prevent illness, provide effective treatment and care and reduce health inequalities</li> <li>• Improve the health and wellbeing of people with disabilities</li> <li>• Support carers of vulnerable people</li> <li>• Improve mental health and wellbeing, including reducing harm from drug and alcohol misuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children's Trust Housing with Support Strategy, supporting New Communities planning,</li> <li>• 0-14 strategy, Public Access (DISC) Strategy, parent key workers</li> <li>• Healthy Schools strategy, LPSA-2 target 5, LAA theme 1, School Sports Strategy, CAMHS Strategy which will include the development of culturally competent services, Children's Fund Strategy</li> <li>• Children's Trust CSN development group, JAT Coordinator, Section 31 work, ADHD pathway planning</li> <li>• LAC Health work, Treatment foster care planning, YES Centres (counselling &amp; teenage pregnancy work)</li> <li>• Joint posts (Healthy schools/CAMHS), children's centres (Wonford, West Exe, Sure Starts), JATs, NSF Steering Group</li> <li>• SEBD review &amp; strategy, OT waiting list review, CSN IT system, Transitions Protocol, early years PSAT &amp; Portage developments.</li> <li>• DISC+, Fair Access to Carers Breaks, Direct Payments</li> <li>• DAT Young People's Substance Misuse Strategy, Hidden Harm conference, YOT CAMHS nurses &amp; Atkinson drug workers</li> </ul>
<b>Stay Safe</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving life chances for children and young people</li> <li>• Making Devon an even safer place to live</li> <li>• A county for everyone</li> </ul> <p>Promoting a healthy and caring Devon</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support parents and carers</li> <li>• Protect children and young people from harm and neglect</li> <li>• Tackle the effects of drug and alcohol misuse</li> <li>• Increase the reporting of domestic violence and reduce the number of repeat victims</li> <li>• Manage safety and speed on Devon's roads</li> <li>• Improve partnership working, leadership and organisational capacity</li> <li>• Improve access to services for excluded people</li> <li>• Support carers of vulnerable people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family group conferencing, kinship support, private foster work</li> <li>• CP training review, IRU development, Integrated help desk, Bideford Pilot/ISA work, child out of school IT system</li> <li>• Tier 3 review/re-commissioning, Champions network</li> <li>• DV Strategy and Invest to save bid, N. Devon reporting pilot, contact centre review, parental substance misuse developments</li> <li>• Safe journeys to school strategy, Sure Start safety work</li> <li>• ACPC Business Plan, paperwork review &amp; action plan, DV Steering Group, substance misuse posts, Children's Trust Local Forums,</li> <li>• Full Service Extended School pilots, Resource Directory, LAA theme 2, Specialist admission &amp; attendance EWOs new PRUs</li> <li>• Fostering review, training &amp; information for foster carers of BME children, Peper Harrow SLA, Residency Order policy</li> </ul>

Outcome	DSP Programme Goal	DSP Challenge	Strategic Responses within Children's Services
<b>Enjoy and Achieve</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving life chances for children and young people</li> <li>• Working for sustainable wealth creation</li> <li>• A county for everyone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help children and young people obtain the skills, knowledge and understanding to get the most out of life, manage transitions and thrive as adults</li> <li>• Support parents and carers</li> <li>• Improve outcomes for children and young people looked after by the local authority</li> <li>• Promote a culture of training and development and raise aspirations overall</li> <li>• Improve access to vocational learning opportunities in rural Devon</li> <li>• Tackle prejudice and champion equal opportunities and good community relations</li> <li>• Improve partnership working, leadership and organisational capacity</li> <li>• Improve access to services for excluded people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foundation stage advisors, children centres, Vision for Learning, Exeter remodelling, LPSA-2 target 9, education otherwise &amp; traveller work, LAA theme 4, Devon Youth Music developments</li> <li>• Children's Trust &amp; Sure Start parent participation strategies</li> <li>• Corporate parenting group &amp; CMB champion, LAC ed coordinator, LPSA-2 target 6, exclusion protocol, Adoption ed-psych</li> <li>• 14-19 strategy, workforce development strategy, Lifelong learning &amp; library strategy, capital strategy &amp; IT developments</li> <li>• alternative curriculum work, school transport review, LPSA-2 target 1, LAC mentoring &amp; work experience plan</li> <li>• Joint BT English as second language work, bullying identified as a priority for work, foster carer BME training programme</li> <li>• Children's Trust Early Years Development Group, Extended Schools, School Sports coordinators, education inclusion strategy</li> <li>• DPs for 16-17 year olds, LAC dowry, admissions policy</li> <li>• 3 year Equality Learning and Development Programme</li> <li>• DCC Race Equality Scheme</li> </ul>
<b>Make a positive contribution</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving life chances for children and young people</li> <li>• Making Devon an even safer place to live</li> <li>• A county for everyone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support parents and carers</li> <li>• Enable young people to make a positive contribution to the community</li> <li>• Reduce the fear of crime in this low crime area</li> <li>• Reduce levels of anti-social behaviour</li> <li>• Lessen effect &amp; incidence of prejudice in Devon, &amp; increase victim confidence in reporting hate crime</li> <li>• Raise level of community participation &amp; involvement</li> <li>• Improve partnership working, leadership and organisational capacity</li> <li>• Improve access to services for excluded people</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• YOT parenting services, expansion of foster carer support</li> <li>• Youth Parliament, Referral orders, youth service strategy and school in-reach workers, PRU &amp; DAY developments</li> <li>• joint training with housing, Force Youth Strategy (NBMs)</li> <li>• YISP panels, YOT strategy development group, DAT Plan,</li> <li>• DYA young carer and domestic violence plays and publicity, traveller services, YOT victim support workers, DV victim support,</li> <li>• Youth Service review and remodelling, LAA-safer &amp; stronger community block, Sure Start strategy, Children's Fund strategy</li> <li>• Children's Trust parent and children/young people participation strategy, Devon Compact</li> <li>• Standards Fund - specialist EPs &amp; EWOs, LAA themes 1 &amp; 2</li> </ul>

Outcome	DSP Programme Goal	DSP Challenge	Strategic Responses within Children's Services
<p><b>Achieve economic wellbeing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Homes for all: building for the future</li> <li>• Improving life chances for children and young people</li> <li>• Working for sustainable wealth creation</li> <li>• A county for everyone</li> <li>• Promoting a healthy and caring Devon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure everyone has the chance of a home at a price they can afford</li> <li>• Support parents and carers</li> <li>• Ensure an adaptable, skilled and flexible workforce suited to available employment opportunities</li> <li>• Improve transport accessibility in rural areas</li> <li>• Regenerate Devon's electoral wards which are among the 25% most disadvantaged in the country</li> <li>• Improve partnership working, leadership and organisational capacity</li> <li>• Improve access to services for excluded people</li> <li>• Improve economic inclusion by tackling the effects of low pay and improving access to financial services and benefits</li> <li>• Support carers of vulnerable people</li> <li>• Find solutions to the housing needs of the increasingly vulnerable population</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LAA theme 3, LPSA-2 target 7, SP Homelessness review</li> <li>• Care Leavers Supported Accommodation SLA</li> <li>• Early years childcare strategy, teenage parent inclusion, JAT information officers, Support for Homestart &amp; DYA volunteer recruitment &amp; training</li> <li>• 14-19 strategy, joint LSC NEET bid, skills mix review &amp; workforce development strategy,</li> <li>• transport subsidy plans, LPSA-2 target 3</li> <li>• Sure Start &amp; Children's Fund priority wards, Early Excellence Centres, participation in Ilfracombe &amp; Wonford SRB regeneration</li> <li>• Children's Trust: Early Years &amp; Vulnerable Adolescents Development work, Children's centres &amp; YES centres</li> <li>• Connexions/SSD/YOT protocols &amp; Rapid Improvement work</li> <li>• LPSA-2 target 10, Contact Centre implementation, care leaver financial advice work, Supporting People Strategy,</li> <li>• Joint equipment store, carers breaks service remodelling</li> <li>• Children's Trust housing support strategy, LAA-CYP block theme 3</li> </ul>

**Be Healthy**

**How good are the outcomes?**

Work with schools to deliver key outcomes that relate particularly to NSF Standard 1:-

- the 2003 PANDA rates Devon PHSE provision good+ at 65% of primary & 70% of secondary against 63.7% & 59.4% nationally.
- 55% of schools participating in 'Healthy Schools Standard': 19 primary, 3 secondary & 1 special at level 3 in "sex & relationship".
- Ofsted S10 inspections (03/04) rated all schools satisfactory+ in sport and 76% of primary & 87% of secondary good+
- The 2004 schools survey ranked quality of catering as between satisfactory and poor.
- Full take-up of the "fruit & veg in school" scheme with 97% of eligible schools participating, just ahead of regional average.
- 86% of all Devon schools provide at least 2 hours per week of PE in the formal curriculum

The Sure Start schemes around the county are demonstrating initiatives to promote the health of children including:

- ◆ Healthy eating programmes in the centres
- ◆ Breast feeding support groups & baby massage
- ◆ First aid, food hygiene and oral hygiene training for parents
- ◆ Development checks for all two year olds
- ◆ Speech and language therapists sessions

Research into children entering an Exeter inner city first school established that 47% were failing to attain any PSD, language & literacy score at reception. To overcome this, a nurture group, for 3-4 year olds feeding into the school was put in place, using a Sure Start/JAT speech & language therapist & school staff. Evaluation of the children in the group recorded the following:

	% at this level at start	% at this level at end of year
Level 1	50%	0%
Level 2 & 3	44%	23%
Level 4 & 5	6%	78%

Thus significantly improving the foundation readiness of the 2004 intake.

Measurable improvements in under 16 conception rates, which fell from 6.2 per 1000 in 1998 to 5.2 per 1000 in 2002. Under 18 conceptions fell from 32.9 per 1000 in 1998 to 30.2 per 1000 in 2003. Exeter is the only PCT with a teenage conception rate higher than national average.

Number of young people engaged with specialist substance misuse treatment services during 2003-04 was 167 compared to 81 in Bristol, 8 in Torbay, 8 in Plymouth & 47 in Cornwall. 61% of these recorded successful outcomes at case closure, which is also reflects high outcomes.

Work with the Joint Agency Teams has improved a number of outcomes

- NSF Standard 2: Recent survey returns by 565 parents of children with disabilities found over 80% felt the information available to them through DISC+, newsletters or information packs was "quite" or "very useful" and 46% considered the quality of information was "better" or "a lot better" than it was two years ago.
- Standards 3 & 4: Expansion of direct payments to parents to 71 families in receipt and to 16/17 year olds with 50 in receipt puts Devon in top 15 authorities for parent/carer DP use and in the lead for 16-17 year olds. Development of parent-carer key-workers which has now recruited 21 with a further 22 in the pipeline is a nationally important innovation in personalised service delivery.
- Standards 6 & 8: The number of children receiving fully integrated health/social care assessment and care plans through the JATs increased from 490 in Mar 03 to 1085 in Mar 04 and 1215 in Mar 05.

In 2004/05, for the first time, 100% of acute & non-acute CAMHS assessments for YOT clients were provided within YJB timescales. Research into the vol sector youth counselling service now available in around 60% of the county indicated that of 305 12-20 year olds researched; 115 had HONOSCA scores indicating serious or severe mental health difficulty of which outcome scoring suggests that 70% recorded some and 30% significant improvement at case closure.

Our work with looked after children has shown gradual improvements over the past 12 months, resulting in the PAF C19 health of LAC improving from 59.9% - Band 2 in 04 to 65.7% - band 3, still below our comparator authority average but on track for our targeted improvement. Foster carers have been issued with a guide on meeting the needs of BME children, " why does race matter in Devon" which includes information on skin and hair care.

Analysis has shown that 13.7% of Devon LAC at 31.03.2005 were children with special needs, and 7.2% of LAC with special needs were placed for adoption as at 31.03.2005

## Are we making a difference?

### Strengths

The expanding network of early years provision including Children's Centres, now includes a number of 'self-financed' schemes (West Exe, Chestnuts) achieved by joint investment of mainstream education, health & social services funding. The most significant increase in childcare places during the last five years has been the rise in the number of places for children aged under 3 years. A very strong early years partnership is already planning a strategy to meet the challenging new Children's Centre expansion targets.

A Healthy Schools (HS) Coordinator is jointly funded by health agencies and education. HS programme contains high quality materials including well-respected substance misuse modules & is achieving good coverage in some areas. Rising PE take-up within nationally respected school sports programme. Recently completed audit of school sports opportunities and recruitment of locality based sports coordinators is leading to good take up of high quality sport provision. Specialist school and college nurses give sexual health advice in 'high concern' areas. Drug education delivered into PRUs & Atkinson Unit by specialist substance misuse workers. Well-established NHS smoking cessation work across Devon. Joint work between schools, DCS & health now being further developed through LPSA-2 Obesity target.

Universal youth and community healthy lifestyles work now supplemented for vulnerable young people through developing YES/YAC network providing access to specialist pregnancy advice &, in Exeter/East locality as the highest conception area, referral of girls considered most 'at risk' to specialist diversionary workers. Housing strategy including expanding network of support to teenage parents.

Strong Tier 3 substance misuse services providing support to tier 2 Champions in YOT, care leavers, residential units, JAT & PRUs. Developing links with adult treatment services. Parent advice available in all areas with support groups in some. Young carers work being developed for carers of adult substance misusers. Developing training programme for tier 1 & 2 providers.

JATs integrated health & social care for children with sensory, learning, physical or communication difficulties in 4 of 6 PCT areas is now being expanded to support additional services for children with long term illnesses through improved links to acute paediatric services and specialist hospital in-reach work e.g. the sergeant social worker and emotional support worker providing a range of supports to long term patients on Bramble children's ward, community children's nurses supporting discharge into each PCT district and new investment by social services has increased the number of SSD funded mental health workers in the JATs from 4 in Mar 2003 to 15 in Mar 2005 putting us above our national target. JAT parent/external key worker, direct payment & Fair Access to Carers Breaks initiatives places them at the forefront of personalised service delivery. Joint Equipment Store, including pooled budget arrangements. DISC/DISC+ continues to win accolades from local parents and national bodies. DISC is now being expanded to include a web based ISA Resource Directory and Parenting Support information.

