

**Review of Devon Children
and Young People's Plan
2006-2009**

June 2007

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Executive Summary

The services for children and young people in Devon are adequate with some good features in all areas and particularly in Making a Positive Contribution. Devon County Council (DCC) and its partners plan that provision should be at least good in all areas for the 2008 assessment. Priority areas are:

- ◆ Narrowing the gap for the lowest achieving 20% of the population
Projects in hand include
 - Improving educational attainment of (580) children in care
 - Schools' response to disability discrimination
 - Change management for migrant families
 - Reintegration of excluded pupils through collaboration
- ◆ Delivering AXS for integrated preventative services 0 - 19
 - includes children's centres, Extended Services in and around Schools (ESS) and Integrated Youth Support Services
 - developing consistent and appropriate thresholds across agencies and organisations
- ◆ Other aspects of the Extended Services in and around schools including:
 - Parenting Strategy
 - Varied menu of activities and study support
 - Child careparticularly for areas of disadvantage and families with the greatest need
- ◆ Bullying
 - Children and young people make this their highest priority
- ◆ Transport
 - Access to services, recreation, education, training and employment
- ◆ Exclusions from education
 - Exclusions from school in Devon compare reasonably nationally; the effect of exclusions is so significant that all agencies agree that the level must be reduced and actions post-exclusion improved
- ◆ Performance and data management and use of strategic intelligence
- ◆ Developing and improving partnership governance arrangements for robust accountability and resources

The Joint Area Review (JAR) and the restructuring of the six Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) into one Devon PCT made a significant impact on priorities during the year. Issues around Stay Safe, which was judged to be inadequate, and inconsistency across the county in terms of resources and equality of access have been, and continue to be, addressed with vigour. This area is now at least adequate with good capacity to improve.

Introduction

This review is presented with an overview of service management (including indications of capacity for continuous improvement), followed by reflection on performance against each of the Five Outcomes.

It is a summary review, focussed on outcomes, which does not attempt to describe or contain detail of all the work in hand. Its purpose is to take a hard look at what we are doing and what we need to do, so that it can inform our future work programmes.

Detailed data underpins the summary. The data was used as evidence against the descriptors provided by Ofsted to help form judgements. This document sits at the top of the pyramid of information and analysis, with the actual judgements for the APA being the tip.

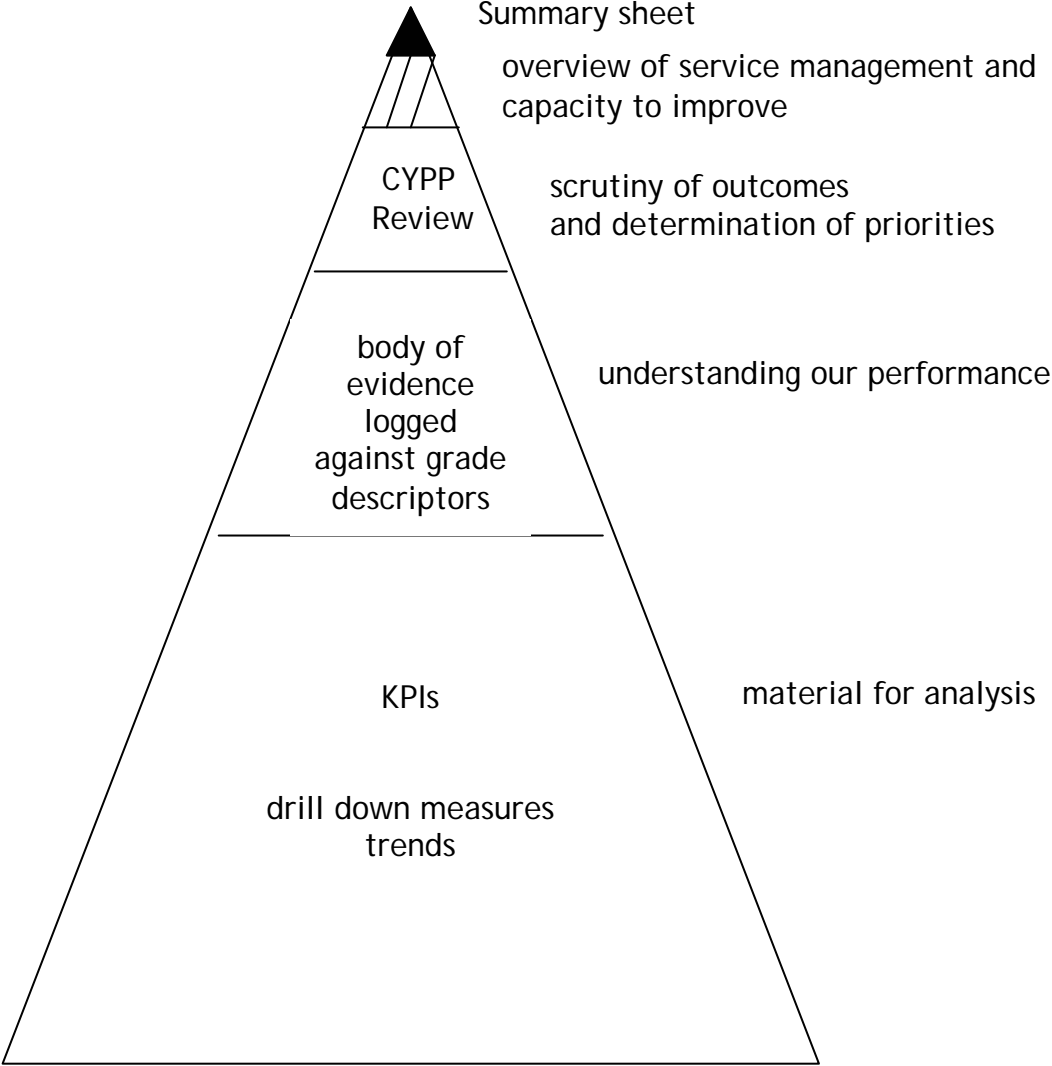
Priorities identified through the review process are also set out under outcome areas, with key priorities in the executive summary on page 3.

As children and young people do not fit into neat boxes, neither do these areas. To avoid repetition an aspect which is covered in one place will not be covered in depth elsewhere. Capturing this is challenging for some areas (such as parenting or children's centres), where an integrated approach is essential. The bulk of the text has been placed where it is most relevant, and the document therefore needs to be read as a whole.

The 2006/09 Children and Young People's Plan was well-received and supported. It was praised in the Joint Area Review (JAR) which followed soon after its writing in summer 2006. This now seems a long time ago. In hindsight it is clear that the plan needed to be more practical and less aspirational, focusing on joint resources, responsibilities, indicators and milestones. The JAR significantly affected priorities for action. Stay Safe required immediate action in several areas and there were 19 recommendations overall. The JAR Action Plan became the major driver rather than the CYPP.

This review, together with the Primary Care Trust (PCT) Strategic Review, will feed into the needs assessment for the new Children and Young People's Plan to commence April 2008.

Preparation for judgements



Background and Process

The development of the CYPP was led through the Children's Trust. In addition to the needs analysis undertaken by those partners there was comprehensive consultation through a range of events which included over 1,000 children, young people, parents, volunteers and professionals with around 60 different organisations feeding in their views.