Children's Trust CAMHS Strategy in place now beginning to visibly drive change: development of joint ADHD & AS strategies underway. Recruitment of Integrated CAMHS managers responsible for single referral, assessment & access to treatment routes across all agencies. Schools increasingly buying into joint funding arrangements with the Children's Fund to provide pastoral support e.g. North Devon early identification of children with low self-esteem is addressed by a Children Activity and Support Programme (CASP) known as the "Big Steam" where children registering poor scores are able to access group &/or individual work. Following detailed analysis of its impact the JACAT now being expanded into N & S. Whole school training & guidance on sexual development in primary school aged children recently developed & being rolled out.

LAC health rapid improvement plan now in place, already showing improved outcomes, includes; new dedicated dentist & nurse time, information & training for foster carers & care managers; active involvement of named nurses in health surveillance with young people and a robust monitoring and recording system for health care. An experienced and stable cohort of foster carers who are keen to take forward this agenda. Some good practice examples e.g. E&M. Devon LAC Sports Programme run jointly with Sport England, 35 children attend regularly & participate in activities including football, tennis, rugby and cricket; Peper Harow placement support service offering group support to carers and individual support to placements on the verge of breakdown because of behaviour problems; the specialist adoption ed psych who advises and supports prospective adopters and children. MTFP with targets and strategy to shift LAC complex care investment out of independent residential & into support for family based carers through the expansion of family care worker scheme from 37 in Apr 04 to 46 by Mar 05 and the development of Treatment Foster Care.

### Areas for improvement

Participation in the Healthy School - sexual relationships and substance misuse modules is low and very low in key high deprivation area schools. School meals review reports low satisfaction, concern about nutritional values. Limited strategic understanding of & work on impacts of bullying on school outcomes.

Little integration of teenage pregnancy, drug & CAMHS prevention work with other targeted prevention initiatives, particularly Children's Centres & Extended Schools. Tier 4 services fragmented and lacking consultant back-up. Lack of specialist CYP alcohol focus/strategy.

Lack of progress in expanding JATs into S&W and in integrating the SEBD and JAT strategies. Lack of management and administrative capacity in the JATs. Significant inconsistency in levels of funding, clinical governance, service quality and breadth of provision available in each PCT area. Difficulties in some areas of workforce remodelling. Lack of formal S.31 agreements covering accountability, management and budget arrangements.

NHS CAMHS services are starting from a low point, with low levels of investment, fragmented services, weak management structures & low staff morale being particularly pressing issues. Historic distrust & poor joint working between DCC & NHS services is proving hard to overcome. Lack of county-wide CAMHS training strategy.

The history of under investment in and confused reporting of LAC health activity has restricted awareness of needs and fed low aspiration among staff and service providers (e.g. low demand for substance/sexual advice & services). No centrally held record of immunisation for LAC although it is captured on individual child health record. Difficulties in developing sufficiently integrated/robust capacity to deliver LAC complex needs services. Lack of specialist CAMHS including for the Atkinson.

#### **Actions planned for 2005/06**

1. Strengthen the Children's Trust strategic role through Healthy Child Development Group to oversee LPSA, LAA, teenage pregnancy & substance misuse planning & commissioning and provide support and direction to DCS Healthy School work.
2. begin to deliver LPSA-2 and LAA to increase the impact and coverage of Healthy Schools and PCT healthy community programmes, by integrating planning and improving links with partner: early years, public health, transport, district council, Extended School, Sport England, Big Lottery, youth service and voluntary / community resources and initiatives.
3. Council meals service to work towards: increased nutritional value; reduced high-fat, high-salt processed meat products; menus vetted by newly-appointed nutritionist; extra equipment in kitchens. Twenty-three pilot schools to trial new meals standards and cost per meal impact from May 2005; subject to outcome, offer new specification county-wide from Sept 2005.
4. Encourage children's centres and extended schools to support delivery of early identification and local access to healthcare services.
5. support development of parent held (red-book) health records and increase advice and support to parents to maximise personal health & independence.
6. Through Children's Trust & LAA support integration and expansion of prevention services for vulnerable adolescents 'at high risk' of sexual or substance misuse problems. Includes: expanding early years work with teenage parents and YES projects and ensuring links to ISA/CAF to strengthen referral and delivery at tier 2. Develop protocols & support strategy for tier 4 nurses to include housing and aftercare. Develop CYP alcohol action section within the emerging DAAT County Alcohol Strategy.
7. Recruitment of JAT Coordinator to: establish consistency of process, performance and funding across Devon, including: skills mix & workforce remodelling; s.31; integration of the SEBD & JAT strategies; roll-out to S&W, joint CAMHS developments; links to prevention developments - children's centres & extended schools.
8. Ensure ongoing CAMHS Strategy roll-out to also include new NSF targets, improved links to prevention services & development of specialist LAC services.
9. Develop and implement mechanism to ensure assessment & recording of LAC health needs, immunisations etc continue working towards PAF C19 target of 70%. Expand Sport initiative & links to LPSA work. Deliver MTFP complex needs plan - recruit complex needs service coordinator and develop service to manage complex risk and treatment within a continuum of family/carer based support – Peper Harow, FCWs, TFC. Continuing support for Atkinson Secure Unit to expand provision and choice of food from different cultures.

## Stay Safe

### How good are the outcomes?

Work with schools has impacted on the following key outcomes

- In Ofsted Inspections 03/04, 87% of both Primary and Secondary schools made very good or good provision for the care, safety and welfare of their pupils.
- 95% of schools have race equality policies and 94% of schools have procedures to respond to racial incidents
- In 03 PANDA 68% of primary schools and 70% of secondary schools had good or very good CP procedures.
- 41% of schools have a staff member with valid CP training, and 10% with expired training.
- During 04/05 over 1000 practitioners from 400 different early years settings accessed 51 specialist early years courses, within which the partnership provided 35 one day CP courses attended by 462 staff, 2 CP foundation courses attended by 28 staff and 4 domestic violence workshops attended by 82 staff.
- 2004/05 performance in PAF C20 is disappointing (94.7% - band 2). However, this represents 9 children who had CP reviews outside required timescales in the first 6 months of the year. A rapid improvement plan was put in place to address this and 100% compliance has since been maintained. Other CP PAF indicators remain in top bandings, while allocation of social workers to children on the CP register has remained at 100% despite continuing recruitment and retention difficulties. Work is ongoing to investigate re-referral rates and completion of initial and core assessments within required timescales.
- Overall referrals remained high at 5825 for the year of which 2079 were repeat referrals giving a slightly improved score of 35.7% (down from 39%) but still far above the national target of 15%.
- Percentage of initial assessments completed within 7 days improved from 39 to 40.9, while core assessment completed within 35 days slipped from 66% to 54.7%, still well behind the national targets of 71% & 69% respectively.
- LAC numbers have reduced by 9.7% in 2004/05 (689 to 615). Targeted LAC reductions in North Devon and Exeter through LPSA1 have achieved success (100% North Devon, 60% Exeter). Performance in PAF A1 remains in top banding, whilst long-term stability (PAF D35) and adoptions of LAC (PAF C23) have improved from Band 2 to Band 3"

272 front line staff attended 'Making Practice Count' training delivered by the Bridge Consultancy and Practitioner Champions are established across the County.

YISPs now established in two thirds of the County have consistently met their target of offering intervention to 80% of young people receiving final warnings.

DCC is now running 7 child safety seat fitting clinics in supermarkets around Devon and over 2000 families have been supported in the past two years to check in-car safety restraint, with a pass rate of in-car safety equipment increasing from 35% in 02 to 75% currently. The Wonford Home Zone has completed and created a new residential environment where children have safe access to recreation previously considered too dangerous to use. In 2004 1400 children received cyclist training from parent volunteers trained by DCC. The council has encouraged schools to consider the scope for "walking buses" within their safer travel plans. At present 16 primary schools organise walking buses, involving up to 400 pupils daily. A further 36 schools intend to implement similar arrangements. The Devon Citizen Survey found 44% of respondents felt that DCC was improving roads around schools to increase the safety of children, 55% felt it was now safer for children to walk or cycle to school.

An Evaluation of the Domestic Violence Schools Liaison Consultancy Project published in May 2004 evaluated the training recently given in schools and concluded that this had increased the understanding of domestic violence and its prevalence.

Devon County Council has been awarded Level 2 status in the National Local Government Equality Standard, following recent external assessment, and children's services response to this agenda was a contributory factor.

### Are we making a difference?

#### Strengths

The ACPC continues to provide a well supported and clear basis for planning and leading joint agency multi-agency CP work. A high level of staff satisfaction has been reported in relation to the CP training initiatives since the external inspection. The membership of the ACPC has been slightly widened and local CP forums have been established across the county. The Council plays a full role in supporting this and has facilitated the ACPC in producing a Business Plan and initial planning towards the development of a Safeguarding Board.

Child protection services: Post SSI Inspection Action Plan work to strengthen CP arrangements in Exeter completed. This has led on to tentative steps towards integrated Help Desks, which includes direct police, JAT & health Visitor involvement. Casework supervision and processes have been strengthened and file quality audits have been strengthened to ensure follow-up & actions are recorded. Work on S47 investigations & CP registration has led to tackling the differential use of thresholds (as identified in the external inspection), and variation in registration levels around the county. Current data shows consistent practice in registration

across the County reflecting the input and training undertaken in the past year. Implementation of Phase 2 Care First is strengthening data input & monitoring. Serious case reviews have been undertaken in line with national requirements and staff were provided with additional training in this area following an ACPC seminar. An independent analysis of recent serious case reviews will be undertaken to inform practitioner and multi agency learning. All staff employed within Children's Services receive appropriate vetting checks prior to having unsupervised contact with children and a process has been recommended to monitor and update these. All SLA contracts with external providers stipulate similar requirements.

**Looked after children:** Increased support to kinship care using family group conferencing, Residence Orders, enhanced allowances and increased support time has helped achieve the LPSA target for N. Devon and 60% of the target for Exeter. Targeted recruitment of adoptive families, both within Devon and through the South West Adoption Consortium and a rapid improvement plan in place to move children's plan through to adoption. Support services have been enhanced for adopters through the appointment of a dedicated educational psychologist. All foster carers and adopters are suitably trained and residential services and placements comply with national minimum standards and regulations. Weaknesses have been identified in the vetting of some residential staff, and action has been taken. The Children's Society provide a well-used Advocacy and support service for LAC over 10. The IRU is reviewing all procedures to ensure full compliance with expectations of Rights & Representation Guidelines and information is available to all LAC informing them how to make a complaint and the process of complaint investigation.

**Children in need:** The JAT CSN IT system fully supports information sharing between the county council and health systems with protocols in place to support external and parent key worker access to all relevant electronic information. A major contract re-tendering exercise has been undertaken for carers breaks services which includes a tightening up of child safeguarding procedures. The joint agency placement panel ensures a high level of information sharing between SSD, LEA and health on children with complex difficulties' risks and needs. The 2004 joint inspectorate review of children's safeguards for LAC placed away from their responsible authority, which mostly focused on children with complex disabilities, identified Devon's strengths as: the ICS system; Case Review Process; sophisticated financial management and; the monitoring of placements. A Transition Protocol with adult services has been agreed and work on implementation is underway. Young carers groups operate in all parts of the county & adult carers of children with special needs are supported to have assessments in their own right.

**ISA / CAF:** the Children's Trust established the Bideford learning Community Pilot, to develop a county wide system of information sharing protocols, web-based resource directory, threshold, common language & staff skills issues (particularly for small schools). This pilot has just concluded, and the results once collated and analysed will be used to roll out ISA across Devon. Building on this, consultation is now underway on extended school capacity requirements and an integrated Child Concern Pathway which will be used to support CAF implementation. The next stage of implementation will be led through a joint agency steering group supported by a new ISA/ESCR/CAF strategic coordinator. Referrals to N. Devon SSD dropped from 536 per 10K 0-18 yrs in 03/04 to 460.4 per 10k 0-18s in 04/05 which may reflect the impact of early preventative work in the Bideford Pilot and a new SW post in Park school.

**Domestic Violence:** Joint protocol with the Police to support reporting and MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences) has been successfully piloted in East Devon and are due to be rolled out to the rest of Devon in 2005/2006. A Domestic Violence Strategy to promote awareness is in place and includes appointment of specialist domestic violence workers across the county who undertake both awareness training in school, youth services and communities, and direct work with children. Following a successful Invest to Save Bid his work with child victims will now be expanded on.

**Sex Offenders:** Inter agency procedures for the management of sex offenders, including the use of Multi Agency Public Protection Meetings (MAPPA), have been established and Children's Services staff have had a 98.5% attendance rate at both MAPPA and RAMP meetings. Children's Services are represented on the MAPPA board to ensure close agency cooperation in this area.

**Substance misuse:** Local research into links between parental drug/alcohol use & CP risks found poor joint working between CP & D&A services. This has now informed investment in a specialist substance misuse midwife in Exeter Maternity Unit, the creation of specialist SWs & CCWs for each locality children's team & a vol sector group worker to work alongside the young carers support workers and Exeter University has been awarded a DOH research grant to interrogate learning & progress in these developments. Protocol development and future investment planning will be overseen by a joint ACPC/DAT steering group. Planning is now underway with the DAT to establish new substance misuse link workers to support these initiatives.

**Services to establish the identity and whereabouts of all children and young people.**

- Private Foster Care: The ACPC is overseeing planning & implementation through a multi disciplinary sub group. An additional social work practitioner post has been created to promote awareness in the community and across the agencies. A new policy of Private Fostering has been written in association with the Black and Ethnic Minority advisory group and new monitoring arrangements for the policy and process will be in place later this year. In accordance with national minimum standards a new fostering panel policy has been published with secure monitoring systems to include CRB & identity checks on all carers.
- Devon has very high rates of LAC placed by other authorities. Following a mapping exercise of the independent residential sector which established serious shortfalls in Children Act notifications by placing authorities a process is now in place to tighten up notifications, recording and routine monitoring by the safeguarding manager.
- Traveller's education service, Gipsy Liaison Officer and the Link Health Visitor for Travellers developed information exchange to ensure that the whereabouts of children are known. If the travellers are leaving Devon a notification goes to the receiving area if the destination is known. Currently inter agency meetings are working on devising a protocol for working with Travellers on unauthorised encampments for identifying and rapidly supporting vulnerable families.