The review of the CYPP has also been undertaken in partnership and at a variety of levels. The JAR, and the action plan which followed this, developed part of the framework. All partners recognise the importance of knowing ourselves well and of robust scrutiny of the available evidence in order to self-assess and plan for the future. This has taken place in the following ways:

- ◆ Lead officers on the five outcomes and the key enablers within the CYPP were responsible for monitoring and reporting on progress to the Children's Trust Executive on an agreed schedule throughout the year.
- ◆ The post JAR Action Plan established key milestones and performance indicators. These are monitored and reported on for further action by the post JAR Action Plan Monitoring Group to:
 - Children and Young People's Services Strategic Leadership Group
 - Devon County Council Corporate Management Board (monthly)

They in turn are held to account by:

- Children's Trust Executive and Board
- Devon County Council Executive and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committees

With reports to

- Devon External Support Team Project Board - led by GOSW
- Devon Strategic Partnership Delivery Board
- County Committees

In addition social care areas are addressed through a monthly Performance Management Board underpinned by more specific and targeted review when issues are identified.

- ◆ Lead officers met 30th March and reviewed all the actions and performance indicators of the CYPP together with the leads on the enablers.
- ◆ 5th April all senior officers in Children and Young People Services (CYPS) met to review their work in the last year against the judgement framework of Every Child Matters.
- ◆ 19th April the Children's Trust Programme Director met with the Young People's Scrutiny Forum to review the priorities within the plan and the effect of the plan so far.
- ◆ 4th May the Children's Trust Board, Children's Trust Executive, the Local Safeguarding Children's Board and invited critical friends reviewed the five outcomes in Devon against the descriptors provided by Ofsted.
- ◆ A draft review summary has been considered and challenged by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Devon County Council.

- ◆ The review has been led by Anne Whiteley (Director of Children and Young People's Services) with the Strategic Leadership Group of Children and Young People's Services of Devon County Council in support.
- ◆ The Corporate Management Board of Devon County Council, the Joint Chief Officer Group, Devon Strategic Partnership Delivery Board and the Executive Committee of Devon County Council have debated and reviewed the developing hypotheses.

The lead officers developed the evidence pyramid (page 5) by collating data, using this as evidence against the descriptors and then summarising the judgements and future priorities arising from this in the sections below.

Leadership, management and capacity

Leadership

Devon has an established Children's Trust, a strong and developing Schools Forum, an Executive Member and a Director of Children and Young People's Services. Addressing the JAR Action Plan has demonstrated how well agencies can work together. A recently established Chief Officers' Commissioning Group will take overall responsibility for resources and accountabilities in a refreshed CYPP for 2008, which will be aligned with the Local Area Agreement and Sustainable communities strategy.

Devon County Council's commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people cannot be doubted. The JAR Action Plan has been resourced and monitored corporately; the Raising Achievement Project Programme is part of a set of high profile corporate programmes which seek strategic synergies; and extended services in and around schools has been named a corporate priority.

The formation of one Devon PCT provides a strong basis for tackling longstanding issues of historical variation and access to services. The joint appointment of a Director of Public Health signals the commitment of Devon County Council and Devon PCT to joint working as does agreement to a Joint Commissioning Framework. The creation of Devon PCT has meant a continuing period of transition which offers both opportunity and challenge.

Opportunities include:

- ◆ addressing equality of access to provision across the county
- ◆ a Strategic Review of PCT services
- ◆ aligning and integrating services with Devon PCT and Devon County Council adult services to ensure continuity and efficiency

Challenges include:

- ◆ Taking forward action in parallel with a key partner undertaking a fundamental restructuring within its own considerable resource constraints
- ◆ balancing the need to have a joined-up approach with adult services whilst retaining the focus on holistic services for children and young people

Performance Management

In our Business Plan for 2006/07 we highlighted the need to build capacity in performance management, and this was borne out by the JAR.

Building on the strengths also identified in the JAR, capacity has been extended and further steps are in hand to align Children's Trust arrangements more closely with Devon County Council's, adding value for all partners.

The Children's Trust Executive has revised terms of reference, and will focus on the performance management of the Plan. The APA process itself has informed some changes.

There has been a focus on performance management in children's social care. A Performance Management Board meets monthly and comprises Branch Heads of Service; the Head of the Independent Review Unit; the lead officer for complaints, the head of internal audit, representatives of Business Resources, the lead officer for Management Information, and Policy and Performance Officers. This provides a balance of responsible officers and external, impartial scrutiny and challenge. The Board considers information from both quantitative and qualitative sources: all the performance indicators; and information from the complaints system, inspection reports, regulation 33 home visits, internal audit reports and any other source that is germane.

Quarterly performance management workshops involve over 120 staff from the Branch in a 'deep slice' approach. They are presented with information about performance, policies, procedures and practice and encouraged to participate in debate about where we should be going, and how we can improve our performance to provide quality services to children, young people and families. This is an iterative process in which the performance workshop examines its own previous agreements each time it meets, scrutinises the impact it has had upon performance, and then agrees changes, - to which everyone signs up.

We are satisfied that we have made and are able to demonstrate compliance with statutory requirements, and have made progress in some key areas (see Stay Safe).

The focus on performance has also been supported by

- ◆ external consultants benchmarking practice and outcomes
- ◆ External Support Board with Government Office South West (GOSW)
- ◆ Devon PCT adopting common statistical neighbours with Devon County Council
- ◆ extension of a Project management approach to resolve difficult or complex situations
- ◆ Performance management boards for other areas of significant risk
- ◆ rigorous monitoring by Corporate Management Board, members and partners including children and young people

The establishment of the Way We Work teams in the 2006 structuring of CYPS has allowed for a Performance Improvement Team to develop. Although not yet at strength, there has been attention to processes, with increased analysis to inform

managers' understanding of their services and a review of how we manage, quality assure and present data. We are able to start 2007/08 with the strength of a performance improvement plan and the documentation in use to take it forward. Given that 2006/07 was dominated by the data demands and aftermath of the JAR in a few specific areas, 2007/08 should see some real progress across the Directorate in performance management and continuous improvement processes.

There is a good record in **budget-management**, and against a considerable challenge for 2007/08 further Performance Management Boards have been established for high risk areas, and management capacity is being further developed.

Resources have followed priorities with examples being:

- ◆ additional management capacity in social care, including an Interim AD
- ◆ a senior officer leading a resourced project team on improving achievement and attendance of children in care
- ◆ additional capacity for strategic commissioning and school organisation
- ◆ developing more local provision for vulnerable children and young people requiring specialist care
- ◆ investment for transition to ensure fairer access to carers' breaks
- ◆ additional investment in delivery of social care to ensure compliance and improve consistency
- ◆ the AXS pathfinders and the strategic approach to extended services in and around schools

Risk analysis

The move towards project management to deliver critical objectives (many within the Children's Trust Programme Office which has adopted a risk policy) has tightened performance review and risk management. For example, ContactPoint had a strong risk analysis element which has led to changes in governance. In some other areas the CT needs further to develop analyses and CYPS is supporting this. The Directorate has a thorough system of individual service/section risk analysis which feeds into the Directorate Risk Register, which is in turn the basis for the Audit Programme.

The actions and outcomes from the JAR Action Plan continue to be closely monitored by Devon County Council at the highest level, and by the Children's Trust partnership. Major risks identified were:

- ◆ Governance and accountability
- ◆ Turbulence (through restructuring)
- ◆ Resources

Actions have been put into place to address these risks but they have not been entirely eradicated.

The potential of a new unitary authority for Exeter, which would destabilise much of the work in hand and complicate future plans by destroying the co-terminosity created by the new Devon PCT, is an additional risk.

Progress in key areas

Devon recognises and celebrates the diversity of its communities and the 367 schools which serve them. The Schools Forum is developing as a flagship to take forward the centrality of Enjoy and Achieve; the LA and schools are committed to working as a strategic partnership to raise standards. This includes trust school pathfinders, voluntary aided schools, foundation schools and the dioceses.

Devon is developing its role as champion of children and young people and strong partnerships with schools and other providers are an important foundation for this. Increasingly a commissioner rather than a provider this is reflected in the workforce strategies. Devon is leading on developing a workforce strategy for the Children's Trust as well as for CYPS. This former remains immature as cultural and structural implications are absorbed and built upon. Strong early years' partnerships are helping the development of more inclusive joint working shown particularly through learning and development and recruitment and retention. The focus is now on remodelling and developing new ways of working, including new roles.