- Devon has a clear policy in place for issues relating to asylum-seeking children.

**Workforce development:** There has been a concentrated approach to Child Protection training in the last twelve months both within Social Care and throughout key agencies. Following evaluation the ACPC has reviewed the quality and accessibility of its CP Foundation training. A new improved delivery model is in place for 2005/2006 which incorporates a systematic quality assurance process. A development programme is under way to meet both the requirements of Section 175 and readiness for pooled resources within a Safeguarding Board by April 2006. A conference has been held for the voluntary sector to generate a common understanding on child concern issues. All new requirements regarding protection procedures are in place and training has been undertaken on both Section 47 thresholds and Bichard and Kelly requirements with key CP staff fully trained in the Sheffield Protocol.

**Youth service:** Have introduced 'Checking It Out'. This involved the production of a booklet with clear and accessible advice for adults working in V&C youth groups. It was circulated through schools, libraries, doctors surgeries and existing networks posters and leaflets with questions adults working in V&C youth groups should ask themselves (and answer) in order to keep themselves and young people safe. This was followed four months later with posters and leaflets, again circulated as above, aimed at parents and carers with questions they should ask the adults into whose care they give their children and wards. The booklet directs people to Devon Youth Association, VYS(Devon) DYS and the Local Youth Networks and over 500 booklets have been sent out.

### Areas for improvement

Workforce development and staff recruitment especially experienced and qualified social workers remains a constant challenge on safeguarding and looked after children services. Work will continue to develop effective recruitment, retention, training and skills mix arrangements.

Internal & external reviews have identified a number of SSD processes needing improvement, in particular: timeliness of initial & core assessments (will be assisted by new paperwork policy change & revised case load waiting system being developed); analysis of referrals shows that there are still issues around the high proportion of re-referrals; CP plans need to become more robust & time-limited; involvement of parents & LAC in CP and child welfare processes needs strengthening to ensure better parent input & that the views of all children over the age of 4 are conveyed to CP meetings and reviews in line with JAR requirements.

Review of PAF A1 has identified two areas affecting the number of placement moves for children: (i) concurrent planning for babies and a pilot scheme for foster placements with a view to adoption will be undertaken in the forthcoming year. (ii) the changing placement needs of the older cohort of LAC (68% of LAC in Devon are aged ten to seventeen) work will be undertaken to see how transition planning to reduce moves in the lead up to leaving care can be better managed.

An internal review of the fostering placement support services based on the Best Value principles is under way and due to report in Autumn 2005. A new post has been established in Foster Care Team to revamp the information, promotional and recruitment strategy using a wide range of materials and outlets this will include an emphasis on black and ethnic minority recruitment and differential targeting on carers for mainstream and family care work placements.

The work now underway in relation to parental substance misuse is tackling an area of significant historic poor inter-agency practices and low investment. Work in this area will require a step-change to make a significant impact across the whole of Devon., one way of helping to achieve this will be by improving the linkage with the domestic violence and community safety work. The LAA will be used to help manage this complex multi-agency project development.

Devon has raised with children's minister a concern that numerous children are placed in Devon without the Local Authority being informed & will continue to raise this as an issue. The continuing upward level of these placements also exerts problematic demand and cost pressures on a number of services, in particular: schools; disability services; CAMHS and; criminal justice agencies.

### Actions planned for 2005/06

1. Develop and implement a multi-agency strategy for full roll-out of ISA / CAF, information sharing protocols, thresholds, assessment processes and resource directory, to include incorporation into extended schools, children's centres, voluntary / community networks and relevant adult services.
2. Take forward development and expansion of locally based preventative services and integrated pathway based on the Child Concern Model to reflect co-location and integrated delivery arrangements as appropriate, to also link to ADHD/AS pathways.
3. ACPC to support a post to oversee the review and dissemination of learning from Part 8 Overview Reports, encourage continuous improvement and learning more generally and, take forward developments to implement Bichard as required
4. Expand multi-agency CP training which has been reviewed & reconfigured to base it within a quality assurance framework
5. Step up action to improve timeliness and effectiveness of SSD referral and assessment procedures. Expand Integrated Help desks to cover all localities and develop SSD internal procedures and practices to meet the areas for improvement identified above.
6. Strengthen planning and joint work with adult services to ensure effective cooperation where children's outcomes are at risk because of parental needs or disabilities and to improve transitions for vulnerable children into adult services.
7. All schools to have a staff member with valid CP training by July 2007.

## Enjoy and Achieve

### How good are the outcomes?

**Attainment:** broad picture of steady improvement: at KS2 in English from 75.4% of pupils gaining level 4 & above in 2000 to 78.5% in 2004; in Maths from 72.5% to 75.5%; in science from 86.2% to 88.6%; at KS3 in English from 62.8% of pupils gaining level 5 & above in 2000 to 73.4% in 2004; in maths from 67.7% to 76.5%; in science from 64.2% to 70.8%; at KS4 from 49.6% of pupils aged 16 gaining 5 or more A\*-C grades in 2000 to 52.6% in 2004 (LPSA target 53%. Rapid gains in the 1990s have been extended, albeit at a more moderate pace. VA measures are classified as "C" (KS1 to KS2; KS2 to KS3; KS2 to GCSE) & "B" (KS3 to GCSE). Attainment is broadly in line with national level, but Devon maintains a distinct lead, particularly KS2 science and at KS3 & KS4.

There are advances relative to SN LEAs: from being below their average until 2000, attainment has risen above average at KS2 and approaches average at KS3 & KS4. During 1998-2004 the % of secondary pupils at level 2 (i.e. 5 or more A\*-C grades, or equivalent) rose from 47% to 54.9% (slightly above the national increase) with significant improvement at schools with low pupil achievement: in 2000 at 8 schools <40% of pupils gained 5 A\*-C grades: in 2004 there were only 2 such schools. Attainment at small primary schools is fully at the level of larger schools. There is no evidence of significant difference in attainment of black and minority ethnic pupils.

S10 inspections in 2003/2004 show achievement graded Ex/VG/G in 65% of schools. Level 1 attainment at KS4 (i.e. % of pupils gaining 5 or more A\*-G grades) showed no improvement between 1998 & 2004. There are significant gender achievement gaps at KS3 levels 5 & 6, but there was improvement relative to national differences in 2004.

**School standards:** in overall primary inspection grades (2003 PANDA) 78.5% of Devon schools were graded VG/G in the most recent inspection (c.f. 74.5% of schools nationally and 80% of SN schools); 72.2% of Devon secondary schools were VG/G (c.f. 68.9% of schools nationally & 80.4% of SN schools). In quality of education, 77.9% of primary schools were graded VG/G (c.f. 77.7% nationally & 80.2% of SN schools); 72.2% of secondary schools were graded VG/G (c.f. 69.4% nationally & 76.9% of SN schools).

**Schools causing concern:** 4.5% of schools have required special measures since 1993 (classified "B") c.f. 4.9% (SN schools) & 6.6% of schools nationally. Ofsted identified 7.7% of Devon schools with serious weaknesses (classified "C"), c.f. 6.7% (SN schools) & 7.8% of schools nationally. There has been no significant reduction in interventions by the LEA or Ofsted in the last 2 years, due to the LEA identifying schools more clearly & speedily, and the new inspection framework.

**Attendance:** the 2004 primary rate (94.7%, classified "C") was no higher than 1997. Unauthorised absence (0.2%, classified "B") was half the national rate but authorised absence was at the national level: lower recent unauthorised absence has been matched by higher authorised absence. In 2004 secondary attendance was 91.6%: it has been significantly below the SN level for the last 5 years. Unauthorised absence was at the national level between 2000 & 2003 but in 2004 truancy was 1.4%, significantly above the SN level. The Devon authorised absence rate has been above national & SN rates during the last five years.

**School place provision:** 98.3% of parents received first preference places in 2003/2004 (c.f. national median: 90.9%). There is high correlation between demand & local provision: 420 children only receive transport to an alternative school because of insufficient places at the local school: many are pupils admitted after the start of Year 7. For admissions in Sep 2005, over 94% of applications received first preferences. A clear admissions policy is in place and supported by a protocol for in year admissions.

**Early Years:** in 2004/5 S122 inspections, 34% were high quality; 61% good; 4.5% acceptable and 0.5% unacceptable. Ofsted assessed 93% as VG/generally good in overall quality, communication, language and literacy, quality of leadership and management (classified B), whilst 96% met that standard for PS&E development (classified C)

**Attainment - ICT:** there is good progress: the 2003 PANDA shows performance in primary schools has overtaken national & SN levels: the % at which the composite grade was good or better was 49.2% (KS1) & 54.7% (KS2). The % of secondary schools judged good or better in ICT subject-level judgements in 2003 PANDA was 92% - well clear of national (59%) & SN (74%) judgements

**Travellers:** in 03/04 school places were identified for 95% of traveller children within 3 days of contact. From 2001 baseline of 30% attaining level 4 at KS2 in English, attainment was 58% in 2003 & 66% in 2004. From the 24% Maths 2001 baseline, attainment was 41% in 2003 & 66% in 04. The transfer rate from primary to secondary school was 50% in 02; 82% in 03 & 95% in 04. Attendance by traveller children is good: primary attendance was 86% in 2003 & 85% in 04; secondary attendance was 81% in 2003 & 82% in 04.

**Exclusion:** Form 4 shows data for 2002/2003: primary permanent exclusions 0.06% of pupils (classified D). Secondary perm. exclusions were 0.19% - below the national median rate. The special school rate was 1.81% of pupils (classified E). 1.25% of pupils with statements of SEN were perm. excluded, (also classified E). But the 5-year record to 04/05 shows improvement (00/01 = 136 exclusions; 01/02 = 107; 02/03 = 117; 03/04 = 74; 04/05 to date = 46, therefore in line to achieve at least 60% of the LPSA target.

**Extended schools:** appointments of extended schools manager and local co-ordinators in each local learning community made, with contracts running until Aug 2006. Children's Trust is piloting development of 8 full service schools. It is too early to judge what impact the new co-ordinators will have but there are early indications of strengthening relationships between schools and with other partners

**LAC - attainment:** recent results are disappointing: 22 out of 35 eligible LAC sat all KS2 tests, of whom 10 gained level 4 or above in English, 7 in maths & 15 in science. At age 16, 58 LAC were eligible for external exams: 30 (52%, c.f. national PSA target of 90%) sat at least one; 26 gained 1 or more GCSE/GNVQ at grade A\*-G; 18 gained 5 or more A\*-G; 2 (3%, c.f. national PSA target of 15%) gained 5 or more A\*-C. In 2003/2004 the % of young people leaving care with 1 GCSE or more was in band 4. Each LAC should have a personal education plan (& designated teacher in support) 100% coverage has not yet been reached. Attainment data excludes LAC placed in Devon (a net importer of LAC) by other authorities. Lack of communication & information from home authorities about difficult-to-place LAC with complex needs being placed in Devon is a major challenge for schools and services.

**SEN/inclusion:** a major plank of strategy over the past 5 years has been to raise capacity of mainstream schools to provide for pupils with SEN, and to reduce the number of statements. In 2000, 5.0% of Devon secondary pupils had statements of SEN - significantly above national (4.3%) & SN (4.1%) levels; by 2004 the Devon % had fallen to 3.6% - below both national (3.8%) & SN (3.7%) levels. At 20/1/2005 2130 pupils with statements were attending maintained mainstream schools (including 130 pupils attending special units at maintained schools) - 66.4% of pupils with statements. Performance in Statutory Assessment is satisfactory: BV43a indicates that professional educational, medical and EP advice is provided within the Code of Practice time limits.

**School accommodation:** recent capital programmes have cut the backlog of unimproved school accommodation. Improvement is accelerated by Exeter reorganisation & PFI, but position continues below average: 2003 PANDA shows 31.1% of primary schools had VG/G accommodation (c.f. 43.3% nationally & 44.3% of SN schools) and 24.8% required much improvement (c.f. 11.4% nationally & 14.5% of SN schools). Only 10% of secondary schools were VG/G in adequacy of accommodation (c.f. 34.6% of SN schools and 27% nationally); 35% required much improvement (c.f. 17.6% of SN schools and 25% nationally). The Exeter PFI has been awarded the "Best UK deal to reach financial close" Award in the Public: Private Finance Awards 2005.

**Workforce Remodelling:** 86% of schools have been engaged in a remodelling activity and all schools are planning for the National Agreement of 10% PPA time.

## Are you making a difference?

### Strengths

**Schools causing concern:** only 1 school has moved from "LEA concern" to either SW or SM: identification & action in all other cases (53 schools in 2000/2001; 56 in 2001/2002; 41 in 2002/2003; 45 in 2003/2004) avoided critical Ofsted inspection. Improvement after LEA support is sustained: no school released from SW/SM has returned to those categories. The record in supporting schools in difficulty is good: only 1 school has moved from SW to SM. In the 2004 school survey, capacity to support school improvement was assessed between satisfactory & good (primary schools: 3rd quartile; secondary schools: 2nd quartile).

**Early years & childcare:** West Exe Children's Centre (opens Sep 2005) combines family centre with nursery unit of a closing First school; the PCT has redeployed Health Visitor time to work from the new Centre. Capital works funded from the education, capital receipts and PCT, and all other costs met from existing budgets. Specialist support to pre-school children with SEN improved through appointment of additional Portage staff leading to reduced waiting time, and deployment of early years SENCOs.

**Attendance:** LEA action has been to target EWO/Behaviour & Attendance Consultant time on 9 schools identified by DfES data; a more vigorous prosecution policy (126 prosecutions in 2003/2004, c.f. 32 in 2002/2003). In 2004/2005 to mid-March, 100 prosecutions, including 55 arising from 171 penalty notices; an energetic programme of truancy sweeps (5 sweeps to date in 2004/2005: 111 young people were stopped), and to attempt to raise attendance of LAC. In the 2004 schools survey there was a relatively benign assessment of LEA support for promoting attendance: between satisfactory and good (2nd quartile). There are positive results of the "Supported return to School" programme, under which school-phobic pupils have significantly improved attendance through EP-led programme input: 80% maintained attendance 8 weeks after intervention. The work has led to an increase in secondary attendance for the last four years and indications suggest Devon will meet 60% of the stretched LPSA target,

**Exclusion:** approx. 50% of schools never/rarely exclude permanently; multi-agency work & training to encourage alternative approach at other schools is under way, but significant improvement not yet proven. A "managed moves" PSA-funded scheme has forestalled perm. exclusion in 34 cases by managed move to another setting, short-term intervention in a PRU, or financial support for resources to keep the child in school. Since 2004 the Behaviour Support Team has reverted to a centrally-funded service; from a focus on schools in early years/primary sector support now extends to all ages. Since Sep 04 536 children with SEBD have been supported; 103 received BST input of 3 or more visits. Efforts are made to reinstate excluded pupils in mainstream schools: Form 4 shows 12.3% of pupils who received alternative tuition for non-medical reasons reintegrated into school. 2004 school survey management of procedures for re-admission of excluded pupils assessed Devon as between satisfactory and good, in the second quartile of LEAs.

**"Education otherwise" provision:** 2 new 12-place PRUs offer 25hr per week provision; broad & balanced curriculum, & therapeutic work & preparation for return to school. 90% of pupils attending KS4 PRUs during 2003/2004 achieved 5 or more accreditations, including GCSEs; all permanently-excluded pupils who attended a PRU or project during 2003/2004 took part in outdoor activities provided by Devon Discovery & achieved relevant accreditation. Voyager PRU is innovative 35-pupil PRU for 10-16 year-olds: it has HQ unit for up to 16 pupils but also 4 rural bases which move according to need, each with a full-time teacher & 2 full-time outdoor education staff (pupils do 2 days/week outdoor pursuits) per 5 or 6 pupils "Chances" in S. Devon provides a youth service/education

off-site provision for pupils at risk of exclusion. Participating schools purchase up to 6 places each per year which are used flexibly.

**English as add. lang:** innovations include a scheme to link isolated bilingual pupils by video-conferencing to promote the first language, raise confidence & self-esteem, develop English language & raise awareness of language/cultural diversity. Eleven schools have been linked; schemes included shared story-telling for Bengali children and links between Japanese, Chinese & Korean pupils. Video phones are used to link isolated pupils.

**Vulnerable children:** a support worker at Park School, Barnstaple links education & social care staff in identifying vulnerable children aged 12+ requiring early intervention & support; this has contributed to reduced referrals to social services. The scheme will be rolled out to other learning communities. A Children's Trust sub-group focussing on vulnerable adolescents at Tiverton High Sch follows a multi-agency approach to adolescents with complex needs, with a key worker from a statutory agency planning with the young person

**LAC:** Priority to promote school & carer awareness of importance of achievement and enjoyment for LAC outcomes more generally. Developing an holistic approach focused on school & placement stability, building self-esteem & resilience and encouraging personal & social development. Beginning to make some progress with a LAC coordinator post created to promote attainment & 'improved outcomes for LAC' is an LPSA-2 target. A Model Policy clarifies roles & responsibilities of designated teachers & governors, guides preparation of PEPs and encourages joint action in response to difficulties in school. 56 LAC benefited from a "dowry" scheme providing schools with modest funding for extra-curricular activity: evaluation showed gains in building self-esteem, self-confidence and fuller engagement with education in 8 out of 9 dowries. Other recent initiatives are: strategies to improve links between foster carers & local youth services and; new systems to overcome difficulties LAC experience in getting library registration. Admission criteria have been varied to give highest priority to LAC. The 20-day rule for offering school places is monitored by admissions forum. A specialist EWO supports LAC admission through coordinating a support package, & (in addition to patch EWO) intervene in attendance difficulties. The current outturn of 12.7% for E&A (LAC) 6 is in band 3 - below our target for the year of 13%.

**SEN/inclusion:** implementation of the broad SEN strategy has included:

- implementation of strategies for the inclusive education of children with SEBD, and with autism
- development of training, policy, guidelines and a help-line for schools and parents/carers on dyslexia
- establishment of an Inclusive Education Panel, including Heads, to consider requests for statutory assessment and decide on provision for children with statements
- implementation of in-year admission and 'managed moves' (i.e. to prevent perm. exclusion) policies
- formulation of an inclusive education strategy and its comprehensive implementation
- a SENCO forum (SENCOs, advisers & EPs), established to produce advice & guidance for schools.

In EP work there has been a sustained shift in emphasis towards preventative/early work within EPs' statutory core work including developing training and teacher coaching work to enhance the capacity of schools to develop inclusive practice, particularly for children with behavioural difficulties through Team Teach (conflict avoidance & physical restraint). There is a good response from schools and from parents/carers about the value of EP input, with consistently high training evaluations, and continued good buy-in. In the 2004 school survey the effectiveness of EP support was assessed between satisfactory and good (primary schools: second quartile of LEAs; secondary schools: top quartile).

**Early engagement in learning:** following initiatives to promote reading in families with very young children, the Library service reports an increase in the number of children under 5 registering as library users - the target of 10,000 set for December 2005 has already been exceeded with 15,158 children registered by March 2005

### Areas for improvement.

**Historic low attainment** in identified localities /learning communities needs targeted support

**LAC:** Strategy to raise LAC achievement, challenging schools on exam entry, monitoring PEPs & encouraging full completion. Carers & care managers to be encouraged to ask schools to account for test/exam entry policies for LAC. Mentoring scheme, encouraging Council staff involvement & encouraging skills or talents, while summer activity programmes will provide new opportunities.

**EP service:** fuller support to early years settings and to improve outcomes for vulnerable groups at KS3 & KS4

**Exclusion:** multi-agency work to support schools in avoiding permanent exclusions

**Early Years** A review of Early Years support across all local authority teams in ongoing. Early findings indicate that action planning will need to address issues of lack of coherence, duplication and communication

### Actions planned for 2005/06

**Intensive support in localities** where there is historic low attainment eg Bideford & Exeter integrating multi agency support including school improvement with particular reference to writing and data sharing.

**14-19** Building on current progress to ensure strong curriculum alignment between schools and FE colleges in particular, together with support and challenge to schools where 14-19 pathways are under- developed

**Integrate school improvement and inclusion support** to schools in relation to low attainment, behaviour and attendance

**Develop and Implement** a coherent strategy for learning communities as the key delivery point for integrated provision, support for school improvement and full service extended schools. Build direct support for head teachers as part of Devon's recruitment and retention strategy and implement the Effective Parent's Partnership Programme.

**Implement the action plan for Early Years support and actively recruit a senior adviser as Head of Early Learning**

## Make a positive contribution

### How good are the outcomes?

- Ofsted 2003/2004 inspections found that 89.9% of Devon Schools were assessed as good, very good or excellent, in their contribution to society
- School exclusions declined over the year as described in the previous section
- 83% of 2003/2004 S10 inspections assessed pupils' freedom from bullying, racism & other harassment as G/VG/Ex. There has been fuller recent reporting of bullying & racist incidents, in particular by traveller children. In inspections to July 2003, pupils' attitudes were judged G/VG in 92% of primary & 78% of secondary schools (c.f. 80% of schools nationally & 89% of SN schools). No secondary school "required much improvement" but the finding that 22% of secondary schools "required some improvement" is in line with the S10 judgement on behaviour: 30% of secondary schools "required some improvement", cf. 26% of schools nationally & 16% of SN). There is scope for raising the position at Devon secondary schools.
- 43 young people stood for election to the 05 UKYP from which; an MYP, a deputy MYP and a member of the YP Shadow Executive were elected for each of the 3 Devon constituencies. In all 23,500 votes were cast in Devon. Which appears to reflect a higher level of participation than the recent general election.
- In the Jan-Mar 05 national rankings Devon YOT came 9<sup>th</sup> out of 156 YOTs with a total score of 95% of the total scores available and best performing in the comparator YOT family. The only scores below level 3 (top band) were in relation to use of remand (band 2) and numbers in education, employment or training (band 1). YJB have just evaluated YOT on the EPQA (Effective Practice Quality Assurance) assessment planning and intervention described as "outstanding"; final warnings and parenting receiving an "excellent" score and education training and employment retaining a "good" score.
- For the 04 summer holidays, Devon Youth services offered 1,600 activity days in Teignbridge & 900 in S Hams, these were linked with the S. Devon YISP and were to some degree targeted at 8-13 yrs considered at risk of offending. Headline figures suggest that in these two districts, youth crime had risen in the 03 summer holiday period by 70% whereas in the 04 summer holiday it remained at non-summer holiday figures.
- This is backed up by YOT referrals where 10 – 13 year old offending rates have shown interesting variation across the county

Locality	02/03	03/04	04/05	% change
North	144	174	197	+ 37%
East	179	286	270	+ 57%
South	140	104	106	- 24%

### Are we making a difference?

#### Strengths

Devon County Council funds and supports members of the UK Youth Parliament. It employs a support worker for members of the Youth Parliament and meets 50% of the costs for a full time participation worker. In 2004 the Council agreed the formation of a Young Peoples Shadow Executive, which has now been elected, so has also a Shadow Scrutiny Forum. The Shadow Executive comprises 9 YP and the YPs scrutiny forum has 14. Both have met since the election with the scrutiny forum looking in depth at school meals and healthy eating reports.

The Devon Youth Music was restructured in Sept 04 to widen opportunities, build stronger links with the music curriculum and encourage professional & community musicians to contribute an inspirational and practical influence on participation. This has broadened the basis of provision in three ways: it will draw in children and young people who might otherwise have been excluded from musical experiences; and it will provide a continuum of opportunity from early participation to career paths; it will help foster two-way community experiences and engagement. The programmes offered this academic year will involve more than double the number of pupils than the year before.

SSD has been working with NCH for some time to develop and pilot a local system and structure of Family Group Conferences for families at the point of crisis that is threatening the need for formal legal action. This is now being widened to allow voluntary self-referral through Sure Starts that will enable families and local agencies to trigger an FGC at an earlier point that will allow families to

retain greater control and independence.

Services for Young Carers continue to be developed. There are six part-time Young Carers Development Workers, who undertake young carers assessments and organise individual and group based support for young carers. There are 324 registered Young Carers in Devon, many of whom participate in activities including weekends away, attending the National Festival, drama weekends and other such activities. In Mid Devon there is an active Young Carers Club that meets on a weekly basis. A revised policy for Young Carers is out for consultation, which includes detailed information of tasks that have been identified for each agency to support Young Carers. Booklets have been produced for Staff, raising awareness of issues relating to Young Carers and their needs for assessment and support. The Children's Trust is sponsoring a conference in Sept with the aim of increasing awareness of young carers needs and boosting best practice and collaborative working.

Young carers, along with victims of domestic violence and young substance misusers have been involved in developing and staging awareness raising / information events about their circumstances. These have included dramatic performances presented to child welfare professionals and informative games developed for PRU pupils.

Case study:

After a recent weekend drama workshop for young people who care for disabled siblings, participants were asked: "what did you find helpful about the weekend?" a few of the replies are listed below:

- *I had a chance to talk about my brother and I heard other people's stories*
- *It helped me on my drama and learning more about including people even if you don't like them you still include them*
- *To know that we are not the only family with a brother or sister with disabilities*
- *To know that other people's brothers & sisters disabilities are different compared to ours, & now I've learned a lot from it*

In 02/3 the youth service undertook a mapping exercise of the statutory and voluntary and community youth work sector across Devon. As an outcome, the post of Young Farmers Organiser was moved from half-time to full-time in recognition of the contribution of the Devon Federation of Young Farmers to the lives and development of 1,252 young people living in hard to reach rural areas but who face issues of lack of access to advice and information, few opportunities to socialise with peers and the chance to take part in activities that range from social to life skills development.

Work with the Children's Fund and YOT has supported a number of initiatives aimed at early identification of children likely to struggle at transition into secondary school, particularly encouraging results are starting to show up from the S. Devon YISP where support programmes have been operating for the past two years, most recently backed up by youth service holiday work and offering rates in the 10-13 age range seem to be showing some marked improvements. Extremely innovative joint agency work to enable vulnerable young people to access a range of activity and support is being developed through the YES centres which bases specialist services (e.g. care leavers, substance misuse) alongside Millennium Volunteers and broader youth service offers.

The high performing YOT offers a substantial programme of victim and offender interventions for young people and families. With the Children's Fund it has developed a Devon wide protocol on anti-social behaviour. A Positive Activities Programme for young people has been run all around the County. In Exeter and East Devon area a sibling project targeting the young offenders has been set up and there are plans to expand this. The YOT has consistently operated within the top 20 national YOTs last year being no exception. The YOT has been supporting the Police in rolling out an ambitious programme of restorative justice training to all NBMs who are beginning to use the approach in both community and school settings. A trial in Braunton, run jointly with consultants from "Transforming Violence" aims to engage a group of disaffected teenagers in productive activity, boost self-esteem & reduce criminal activity, including crime aimed at other young people. This links with other preventative initiatives mentioned elsewhere and if evaluation shows this project to be successful it will become part of a prevention package to be rolled out to other localities.