Customer focus is a corporate drive, well supported by CYPS with a champion established and review of practices and outcomes. The CBI reported that Devon had "created transparency when comparing in-house services with those offered by other providers and given in-house teams a clear customer focus".

There is a constant tension in counties like Devon between local responsiveness and county consistency. It is essential to strike the right balance of a localised solution whilst complying with the strong strategic overview that fits a large and varied county.

Against this backdrop there is a track record of:

- ◆ Improving educational results year on year; the decision (as a previous priority) to make the major investment in restructuring education in Exeter continues to be born out by improving results
- ◆ Well led and managed school improvement service (including secondary SIPs), with strong subject support for schools and support for schools in difficulties including timely financial management
- ◆ Value for money as the income per pupil is one of the lowest in the country
- ◆ Ground breaking commissioning processes addressing issues over the engagement of children, their families and community as well as making good use of resources
- ◆ Excellent support for schools to procure their support services
- ◆ Participation of children and young people in decisions affecting their lives

There have been in-year pressures through:

- ◆ the outcomes of Job Evaluation which affected morale, endangered recruitment and retention in some areas, and made additional demands on management capacity
- ◆ frustrations and a drive to avoid lost opportunities with the creation of one Devon PCT

- ◆ financial challenges to disinvest, reinvest, address overspends and make efficiency savings

These pressures are being managed and Devon is now in a strong position to move forward. As a Children's Trust pathfinder there has been considerable sign-up across agencies and organisations demonstrable from the Devon Strategic Partnership right to the local level where AXS pathfinder local management boards are supporting the initiative. This reflects both a common agenda and leadership across partners.

Devon and its partners are ambitious in driving forward improved outcomes. This is evident from

- ◆ the cutting edge initiatives, such as Budget Holding Lead Professionals (positive outcomes are emerging from case-studies in pilot areas)
- ◆ an emphasis on breaking down organisational barriers to address personal needs (some work with children in care provides evidence of success here)
- ◆ the complex alignments of the rolling out of extended services around schools alongside integrated service teams
- ◆ a developing strategic role for the Schools Forum in providing leadership across Devon's schools

Significant developments over the past twelve months include:

Closing the Gap

The gap between the generally good achievement of children and young people and those in the lowest achieving 20% is being addressed through a multifaceted project approach. Seven areas have been prioritised for investment to give additional impetus; in some areas, such as the achievement and school attendance of children in care, significant progress has been made in the months the projects have been working.

AXS

The AXS programme is Devon's model for developing local, frontline, multi-disciplinary, integrated and preventative support and delivery around the needs of children and young people in their communities.

The AXS pathfinders (being evaluated by Newcastle University) are based in nine areas of Devon. The swift and easy referral element of the core offer for Extended Services in and around Schools is being addressed through this development. There is a county project board of all partners led by the Assistant Director. The pilot phase is combined with the Budget Holding Lead Professional pilot, the implementation of CAF and ContactPoint. Roll-out across the county will follow thorough evaluation of the learning. The effect on outcomes at individual case level is emerging. There is demonstrable commitment and understanding of this development across the partnership.

Commissioning

Children's Trust partners have adopted a Joint Commissioning Framework, which has been used by the DfES as a model of good practice. The County Council has taken the necessary steps to establish and support a Core Commissioning Team

underpinned by a Strategic Procurement Unit and contract management capacity. Devon's track record in procurement is good and the expertise we have should allow for good capacity to manage and support strategic joint commissioning. A Commissioning Portfolio for 2007/08 has been agreed, and includes joint initiatives for:

- Children with Special Needs: Emotional Health and Wellbeing
- Parenting
- Substance Misuse
- Sexual Health
- Children aged 0-5; their families; parents and carers
- Children with Special Needs: Physical, Sensory and Learning Disability
- Strategic commissioning of school improvement

Participation

Devon has had informal feedback that it has achieved the advanced standards of Hear by Right and is leading on this being extended across the Children's Trust partners. There is evidence throughout Devon County Council and the Children and Young People's Directorate of children and young people being engaged in planning and evaluating those decisions which affect them or their peers. An excellent start has been made. It is supported and implemented at all levels from strategic decisions, to town and school design and to work with individuals.