The LAC strategy is now being actively supported through the Corporate Parent Forum, which involves strong elected member and senior officer representation from across the council. In December this group sponsored a very successful Celebrating Achievement event when over a 100 looked after children received awards for personal achievements or perseverance whether educational, recreationally, domestically or socially. There are a number of new supports for children and foster carers at transitions as exemplified by the Peper Harow contract mentioned in 'Healthy'. A Standards Fund LAC dowry scheme has been used as an innovative tool to enable children to participate in a variety of activities that would not normally have been available to them and they have had a role in choosing the activity that they would like to pursue. Care Leavers forums have been very actively involved in reviewing and rewriting their Pathway Plan paperwork as well as information and advice leaflets for younger looked after children. Where a child or young person is looked after, they, their parents and carers are all actively encouraged to participate in planning, placement and review. Looked After Children aged ten plus are offered an Advocate by the Advocacy Service in order to convey their view to them at any meeting about the. Looked After Children have their own website, hosted by the Children's Society, where they can communicate with each other and express views about issues relating to being in care. The Foster Carers have a well-established strategy group which is involved in consultation about all areas of Foster Carer policy. A lot of work is going on to improve outcomes for LAC from minority ethnic groups through improving the links between the fostering service and minority communities and increasing the awareness and understanding of specific BME issues and needs among carers. Training and guidance on sexuality and gender issues for children and young people is available to carers.

A recent breakthrough for children with special needs and disabilities has been the introduction of direct payments for 16 & 17 year olds. Recipients are supported to plan and purchase their own carers breaks and community support packages by Devon Youth

Association support workers. This is now the biggest such scheme in the country. This offers an important opportunity to practice and develop personal and independence skills in the run up to transition to adulthood and adult services.

Through early years, youth service and social service contracts Devon supports a wide range of voluntary and community sector providers. Through these initiatives considerable resources are being invested into local volunteering and rural community self-help.

### **Areas for improvement**

Consultation with children and young people consistently refers to the lack of and need for safe places to meet and develop social, active, creative and life skills and interests. In a large rural county such as Devon the developing Children's Centre and Extended School agenda offers an important mechanism for improving access to positive and creative activities and additional parenting or preventative support. Given financial constraints this will only be fully effectively achieved when opportunities and funding across the whole range of school and children's services can be more coherently aligned. The Children's Trust is attempting to develop pilot projects that can provide blueprints and mechanisms to help us achieve this.

We are aware that whilst there is a lot of good work on combating bullying going on within schools and in some specialist settings such as training and support for foster carers, there has not been a universal approach or significant attention put into this work. There is now an identified need to draw up a strategy including use of best practice approaches such as Restorative Justice and early identification of additional needs, this will also link to wider prevention work with vulnerable children and young people.

Good progress has been made in reducing permanent exclusions and improving attendance as part of the first LPSA. A second round LPSA will focus on work to continue and expand this work with a particular focus on KS3.

Recent work as part of the national Social Exclusion Unit research into transitions for vulnerable and chaotic young people has highlighted the development of integrated YES services and work with housing providers (see next section) as examples of national good practice. However, we are aware that there needs to be further work around vulnerable young people who are not currently engaged with statutory services or covered by the 'transitions protocol' to ensure improved transfer to adult learning, mental health and substance misuse services.

The generally poor outcomes being achieved by our looked after children are a great cause for concern. One of the priority developments to change this is the introduction of a LAC mentoring scheme, whereby employees of DCC will be given time within their working week and annual appraisal programme to mentor LAC, providing them with support to develop a skill, an interest or a future work opportunity and at the same time build their self esteem.

Actively supporting high aspirations in child, parent and family outcomes and independence requires much more holistic approaches than many agencies, including DCC, have been used to in the past. The LPSA-2 and LAA programmes will make a significant contribution to our ability to meet the improvements identified above. To achieve this, a priority for the next period will be to establish more robust governance and commissioning arrangements to allow greater budget flexibility and innovative practices. A particular need that has been identified to support this is advice and information to parents where no individual agency has resources or accountability to develop a high quality holistic range of provision and where currently activity tends to be piecemeal and frustrating for parents and carers. We plan to use the LAA to build on the excellent base offered by DISC and YOT parenting work to provide a multi-agency approach to this.

### **Actions planned for 2005/06**

1. Work with schools to identify best practice and increase awareness so as to strengthen the 'voice of the child' as an influence on aspects of school improvement and developments.
2. Jointly with identified learning communities and the Children's Fund develop the Children's Trust extended school pilots and establish best practice examples of how resources can be most effectively utilised.
3. Develop best practice guidelines and toolkits for combating bullying and to support victims of bullying and young people who are victims of anti-social behaviour.
4. Develop and deliver the LPSA-2 programme for school attendance, focussing on transitions into and alternative opportunities with KS3.
5. Development of 16+ multi-agency services to include expansion of the YES projects, integration with the Children's Trust Housing with Support Strategy, joint work with adult services to provide support up to 21 for young adults with learning disability, mental health needs and problematic substance misuse along the same sort of lines as has been developed for care leavers.
6. Build on the work of the Corporate Parenting Forum and implement the LAC mentor project as part of the wider LAC improvement plan and LPSA-2
7. Develop a parent information, advice and parenting support standard to be established across Devon. As part of the LAA work with existing services and funding streams to support multi-agency implementation

## Achieve Economic Well-being

### How good are the outcomes?

Rapid increase in provision from 213 childcare places per 1000 children aged under 5 in 2004 to 266 places per 1000 in 2005:

Type of child care	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Childcare places for 0 – 2 years	1241	1390	1507	1989	2167
Childcare places for 3 - 4 years	2470	2764	3534	4112	4512
Childminding places for 0 – 4 years	3010	2393	2384	2178	2041
Totals	6721	6547	7425	8279	8720

- This includes 688 extra places in private day nurseries; 258 new childcare places in pre-schools offering full-day care for 3 & 4 year-olds; extra places for 2-year-olds at full-day care pre-schools and a small increase in nursery units offering wrap-around care.
- There have been a significant increase in the number of before school places which have risen from 147 in 2000 to 1267 in 04 and after school places which have risen from 1631 to 2739 in 04. While the number of holiday places have dropped back from 3998 to 3692
- In childcare inspections 68% were assessed as good, (31% satisfactory & 1% unsatisfactory); 95% of childcare providers' suitability was satisfactory or better (classified "C"). The breakdown was: childminders - 55% good (against England average of 47%), full day care 68% good (64%), sessional care 69% good (60%), out of school childcare 47% good (42%).
- Point scores at 18+ are in line with National averages with little variation across providers. Achievement on work based learning programmes is above the Devon and Cornwall average in most areas. Participation and progression rates at 16 are satisfactory. The range of courses at level 3 is sufficiently wide ranging for most learners. Inspection evidence indicates that the quality of teaching and learning across 14 – 19 is at least satisfactory. 20.2% and 19.8% of 18+ entered higher education in 2002/03 respectively.
- Across the whole of Devon Connexions the number of 16-18 year olds NOT in ET&E was 5.8% in Nov 03, a figure which improved slightly to 5.1% in Nov 04 which is better than the LSC and National average.
- Connexions records for teenage mothers suggest that of the total number of young mothers known to them that were engaged in ET&E was 11.9% in Dec 2003 which rose to 14.3% in April 04 and to 23.8% in April 05 which is a little below the company average and well below the national target.
- Latest YOT figures (mar 05) show that 100% had received a needs assessment of which 82.6% were engaged with ET&E and 96.8% were satisfactorily accommodated. The Connexions PA service for Exeter, East & Mid YOT has recently been evaluated by the YJB and adjudged as excellent.
- PAF CF/A2: our provisional outturn for the percentage of care leavers with 1+ A\*-G is approx 47%, which is a deterioration from 61.5% in 03/04 and reflects our disappointing performance overall in the educational attainment of LAC. The percentage of care leavers achieving 5+ A\*-C has similarly deteriorated from 03/03 and at a provisional figure of 2.4% is significantly lower than our comparator authorities.
- PAF CF/A4: engagement of former LAC in ET&E as a percentage of all 19 year olds locally improved from 50.3% in 03/04 to 62.1% in 04/05. However, numbers of care leavers in higher education at age 19 remain low 5.5% for 04/05 and 98% had an allocated PA or SW from the care leavers team. Only 38% (of all Care Leavers) have Pathway Plans, although 57% of relevant Care Leavers have such plans.
- District council homeless returns recorded a drop in 16-18 year olds with priority needs from 139 in 04 to 120 in 05. At the same time the number of dependant children (under 16) affected by being a priority needs homeless family dropped from 1351 to 985. But the number of pregnant mothers who were homeless rose from 128 to 156.

### Are we making a difference?

#### Strengths

For the past 3 years DCC has been running a major campaign with Devon Welfare Rights to increase take up of benefits, the opportunity to receive easily accessible professional advice on benefits is now being incorporated into the County Contact Centre

arrangements, where any relevant enquirer will be offered the possibility of a check.

New Opportunities funding from the Lottery has been used effectively to encourage local parents groups and schools to develop a range of before and after school groups and activities, which have provided important support to the wider childcare initiatives.

An LPSA-2 target to *'improve productivity & skills, particularly amongst the hard to reach'*, will build on the current close working between the county council economic regeneration team and the LSC. A priority within this work is and will remain the need to encourage 16 – 25 year olds to remain in Devon by improving the availability of high quality training and employment opportunities even in the more rural parts of Devon.

The number of pupils participating in vocational courses has increased by over 50% during the last two years and most schools are involved in increased flexibility and offering applied GCSE Courses. The range of post 16 courses is good for level 3 learners and collaborative arrangements maintain minority subjects. Widening of post 16 offers at Level 2 and below is less advanced and in some sixth forms there is no provision below Level 3. The 2004 Schools Survey showed that secondary schools assess the LEA Support for 14 to 19 education provision as between satisfactory and good. The majority of providers are committed to increasing access to and participation in education and training for young people. However, gaps in data, especially relating to vocational courses in schools other than increased flexibility courses make it difficult to judge the overall position.

There is full agreement to the 14-19 strategy across all providers across Devon in partnership with the LSC. Effective infrastructure mainly in place to develop provision across the County to strengthen entitlement and access as well as to support local flexibility. Effective partnership arrangements has supported the development of an effective vision and action plan.

All young people access impartial information and advice appropriate to their needs. Most follow appropriate courses that enable them to progress satisfactorily. Increasingly, destination data is being used strategically by the full range of providers. Attainment by point score and entry KS5 is improving although it is below national average.

The county benefits from having a well run, high performing Connexions service which is an active partner with schools and council children's services and provides a high level of universal coverage through a large network of PAs and a range of locally accessible settings. Work with targeted groups is showing steadily improved outcomes. As part of this, joint working protocols and information sharing agreements are in place between Connexions and the YOT, SSD & the JATs. And Connexions has been a key member of a recent Rapid Improvement Group focussing on improving ET&E outcomes for care leavers. Connexions has recently led a consortium bid to the LSE for a pre-e2e-NEET project. This bid has been successful and will target the range of vulnerable and excluded young people, with particular emphasis on offenders, young parents, care leavers and young people with special needs. Work to pilot the scheme is about to begin in S. Devon.

14-19 provision in Exeter is good and improving, with the new school development work being a spur to enhanced achievement. While provision in East and Mid Devon is as yet less coherent, there is evidence of increased collaboration between the schools and local colleges, and North Devon has a established forum for determining and developing 14-19 provision. In South Devon there is joint work with Torbay to develop opportunities for young people from both Local Authorities.

All the reviews of Looked After Children regardless of their age are chaired by the Independent Reviewing Unit to ensure vigorous and timely plans for the child. Care leavers are encouraged and supported in engaging in education, training and employment and an information pack for all Care Leavers has been produced jointly with researchers at the University of Exeter to lay out the detail of all benefits and financial support available to Care Leavers in education and work placements. Jointly with voluntary sector and RSL providers SSD have developed a flexible supported lodgings scheme for care leavers. This has proved extremely successful at creating new market capacity, particularly in rural areas which has allowed the young people to stay in their localities rather than having to move to the towns. This ability to be able to allow care leavers a high level of choice about where they live is now being further developed through a link with a local charity 'Wheels to Work' which provides grant funding and support for rural young people to be able to purchase, maintain and safely use mopeds, thus overcoming the problem of home to college or work transport.

Foster Carers have received advice about encouraging young people to take up part time employment as a method of increasing self-esteem and gaining work experience.

The Children's Trust has led the development of a Housing Support Strategy for Vulnerable Children, Young People and Families. The strategy which was developed following a series of consultation processes, is attracting national recognition for its cross sectoral and innovative approach has informed the LPSA-2 & LAA housing initiatives and is being used as the framework to implement the Supporting People investment-disinvestment strategy and joint investment planning between the county and district councils, including use of 2<sup>nd</sup> home council tax. A joint training-information day "Young People Matter" organised between housing and children's service providers in July will also mark a big step forward in this area of work.

Under 18 conception rates in Devon are significantly lower than the England and SW averages. With quite low numbers trends and services are difficult to plan for. However, jointly with PCTs and the voluntary sector a number of initiatives aimed at engaging or maintaining access to ET&E opportunities have been developed: in Mid & East Devon, specialist Young Parent support workers and; in North Devon through a college based nurse. Across the county there are 10 specialist independent floating support units for

teenage parents as well as a further 16 places for mixed groups of vulnerable single parents within shared/hostel type settings. The CT strategy described above plans to switch this balance around to provide a greater range of independence enhancing options.

## Areas for improvement

There is a continuing need to develop support for young people making the transition to FE / HE or employment particularly those from the areas with highest rates of deprivation and young people with additional needs whether that be rural transport needs, issues associated with disability, ethnicity or gender. This is likely to form a key strand of joint work between the Children's Trust and the wider Devon Strategic Partnership regeneration projects. As part of this there will be a need to improve our understanding of provision and take-up of 14+ vocational opportunities and the links to local employment opportunities.

Promote accessibility to the full range of courses at all levels through area focus development. Systematic collection of data relating to school provision and planned provision needs strengthening. Achievement at KS4 level 2 is too variable across the County. Progression for young people with SEN is an issue.

DCC will continue to collaborate with local employers, government office, district councils and the LSC to support the active encouragement of the widest possible range of employment and training opportunities across the whole of Devon. This forms part of the wider council strategy of encouraging sustainable local community wealth creation and high aspirations.

The LPSA-2 improved outcomes for LAC will be used to develop a work experience and modern apprenticeship programme for Care Leavers to be able to access opportunities within DCC. This will form part of the wider mentoring and corporate parenting activity referred to elsewhere.

Education, training and employment for young offenders continues to be a target to be worked towards. It is viewed as a difficult target owing to the lack of provision, especially work based learning in Devon for disaffected young people and those of low ability.

A key area of work identified as part of the CT Housing Support Strategy is the need to develop a Foyer plan jointly with the LSC and SP, this will particularly focus on the needs of young people with special needs, teenage parents and young people from BME backgrounds. Currently, provision and funding is not structured so as to incentivise innovative and creative ways of offering linked accommodation and training within a rural setting.

A further LPSA-2 target will focus on expanding the work already happening with Devon Welfare Rights to maximise benefit take-up. This will however be expanded to focus more on benefit incentives to support routes into employment and self-employment, support for people on low pay and support for families that include children with disabilities. (national statistics suggest that 60% of families with a disabled child live at or below the poverty threshold).

## Actions planned for 2005/06

These will primarily focus on:

1. Working with partners to support employment generation
2. Strengthening links, opportunities and support for transitions from statutory schooling. Extend access to the full range of courses at all levels, paying particular attention to areas with limited provision.
3. Strengthen the relationship between the LSC and the LEA by sharing procedures and processes regarding providers, access and dissemination of data and target related to participation, retention, attainment, and progression.
4. Audit post 16 courses together with LSC, to establish current provision. Establish KS4 audit as part of annual review of schools. A post 16 self-evaluation tool and training package are being developed to promote the development of provision at all levels.
5. Responding to and implementing the Youth Green Paper
6. Implementing the relevant elements of the LAA & LPSA-2 initiatives
7. Implementing the Children's Trust Housing Support Strategy

**Does service management help to improve outcomes for children and young people?**

Approaches to Service Delivery

Devon has a proven track record of innovation and strategic planning (Children's Inspection 2003) but has on occasions struggled to deliver coherence of implementation across the system Devon-wide. This reflects in part the balance between innovation, prioritisation and capacity (CPA) and in part the translation of strategy into operations and practice. The complexity, breadth & scope of the CfC agenda generates a new challenge to capacity, historic priorities & commitment to culture change. We do not underestimate the size of the task, the importance of delivery and the scale of the cultural shifts required, at all levels across the system, and all functional areas of infrastructure. Our phased, incremental approach to integration of Children's Services within the Authority is a measured response to managing the tensions between these. The Devon Transition Plan is an important tool in defining and identifying the specific actions required to manage the on-going change agenda.

Our approach to service delivery continues to build on our partnership strengths, both with the voluntary sector and other public sector partners and through new partnerships forged through the Children's Trust, including new partnerships with the independent sector. This strategy reflects the need to simultaneously increase capacity for service improvements and pro-actively develop & stabilise aspects of the market in order to secure improved access, coverage & consistency of services linked to improved outcomes. This is exemplified and evidenced below:

- **Strong** all party member support and leadership in furthering integration of Children's Services exemplified by creation of Children's Services Division (Sept 04) bringing together children's social service & central LEA services for vulnerable children as a stepped change towards a single service Directorate. Single Divisional management is now supporting improved joint working on vulnerable Children's agenda, e.g. joint contracting for residential special education; raising nutritional standards in children's homes; new specialist posts: Ed Psych for Adoption, LAC education coordinator. The Council has published a Devon Transitional Plan 05/06 setting out steps to achieve full integration & clear accountability framework as well as planning towards the CYPP for April 06. Members have strongly promoted integration and are pro-active in setting the pace with partners. E.g. Children's Trust, LAA and LPSA2 in order to strengthen innovation, align resources and service delivery of children's agenda.
- **Devon Children's Trust** has ambitious, comprehensive agenda for CfC, agreed vision, priorities, work programme, governance arrangements, membership & stakeholder involvement providing sound base on which to build. Developments include:-
  - Work programme priorities reflect the range of locally identified needs e.g. CSN Development Group is responding to a service/strategy review involving parent/carers, Vulnerable Adolescents Group has identified the issues that are "everyone's problem, no ones accountability"; ISA has focussed on using a learning community Bideford Pilot to establish best practice.
  - Parent/carers, parent/governor involvement at Board level strengthened in 05 (harnessing skills from Surestart parental participation and parent partnership) make active contribution at strategic level and are pro-active in local communities, keep the reality, practicalities and issues to the fore of the Board.
  - Joining key parts of system, previously fragmented e.g. Head teachers representing Primary, Secondary and Special Schools on Children's Trust Executive and Schools Forum, facilitating Vision for Learning implementation.
  - Integrated model of service delivery being developed around Children's centres, extended schools, youth enquiry services and Joint Agency Teams with a view of embedding access to services for vulnerable children through universal services. Developments underway linked to work on ISA/CAF/ICS around a child concern pathway.
  - Work priorities taken forward by development groups working to project plans engaging wide stakeholder involvement – some more successful than others e.g. Bideford Pilot has added value – started from joining together aspirations of local primary heads for their children improving outcomes/service choice and the work required on ISA, has both informed Devon-wide learning on ISA, developed model for local needs analysis with Dartington, achieved web-based resource directory – Disc+, a planning tool for the local learning community and stakeholder group and a systematic approach to service development. The CSN group has made slower progress on some aspects – in part a capacity issue (to take forward detailed work on Section 31 Health Act flexibilities to achieve clear accountability framework and infrastructure arrangements – plan in place but also complexity of cultural change in integrating special education services.
- **Voluntary** Sector capacity building has been a key priority for the Authority through the development of the Devon Compact and strengthening of the role of local CVS's through increased investment. Strategic meetings between the voluntary sector and SSD are held twice a year to discuss: commissioning intentions & exchange perspectives; inform on key themes which impact on all client groups & to develop appropriate responses to manage transitions between client group service areas. Devon Children's Trust is supporting work to assist in the market stabilisation of the voluntary sector – a key current piece of work is looking at meeting full cost recovery for voluntary sector the issue having been raised by Devon is being led by GOSW at the behest of the former Minister for Children. Numerous positive examples of public: voluntary sector partnership e.g. NCH and Surestart development; DYA joint investment in YES projects across the country; Devonwide strategic approach now secured to supported lodgings provided by DYA.
- **Multi-disciplinary** Joint Agency Teams for children with Special Needs, single management arrangements are well established except for S/W Devon. The model of integrated access to specialist services are being developed and extended now to CAMHS services, through a single pathway approach, joint CAMHS managers & increased investment in practitioner time. Delays in

moving forward with the establishment of S/W JAT in 04/05 is disappointing – largely a capacity issue to be resolved by the imminent appointment of a strategic co-ordinator post for the County. New developments in S/W will focus on integration with universal service alongside children's centre/extended school developments. Key areas for improvement in 05/06 include achievement of Section 31 Health Act flexibilities to encompass JAT infrastructure & accountability framework & integration of Special Education Services. As part of the action plan following the Children's Service Inspection, the strengthening of processes, systems and links between JATs & Social Services Children's Helpdesks as "an integrated model" has improved the accountability, communication, work-flow & standards in managing our "safeguarding/child protection" responsibilities. Quality assurance in practice standards is an ongoing area for improvement, building on File Quality Audit.

- In 05/06 Children's Trust is working up a Common Dataset (needs & performance analysis based on CfC); strengthening participation of children, young people and parent carers, including a new contract to establish support for parent/carer network; accelerating work programme of CSN and extended schools integration; produce the CYPP (see Transition Plan) and; through the establishment of Joint Commissioning Team develop a whole-system approach to performance management, Taken together these will enable the Board to establish robust prioritisation & performance management against targets.
  - In a County the size of Devon the relationship between Devon-wide & local service planning/implementation is a constant tension – Children's Trust is developing a model based on clear strategic planning frameworks supported, implemented and delivered at the local level. The building blocks are in place though Learning Communities, local Children's Trust Forums and the Children's Trust Executive with linkages which are still developing.

**Performance Management** arrangements are currently separate and organised within Service Directorates (EAL & SSD). The Transition Plan has identified this as a key area to be addressed as part of the integration of infrastructure services to support a single Children's Service. Significant weakness prevail in sharing data, with a plethora of different systems & processes which do not "connect or communicate", reliance on manual processes for key data lacks accuracy & timeliness. This is particularly acute in management information of LAC attendance, PEPs & attainment, although joint work in 04/05 has identified the extend of gaps and complexity of business process issues. Detailed action planning to follow. Notwithstanding these issues both Directorates have strong ethos of performance management and will build from strength, utilising respective areas of experience e.g. well developed deployment of the Business Excellence Model in EAL and the Rapid Improvement Model in SSD. Over the past year we have:

- **Significantly** strengthened & systematised performance management in social care with improvements in quality of data, data management, performance reporting at strategic and operational level, review & action. Enabled earlier identification of issues & action to resolve e.g. PAF C20 problems identified in first 2 quarters addressed & resolved through process changes by quarter 3 & 4. Use of Rapid Improvement Model, engaging all key stakeholders has proved successful e.g. improvements achieved in C23 in 04/05 compared to performance 03/04. The model also being used to sustain improvement in C23. Front line manager involvement has been significant contributory factor to improvement with performance management now a key element of service plan development, alignment with role objective setting, management conferences, workshops & reporting at locality / team level. Work still in progress to reduce/modernise cumbersome business processes and further engage practitioners.
- **Well established** performance management processes in EAL include:-
  - Action plans for individual services within the EAL Directorate are completed annually, complemented by a year-end report on outcomes.
  - Annual EFQM exercise undertaken both by the EAL senior management team and individual service management teams. EFQM development plans are taken by service managers to a "Continuous Improvement Group", which meets every other month to consider all aspects of performance management
  - Full coverage of annual performance management assessment of individual staff & subsequent six-month review meeting
  - Performance measures, which are used throughout the organisation. (A new system, SPAR.NET, is being developed to allow fuller exploitation of corporate performance data)
  - Charter Mark: four EAL services have achieved Charter Mark and several more are expected to be successful in 2005. All services will go for assessment over the next three years.
  - Staff are surveyed annually and their comments inform management of the service.
- **Joint Contracting** practices greatly enhanced with significant benefits e.g. IPPs in place for all jointly purchased & social care external purchased placements helping to hold providers to account for quality of service purchased; development of outcome based contracting with independent sector provider for cost and volume contract (linking performance outcomes with purchase price). Improved contracting arrangements have stabilised market prices with cost increases of 1.3% in PAF B8 evidenced at outturn as opposed to 26.8% between 2002-03 & 03-04. The cost profile remains "acceptable" & in-line with planned investment / disinvestment strategies aimed at modernising in-house residential and fostering services.
- **Rapid Improvement Plan** to reduce sickness/absence in place in Social Services. From an average of 14.7 lost days per FTE per year to a target of 11.7 lost days by quarter 4 in 05/06. For Children's Social Services the current % of working days lost to sickness absence is 4.04%.
- **Recruitment** and Retention of Social Workers is a priority of the MTFP and we are in year 3 of an action plan to reduce staff turnover from 10.57% in 04/05 to 10.50% in 05/06 this is an improving picture & bellow the national average. Vacancy levels are running at 7%. Pro-active management and development of trainee social worker scheme, enhanced progression and active marketing are all elements of the strategy. Currently seeking to improve investment in staff learning and development through

alignment of L&D with Children's Services strategy, study time within caseload weighting allowance, pro-active promotion of portfolios and backfill support to those undertaking CCA.

- **Level 2** of the Equality Standard for local government achieved by DCC (corporate health indicator) in 04/05. Race Equality Scheme now being refreshed, Corporate Equality Action Plan in place, Impact Assessments underway with 2 completed in Social Care. Youth Offending Service currently undertaking full race audit impact (YJB) towards race action plan, early evidence suggests that % offences committed by BME are less than base BME population %. Engagement of 16-18 from BME in ET&E was 95.9% in Nov 04 compared to 80% in Nov 2003. As with a number of partners our ethnic data is incomplete and this is a key area for improvement for 05/06.
- **Successful** achievement of LPSA1 – Reduction of LAC targets achieved 100% in North Devon & 60% Exeter; increased take up in Direct Payments by 16 & 17 year olds has led to Devon having the biggest number of such DPs anywhere in the country; improved access to quality information – parent/carers of CSN was achieved; parent care key workers has not been achieved (covered elsewhere); target to achieve 56.5% 5 A\*-C GCSEs led to a rise well above the national trend; although the very challenging KS2 targets for Exeter pupils were not achieved, the KS4 5 A\*-C GCSE target was surpassed; reducing secondary permanent exclusions is on target; raising secondary attendance is likely to meet 60% of the stretch target.
- **DCC** at corporate level DCC has strengthening its approach to Performance Management, e.g. development of management information systems – procurement of ORACLE HRMS (Workforce). Corporate appraisal process in place for all staff at present loosely linked back to corporate goals – area for improvement in 05/06 with refreshment of DCC Strategic Plan, to address identified weakness i.e. strengthening/simplifying and connecting strategic plan with individual effort. **Hear by Right** Programme and the Devon Youth Parliament are contributing to the pro-active involvement and participation of Young People in the scrutiny function of the Council.
- **Participation** of children and young people systematically in performance management/review of services remains our biggest challenge. Examples to date are service specific e.g. Care Leavers, Young Carers, renewal of external contracts – Children's Rights, Up4It. Planned developments in 05/06 for more systematic inclusion of children and young people's contributions in place through commissioning and contracting practices, e.g. involving young people in pre-evaluation stage of commissioning a preferred provider list for fostering; and all subsequent commissioning activity.