Integrated Youth Support Services

Devon will have Integrated Youth Services from April 2008, with a Head of Service. A Commissioning Board of relevant services, including Connexions, is already meeting. Its immediate role is to analyse the information held by services to put in place the structures needed for targeted youth support; and also to build on recent successes in creating positive activities, and to define a universal entitlement for young people. It will pilot and evaluate new approaches to targeted youth support.

Children's Centres

A comprehensive programme to roll out 31 Children's Centres by 2010 is on target. There has been extensive local stakeholder engagement (including parents and young people) in the specification and tendering process on which we have received warm feedback. The process has increased the market-place for children's services providers.

Review of the five outcomes

Be Healthy

Following review of the evidence the judgement is that Devon County Council is making an adequate contribution to Be Healthy with significant capacity to improve which will be greatly assisted by the formation of one PCT for Devon.

The challenges within the CYPP were:

1. provide parents and carers with access to advice, information and support to promote healthy choices
2. provide a range of services to promote children and young people's physical health
3. develop integrated services to promote the mental health of children and young people
4. reduce alcohol consumption and smoking among young people
5. identify and respond to additional health needs of children and young people experiencing health inequalities due to long-term parental health difficulties or because they are looked after in public care
6. develop services to ensure children and young people with disabilities or long-term health needs receive integrated assessment and responses to their health and development needs

The JAR judgement and recommendations focused work on the key action areas of:

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Services for Children with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD)
- Consistency of resource and service across the County

Significant progress has been made in these areas and they will continue as priorities. Historic resource issues and the implications of the PCT financial recovery plan will take time to address and apply to addressing the issues below.

Good progress on the integration of CAMHS across Devon has been achieved although variation in the provision of CAMHS remains. New referral management systems are being introduced which have reduced waiting times across the last year. First appointments are now within 3 - 4 weeks in some areas with roll out in hand across the county, subject to revised commissioning arrangements, by January 2008. The emphasis is on brief intervention. Data collection remains challenging in some areas where there is no appropriate IT system. Primary mental health workers are being recruited to link with the AXS network developments and strengthen links with schools.

A single Devon service and the place of CAMHS as a first focus for the Joint Commissioning approach across PCT and DCC will aid further progress. Devon's self- assessment of progress on four elements of the implementation of the CAMHS framework is that there is partial implementation achieved so that level 13 can be evidenced. The development programme is agreed.

Performance against assessment and access to CAMHS targets for young offenders is excellent at 100%. There is some difficulty accessing tier four services for a small number of young offenders (10-20).

Considerable progress has been made in improving services for children with Learning Disabilities and Difficulties. The Joint Agency Team approach now covers the county with a new head of service role with three Joint Agency Service managers covering south west, north, and Exeter/east/Mid Devon areas.

Therapy waiting times continue to be a challenge as the PCT has not yet been able to increase investment where there has been historic under-funding, owing to its financial recovery plan. A snapshot review of therapy waiting times is taking place at the end of June. New data will be available after this.

An Integrated Assessment process is being implemented which will deliver assessment and direction to service provision within agreed LA and NHS timescales for the approximate 3,000 young people affected. The pathways will be rolled out by Christmas 2007 supported by the Joint Commissioning Strategy which will deliver Fair Access to Carers' Breaks and Integrated Commissioning around Special Schools project. Under Fairer Access to Carers' Breaks families will receive a service package identified by combining social care, individual child health and carer specific assessments. This is based on an equitable points system between £500 - £20,000.