#### Workforce Development

- **Capacity** building for the future and workforce development is a priority for DCC. Key Corporate initiatives include:-
  - An agreed workforce plan 2005, following Best Value Review in '04, to reflect changing local and national requirements in planning workforce needs for the future.
  - Devon Improvement Programme, DCC is one of 13 participating authorities sponsored by ODPM, £1.3m. Aims to develop capacity and skills in the areas of strategic planning and visioning; member and officer capacity; performance and project management; communication, consultation and partnership working.
  - Leadership development through a new DCC programme "Inspiration-leading to Excellence", based on a coaching model and action learning to be piloted in 2005, linked to delivery of strategic plan and in response to the CPA report
- **Across** Social Care and Education there is strong emphasis on workforce development, albeit, as yet not integrated (see Transition Plan) e.g. Investment in personnel support for the massive reorganisation of schools, affecting 1, 488 teaching and non teaching staff in Exeter. Through citywide agreement with governing bodies, close liaison with professional associations, personalised support and retraining schedules and a priority interview protocol all staff have been accommodated for September 05 with no compulsory redundancies.
- **Joint** conferences, workshops & events held in 04/05 to support change management including: 500 staff attending new Children's Service Division event - Making Sure Children and Young People Matter: Beginning a Decade of Change; Children's Trust NSF/ECM launch with 200 health, social care & education staff; Hidden Harm Conference with over 100 delegates from all relevant sectors; Making your Practice Count - 300 Social Care as prelude to ICS implementation using – Bridge Consultancy; anti-racism training delivered & target of 50% early years staff holding recognised qualification has been met.
- **New** roles being developed in frontline service delivery to support links between mainstream and specialist services, e.g. Social Workers and CCWs in mainstream Children's Services specialising in substance misuse & linking with adult drug treatment services; development of pastoral care workers based in schools and working back into JATs; scoping work undertaken within children's centre developments to look at competency based approach to designing new roles. Single manager posts being extended now to include e.g. the appointment of frontline CAMHS managers who will manage referral, assessment, care & treatment plans provided by staff from PCTs. NHS CAMHS providers and SSD

## How well are you using your resources?

Budgeted per capita investment in PSS services in 2004-05 was £269 per head (likewise for Children and Family services per population aged under 18), which represented an increase of 10.7% since 2003-04. If consistent with the previous 5 years, this will again exceed the IPF comparators for both the total PSS and Children and Family services PSS budget.

The overall percentage PSS expenditure on provision for children and families has fallen slightly to 18.4% (from 18.7%). However, prudent financial management in 2004-05, which included greater rigour in contracting arrangements and strategies to modernise in-house services, resulted in a minor under-spending of the Children and Family services budget of £0.050m in contrast to the over-spend of £1.117m recorded in 2003-04.

### **Investment Patterns, Impact and Value for Money**

Medium Term Financial Planning is proving an invaluable tool in supporting a programme of modernisation in children's social care services and a similar approach to the remodelling of support services for special schools for children with educational and behavioural difficulties. Both have developed disinvestment and investment strategies to invest in supporting children within their families and local communities, and in support of strategies to increase family based care (reduce LAC) and promote inclusion. Specific examples of how this approach is securing positive change include:-

- Comprehensive trend analysis (need, price, performance) and modelling based on scenario planning to understand impact of the relationship between these elements e.g. impact of residential homes closure and enhancement to staffing ratios has led to planned rise in cost of in-house residential beds – new services will be judged against corresponding improvement in performance e.g. placement stability
- Extensive market analysis & strengthening of commissioning strategy; impact of other LA LAC on Devon market and costs to partner agencies flagged as a national issue and demonstrated through representation to DfES and DOH re changing commissioning responsibilities of PCT's with some success in the latest DOH Guidance on Lead Commissioner.
- Significant switch in expenditure from residential services to family support evidenced in performance of EX77 (£74 per head an increase of 34.5% on 2003/04) with Devon exceeding IPF and national trend. Switch has totalled approximately £0.380m in 2004-05, resulting from the reconfiguration of in-house community homes and the planned reduction in the number of looked after and accommodated children.
- SEBD Strategy is seeing a switch of expenditure through closure of Hillcrest Residential School (£616k) and anticipated capital receipt of approx £3m to be reinvested in day SEBD provision in priority areas around the county still to be realised. Reinvestment of revenue so far has been in an additional KS-1 nurture group at Inverteign (one more planned in N. Devon); four KS-1&2 outreach resource bases, linking locally with other agency initiatives (8 more planned); additional teaching input to "Chances" off-site KS-3&4 provision (2 more planned); additionally resourced, day provision at Ratcliffe EDB school; appointment of senior specialist EP to co-ordinate County-wide strategy.
- **Commissioning** strategies are becoming more sophisticated – still work to do on aligning strategies between partners e.g. CSN and refreshing the overarching strategy. Sound examples of commissioning practice in LEA and Social Care on which to build. Service specific examples of this are
  - The school support service (stakeholder) Board oversees the delivery of services to schools: costs have been held to inflation for two years.
  - An alternative portfolio of services to schools is currently being developed, to promote competition and increase choice; this will be by OJEU process and also managed electronically.
  - E procurement – DCC has made good progress on E procurement, notably by establishing a Devon Portal to facilitate schools direct access to suppliers, this is also supporting schools in seeking efficiency savings: and by the electronic procurement of the £94m PFI project, a system commended by bidders for streamlining the process.
  - Outcome focussed procurement & Negotiated Tender procedures have been run by SSD in conjunction with partner agencies, in particular Supporting People and the DAT
- **Both EAL and SSD** have been engaged in the delivery of LPSA's with significant success achieved and reported in year 3 (04/05). The following examples illustrate how targeted investment and focus of objective can supplement the achievement of service strategy.
  - LPSA – Reduction in LAC achieved 100% target in N.Devon and 60% in Exeter achieved by investing in additional services to divert and support children/young people at home or with family and friends. This has contributed to the overall strategy to continue the reduction of numbers of LAC from 615 and bring in line (or under) IPF in 04/05, linked also to Medium Term Financial Strategy to switch spend into prevention). Targeted investment in preventative services has seen an improvement of approximately 2% in PAF E44, which remains "good" at 37.6%.
  - Devon has a good reputation for its support for schools in workforce remodelling, and has been commended in an HMI report and was asked by DfES to produce a FAQ guide on implementing PPA. It instituted a series of budget surgeries to support schools in implementation against falling rolls. Its workforce remodelling steering group includes reps from the professional associations and a wide range of stakeholders. A number of taskgroups work under its remit.
  - Direct Payments for 16/17 year olds with special needs have been increased by developing a contract with DYA a vol org youth provider to enable young people to manage the skills and negotiations required.

- Improve the availability and good quality information for families with Special needs children has been achieved by development of the existing work of the 0-14 DISC & DISC+ marketing and publicity arrangements.
  - Improve attendance; use of the pump-priming funding led to an increase in specialist capacity within the EWS and also a greater involvement in the development of ICT in schools by the EWOs.
  - Reduce exclusions; pump-priming fund has been allocated to secondary and special schools in negotiation with LEA Officers. This has led to some innovative practice to reduce exclusions and thus reduce central costs in providing full-time education. To date in 04-05, 39 pupils have remained in school whereas previously they may well have been excluded. The costs of educating a pupil in a PRU for just one year are approximately £11,000.
- **There** are a number of areas in which the LEA is demonstrating VFM, examples include:-
    - Management of school places, Devon has a good record in managing the stock of school accommodation in line with demand for places – the % of surplus places in Devon primary schools in 2004 was 9.9% compared with the national median figure of 10.5%. In secondary schools the Devon % was 3.5%, compared with the national median figure of 5.7%. Ofsted Form 4 shows that only 7.1% of Devon primary schools had 25% or more surplus places – classified as “B” – while only 2.7% of secondary schools had 25% or more surplus places – also classified “B”.
    - VFM – the DfES local authority grid profile dated 17 June 2004 shows that for 2004/05 Devon LEA had a total school formula spending share per pupil of £2863 – considerably below the England average of £3109. Devon was ranked 129<sup>th</sup> highest out of 151 LEAs in this fundamental measure.
    - Cost of LEA support services – price controls are negotiated with the School Support Services Board which have capped price increases at the rate of inflation during the last 2 years.
  - **Joint Agency Complex Cases** panel determines resource allocation (for complex placement needs) well established trend and activity data, framework for decision-making and protocols to assist in relative contributions in place since 2003. Whilst not a “pooled budget” area as yet, this has brought advantage to development of transparency in costs and contributions apportioned to partners, focus on developing and improving commissioning activity and comprehensive market analysis. A priority area is to establish a more rigorous monitoring system to evidence that we are achieving VFM in placement commissioning. A multi-agency monitoring team has been established to monitor the progress of the new outcome based contract approach (PAF indicators and KPIs linked to contract price with independent sector provider being piloted), this will be used as the template for monitoring and review of all commissioning activity. The evaluation of the pilot will inform the competitive exercise underway which will be the basis of all placement commissioning for the next two years. We actively review levels of spend, unit costs and activity with all other South West Local Authority’s. Through the SWPG we are able to assess our relative success in achieving VFM in the commissioning of services. In 04/05 there are two indicators where we are achieving better than the average efficiencies in our commissioning:-
    - Our multi-agency panel arrangements had succeeded in Devon achieving the best commitment of Health spend to agency placement in the SW (although some in-Devon variance between PCTs).
    - We achieved the lowest inflation increase spend on children’s placements compared to SW LAs average 2.7% in contrast to a SW average of 3.5%

#### **Expenditure in line with Projections and Financial Management**

**Financial accountability** has remained the responsibility of the 2 service Directorates (EAL&SSD), with work underway to combine budget leads for services for vulnerable children, “pool” budgets for children with complex needs, establish pattern of joint budget reporting. The Council has secured improvements in CPA auditor – scored judgements, on a range of financial measures; the average mark has improved from 3.18 in 2002 to 3.5 in 2004. This is reflected within Directorates where there are systematic and sound processes in place with rigorous scrutiny and management of expenditure on volatile budgets on a monthly basis. The timeliness of financial statements has improved from Grade 3 to Grade 4 CPA and there is clear evidence of management action responding to areas of potential overspend.

- **Outturn** position for 04/05 for Children’s Social Services was £50k underspend and demonstrated largely stable projections throughout the year with expenditure in line with projections, based on the Medium Term Financial Plan. Unit costs stabilised and held in 04/05 in contrast to trends in previous year whilst preparing for a comprehensive process of market testing and competition which will encompass all foster care and residential care purchase over the next two years. The main variance from this was significant financial pressure in the care leaver’s service, which was not budgeted for. Trend apparent from early in 04/05 and containment plan put in place to manage the overspend. This was subsequently addressed at budget preparation for 05/06. The position belies the continual pressures in the system and the rigorous management action which prevails. Costs of residential purchase were held.
- **Outturn** position for 04/05 for the LEA shows an overspend of £739k, which was 1.4% of the LEA’s non-schools education budget. There was considerable in-year budget pressure arising from teacher redundancy and further pressure on the contingency budget arising from actual pupil numbers being higher than forecast. The emerging difficulty was spotted in good time and management action reduced the potential overspend of £1.7m by approx. £1.0m. A redeployment policy for schools has been implemented to ameliorate the effect of falling rolls.

#### **Pooled Resources**

- **Impact** of pooled resources for service outcomes is most ably demonstrated in the Devon YOT – well established, proven track

record in budget/resources management and performance outcomes. Current pooled budget is £1.4 million (partner contributions and Youth Justice Grant, established early and placed Devon YOT in advantageous position to reap benefits of devolved budgets, unit costing and local accountability, improved bidding quality through more transparent financial arrangements, clarification and control over true cost of the service, enabling improved assessment of value, improved commissioning at a County and local level through the Steering Group and Service Manager having clear control of the total resource and better engagement of partners through specific outcome requirements linked to investment. As a result the service has been highly successful in both performance (Devon YOT has remained in the top twenty best performing YOTs since performance tables in situ) and in fiscal management with a prolonged period of sound financial management with no overspend and strategic roll forward of underspend for longer term investment purposes.

- **Significant** although differential impact and progress 04/05 in securing alignment of resources within agreed joint frameworks of decision making in support of Children's Trust priorities – work programme, early days but some evidence of some benefit for children/young people, clarification around business processes inputs and outputs and more transparent decision making. Examples listed illustrate the points.
  - Young People's Substance Misuse Strategy (DAT) cited as good practice by GOSW; complete alignment of all funding streams, budget (£700k) managed to target against priorities through partnership steering group. Higher rates of treatment achieved for young people per head of population than anywhere else in South West.
  - CAMHS – CAMHS grant (Health and Social Care) operating as single pooled budget to support strategy implementation. Better understanding of resource space has allowed the creation of new single manager posts managing access to CAMHS services through integrated single pathway, at the local level. Joint planning is now happening in relation to the CAMHS Grant and new PCT – SIF budgets although difficulties in unpicking historic health budgets mean that formal pooling may well take some time to achieve.
  - Preparatory work to produce template/model for Sect.31 Health Act Flexibilities to cover all business and managerial accountabilities of JATs. Detailed scoping exercise has revealed complexity of current cross-charging arrangements and dynamics of funding, gaps in accountability between agencies re budget monitoring, management and ad hoc business arrangements. Work points to potential solutions in pooling of resources through formal agreement in 06 to deliver improved accountability, simplified business process, efficiency in operation and consistency for users. Detailed project plans in place to progress in 05/06.
  - Joint Equipment Service for children's equipment secured by Health Act Flexibility agreement – in 04/05 – will become fully operational in 05/06 and has been achieved by pooling spend 60% Social Care, 40% health based on trend data in 04/05.
  - Fair Access to Carers Breaks (FACS) piloted and evaluated in 04/05. Model worked up with parent carers for managing demand and access to respite more fairly and equitably across the county, links budgeted levels to assessed need in an expanding area of demand where pressures potentially create budget overspend.
  - With Children's Fund and Sure Start work is now underway to plan integration of the funding streams into the Children's Trust arrangements and the opportunities this will create for budget pooling with other prevention and early intervention monies.
- **Within** the Council work underway to pool resources (SSD/LEA) for Children with complex care needs. To date, all cases have been identified and agreed, together with levels of associated LEA/SSD funding. Impact of this work has revealed gaps in management information and as a result IT developments have been commissioned to enable SSD expenditure on transport costs to be identified on a named child basis. Ongoing work in 05/06 will focus on establishment of joint commissioning/pooled budget arrangement for children with complex needs, family support and prevention services. This work dovetails into the work being undertaken as part of Section 31 Health Act Flexibilities for JATs (see above).

**How well do you engage children and young people?** (no more than 3 sides of A4)

For the past three years the Children's Fund has supported work in statutory and voluntary youth services to develop a Participation Standard and best practice training and advice modules to support this work. At the same time children's social service has contracted with the Children's Society to provide support for participation and advocacy by looked after children. Both of these initiatives as well as activity with specific groups such as care leavers have served to generate pockets of good practice and experience of how children and young people can be engaged with and empowered to effect change. There is an active Care leavers group in S&W Devon, and a group in N. Devon meets on a less regular basis, with Exeter and East Devon in the process of setting one up. These groups are directly contributing to the development of the new pathway plans and a guide produced advising on financial issues relating to further education.

**Case study**

*A questionnaire of all N. Devon care leavers undertaken by the group found that lack of transport and suitable venues were a barrier to attendance at care leavers groups, and that a greater measure of independence from Social services organisation might facilitate attendance. This is now being acted on by the team who are seeking to establish a means of providing a satisfactory solution.*

There has been an active involvement of young carers, who have a bi monthly steering group to plan activities and events. They are currently represented on the steering group organising a county conference in October to raise awareness of young carers.

However, overall participation by children and young people in strategic and service development has tended to be piecemeal and difficult to collate into an effective voice for change and improvement. The Children's Trust has therefore set out an approach aimed at expanding and systematising this process under the title **Link2Together**, which was designed and selected by a group of young people. The **Link2Together** approach is based on four key strands which are described below with examples of current or planned activity:

**1. Participation in service specific activities**, this is informed by the Children's Fund Children and Young People's Participation Standards, examples of good practice:

- work through the youth services and Connexions to set out young people's entitlements and young people's input into staff recruitment and public information, most recently in the recruitment of the JAT Strategy coordinator where a young person and a parent representative will be on the interview panel
- work within care leavers support groups to develop information leaflets and advise on services and needs
- school councils, variable but some excellent examples
- work with young carers and victims of domestic violence who have been involved in developing publicity and training materials based on dramatic productions of their experiences
- direct input into Children's Society LAC independent advocacy website and bulletin
- involvement of young people in the recruitment of Independent Review Officers
- participation by young people in advising on substance misuse and supported lodgings contract tenders

Most of these have direct feedback loops to children and young people as they are directly involved in the process.

**Case study**

*Siblings of children with disabilities participating in a drama activities weekend organised by Teignbridge children with disabilities team completed a questionnaire about their experiences which when evaluated showed:*

- *they valued meeting other young people with similar issues*
- *they felt able to express feelings in the drama group they did not always express at home*
- *it developed their knowledge around disabilities*
- *they empathised with their siblings and had a greater understanding of their needs.*
- *They welcomed the opportunity to attend other events.*

*A plan to build on this development is currently being discussed within the young carers forum.*

The main weakness in engaging young people in Devon relates to the limited range of services currently regularly including children or young people in these processes. Increasingly contract reviews of commissioned services are recording feedback on participation or consultation activity, but there is considerable work to be done to strengthen participation in statutory services. It is planned that current support for participation in voluntary youth services will be recommissioned to also support activity around staff recruitment and service reviews in the statutory sector. An internet based information page will be established to make the standards more readily available, advertise best practice & training opportunities, support problem solving and generally encourage take-up

## 2. Participation in one-off consultation events, examples of good practice:

- Mori polling of children and young people's views as part of the needs analysis for the Community Strategy for Devon
- The Mid Devon Shout event which involved a cross section of young people in a consultation on local services
- Participation by children and young people in the school meals review included 10,200 responses from children and young people
- Care leavers secret shopper research into the quality and availability of advice and information
- Consultation with young people on a building Design Quality Indicator process and three "classroom of the future" design sessions within the Exeter schools remodelling, and the Exeter YES design work.
- The use of a range of consultation events to develop an informed strategy as set out by the West Devon Reference Group

These processes provide very important intelligence to inform wider decision-making. The feedback loop from these events is restricted by the random nature of the child or young person's involvement and the inevitable time lag between participation and change activity. Key requirements being put in place to support effective feedback are described in the next section.

### Case Study:

*In order to begin to understand young people's priorities West Devon Children's Trust Forum analysed a broad spectrum of consultation exercises have been held across Devon in the past two years. They found that young people's concerns primarily focussed on :-*

*Being healthy - access to information and advice on health issues e.g. sexual health, especially in rural areas; better facilities and encouragement for cycling.*

*Staying safe: concerns over bullying, domestic violence and drugs and alcohol issues: school buses*

*Enjoying and achieving: more things to do, both sport and leisure: safe places to meet, especially at night: more play space: better access to public transport to get to swimming pools, cinemas, shops etc. a review of whether youth clubs meet the needs of young people today.*

*Making a positive contribution: a desire to be involved in community affairs and be listened to.*

*Achieving economic wellbeing: worries over cost of higher education: worries over jobs and training: lack of appropriate part time jobs; concerns over the affordability of housing.*

The main weakness has been illustrated in failed attempts to get participation in the Children's Trust CAMHS Strategy development where sufficient support and lead-in time wasn't available to structure meaningful consultation. The Children's Trust development groups have been charged with establishing strategies to try to help overcome this. It is also planned to create an internet data-base where outcome information from consultations can be stored and accessed this will set up a feedback loop to facilitate more use of the information gained from consultation and encourage best practice.

## 3. Developing an information framework for young people, this is in its infancy, but it has become clear that if children and young people are to be meaningfully involved in decisions and developments then they need an age appropriate source of information and communication to facilitate it. Good practice in this area will involve

- recruitment of an information officer to support the process
- development of the web based material referred to in strands 1 & 2 above (standards, data base etc)
- development of a network of information outlets – these will be in the form of notice boards based in youth centres and schools. Boards will be kept up-to date with themed information sheets e.g. on the CYPP, on bullying and evidence of what works – Boards due for piloting in a number of centres and secondary schools in the autumn term
- age appropriate web pages and data sources within the children's trust website – being planned
- support and participation within citizenship / PHSE sessions
- feedback loop through a text messaging service and e-mail address – specification and safety standards currently being developed

This development is being informed by small-scale good practice examples operating in the youth service and some schools currently. However, it is innovative and we are seeking to put in place a small research arrangement to monitor the impact of the project as it is rolled out.

**4. Supporting Children and Young People in the driving seat, examples of good practice:**

- the Youth Parliament & youth scrutiny committee
- development of direct payments for 16 and 17 year olds with special needs
- Bideford Youth Café project

**Case Study:**

*17 year old female with muscular dystrophy "interviewing the enablers was great because I had all the power, we had a job description from DYA, and that was helpful, I was able to choose the person I wanted and she has come and taken me out when it is convenient for me"*

*16 year old male, wheelchair user " I wanted to go to the gym to build up my strength but they are too expensive, I didn't know I was allowed to use Direct Payments for this because no one told me until now, I have been going once a week and don't want it to end".*

These examples imply a level of engagement by children or young people to the point where they are directly overseeing the purchase or management of the service or services that they are receiving. While in each case there are professional support workers involved their role, unlike in the examples in element (1) above, is to facilitate independent activity rather than activity on behalf of the service.

**How good is partnership working?**

Devon is in the unique position of being the only two tier Pathfinder Children's Trust which is also a Local Area Agreement Pilot. As both these initiatives are being established under the leadership of the County Council and within the framework of the Devon Strategic Partnership it has been agreed that the governance and partnership arrangements that are being developed within the Children's Trust will also be used to oversee the development of the children and young people's block of the LAA.

The County Council has set out within the Transition Plan its arrangements for moving to a Children's Services Authority and ensuring effective leadership and partnership working across services for children and families throughout Devon. A key element of this will be the governance and delivery arrangements of the Children's Trust pathfinder.

The Children's Trust operates as a sub group of the Devon Strategic Partnership, it has also taken over the functions and purpose of the CYPSP and Prevention Strategy Development. It is overseen by a Board which includes key Children Act 2004 Duty to Cooperate partners:

- County Council elected members and chief officers
- District Councils – invited
- Health PCT chief officer, non-executive member, NHS Trust clinical director
- The Police
- Connexions

In addition it contains strong representation by parents who represent:

- Parent governors & PTAs
- Sure Start and early years parent groups
- Children with special needs groups

And voluntary & community groups

Schools are represented through the three Devon head teacher association representatives who sit on the Executive. The Executive also includes other key professional representation such as paediatric consultants, nurses, social workers and psychologists

The structure of the Children's Trust is being developed to encourage broad engagement with agencies and front line staff at functional service level and local geographic level through local children's trust forums. Within this structure a number of extremely innovative arrangements are being developed through a process of iteration and organic development. Significant among these are:

Parents network: parents on the Board are being supported by the development of a parents network that brings together parents from the different local groups e.g. PCT based CSN parents forums, Sure Start groups, DAG, these can then facilitate consultation and discussion, this is happening through occasional meetings but more critically through the development of an e-mail and web based network. This is currently in its early stages but it attracting a lot of support from parents.

Voluntary organisation: Vol & community organisations historically struggle to find a fair and transparent way to enable high level strategic input and accountability across a sector that is very fragmented and occasionally competitive. The sector is now working up a set of protocols and working arrangements that are allowing some of these difficulties to be overcome and which should enable direct participation by the sector on the Board of the Trust.

Devon has a range of strong partnerships focussed on specific functional or client arrangements. In particular:

- The 0-14 and early years partnership, including Sure Starts
- Children's Fund Partnership
- YOT
- DAAT
- Safer Communities
- Supporting People
- ACPC

The primary purpose of the Children's Trust is the development of integrated governance, planning, commissioning, processes and delivery systems along the lines of the DfES "onion". Therefore the Children's Trust arrangements are being developed to complement and work with these existing partnerships, while recognising that over time there may need to be adjustments to how this happens as part of the planned pattern of CFC changes.

The Children's Trust work programme is being taken forward through a set of Development Groups which focus on specific areas of change and integration. These are:

- Early years: focusing on Children's Centre development and workforce development
- CSN: focussing on expansion of JATs into S&W, inclusion of CAMHS into the jAT arrangements and integration opportunities within extended school, children's centre and SEBD plans
- CAMHS: focussing on delivery of the CAMHS strategy
- Prevention: focussing on delivery of the Prevention Strategy & local innovation and participation
- Vulnerable Adolescents: focussing on the housing support strategy, parent support programmes and integrated 16+ services (YES centres)
- ISA: this group has focussed on school based identification, skills and resource directory needs using the Bideford Pilot. This work is now completed and it is now planned to disband the development group although the Bideford work will continue as local project with CT support. A new and expanded group will be set up to oversee the implementation of ISA as well as CAF, ICS & ESCR arrangements.

A further group to focusing on 'Healthy Lifestyles' is being considered as a way to integrate a number of themes around Healthy Schools, LPSA-2 & LAA NSF/health targets, teenage pregnancy and substance misuse strategies.

A small working group has been set up to oversee the initial specification for full service extended school pilots.

Other key areas of partnership working are:

**Learning Communities:** Builds capacity through a cluster of schools working collaboratively supported by 0.5 FTE extended school co-ordinator posts to:- develop integrated identification and access to prevention services; provide economies of scale for school improvement activity. Bideford Pilot learning community has been used to develop the practical learning and implementation arrangements to support ISA and extended schools links.

**Youthwork:** the Youth Service has developed successful service level agreements with the Devon Youth Association and VYS (Devon) (Volunteer Youth Service??). A report on Youth Work contributions to the five ECM outcomes (November 2004) illustrates developing partnership working with (among others) the local youth network, Connexions, District Council Community Safety Partnership, Police, local drugs project and University Widening Participation Programme (aim higher). There is funding from Mid-Devon PCT to a youthwork project at Okehampton providing sexual health and wider health drop-in advice and support sessions twice weekly about a range of issues from sexual health to mental illness

**Inclusion:** there is a growing level of informal partnership working involving the EP service, and increased joint project work - eg. with social services re. foster parent training

**Joint Agency Teams:** the arrangements (involving education, health and social services) are working reasonably well, although implementation of budget pooling will be the prerequisite for quicker resolution of the more complex cases

**LAC:** officers from the YOT and Connexions liaise with the LAC specialist EWOs and (if necessary) with the LAC coordinator

**Healthy schools:** Devon has an adviser for PSHE, a Healthy Schools coordinator, a Healthy School Substance Misuse coordinator and 1.2fte. link officers on healthy schools work, who are PCT appointments

**Forestalling permanent exclusion:** there is increasing joint working between the YOT, Connexions, EPs and the complementary education team to support individual pupils - for example, through extra hours of input from Connexions, and the arrangement of work experience, while support from the YOT has included extra hours of tuition of on-to-one intervention work, counselling and anger management classes

**Early years inclusion:** there are several initiatives involving joint funding: joint funding with EYDCP is providing early years behaviour support workers with the EP service, additional EY EP time; "total communication" time for EY children in EY settings, and inclusion support for settings and joint funding with PCTs is providing an EY language project and a joint equipment store

**Travellers:** there is improved inter-agency cooperation and exchange of information arising from meetings convened to formulate a protocol for working with travellers on unauthorised encampments. Participants are from the District Councils, PCTs and Police, as well as the Council's Gypsy Liaison Officer and Traveller Education Service

**14-19 education:** there is close effective working between the LLSC, LEA and Connexions on 14-19 issues through a County-wide strategy group. A 14-19 Strategy has a clear vision agreed through consultation and an action plan to secure its implementation is being drawn up. There are structures and partnerships across all areas of the County to support wider opportunities for learners aged 14-19, although some are less effective than others

**Exeter PFI:** Involvement of stakeholders was a major element of the reorganisation of Exeter schools. A Partnership group involved stakeholders (e.g. LSC, City Council, local employers, schools and the FE college) in steering the proposals, meeting throughout the life of the project. There was an unusually high involvement of the PFI schools in designing the new buildings. A Design panel at each school was trained in the use of design quality indicators to assess bids, and each school was encouraged to involve the local community in its scheme and the premises arrangements for community groups were protected in the contract. The project has been short-listed for national private-public partnership awards in the "Best community/user involvement in a project" and "Best UK deal to reach financial close" categories.