The Child Health Promotion programme is addressing the consistency of resource and service across Devon. The new specification is currently out for consultation and service developments are due September 2007. The lack of additional resources means that the 18 week target will not be achieved this year. This work links with the new Public Health Nursing strategy, also out for consultation, which addresses the national thinking on the roles of Health Visitors and School Nurses. It also addresses some of the resource issues which have also been identified within the CAMHS and Learning Difficulties and Disabilities work.

Good progress has also been seen in:

- Healthy Schools - challenging targets are currently being met. 138 (38%) had achieved healthy schools status by May 2007 (national average 31%) in line with the national target. The work is endorsed by the Strategic Health Authority and is being independently reviewed for Devon by the University of Hull.
- High quality physical education provision within the primary phase (94.7% pupils participating in minimum of two hours physical activity a week)
- Sensible drinking - new alcohol strategy developed with High Focus Area support.
- Children in Care - Devon is in the top band with regard to health assessments for children in care and has a full complement of named doctors and nurses for this work
- Assessment and access to substance misuse services by young offenders is also excellent having achieved the Youth Justice Board target of 100%

Priorities for Action to improve Be Healthy include:

Short term

- Health needs assessment - need for an agreed model to inform the Joint Commissioning Function and the refresh of the CYPP

- Devon PCT strategic review of all services will inform and link with new CYPP
- Continue the development and improvement of services for: CAMHS, Children with Learning Difficulties Disabilities - ensuring consistent access to services across Devon.

Medium term:

- NHS child-specific health targets - improve Healthcare Commission Hospital Improvement Review (HCHIR) grading
- Maternity Services - address issues of accessible services and the extent of genuine choice
- Waiting times - improve accessibility particularly to CAMHS, therapies (occupational, speech and language), sexual health services, children in care accessing specialists, substance misuse.
- Parenting and Child Health Promotion Programme - identify and support the most vulnerable families at the earliest possible stages.
- Healthy Schools - maintain the quality assurance standards of the Devon programme and roll out especially in areas of higher deprivation, special schools, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and schools causing concern.
- Teenage Pregnancy - whilst there is an 8% decrease from the 1998 baseline rate a more focussed approach to achieve the 2010 target needs to be implemented.
- Children in Care - strengthen the health improvement interventions addressing high risk behaviours
- Involving young people - further the engagement of young people in the commissioning of health services

Stay Safe

Following review of the evidence the judgement is that Devon County Council is making an adequate contribution to Stay Safe with significant capacity to improve. Swift improvement in the provision of social care has been achieved and is continuing. Impact is evidenced by improvements in performance.

The Children & Young People's Plan (CYPP) contained most of the areas which were identified in the Joint Area Review (JAR). The agreed challenges in the CYPP were:

1. Support parents and carers to provide safe homes and stability as their children grow
2. Help children and young people make choices, build their confidence and avoid harm
3. Identify people and circumstances that represent a serious risk to children and young people and respond to such threats quickly and effectively
4. Assist children and families experiencing violence or discrimination (in the home, at school or in the community) to bring about change
5. Identify and safeguard children and young people who are looked after in public or private care settings
6. Encourage communities to create a supportive and stimulating environment in which children and young people can play safely while developing protective skills

The JAR judgement and recommendations focused work on the key action areas of:

- ◆ Improve safeguarding
- ◆ Agree, communicate, implement and monitor use of thresholds to services
- ◆ Increase provision of service to children with special educational needs and learning difficulties and disabilities (see Be Healthy)
- ◆ Improve access to CAMHS (see Be Healthy)

Concerns underpinning these areas were:

- ◆ Not all children and young people in care were allocated to a qualified social worker with the attendant risk to planning, monitoring and reviewing.
- ◆ This concern was confirmed by examination of case files. The quality of personnel files and appropriate CRB processes was evident
- ◆ Inconsistency of application of thresholds for children in need with high needs affecting appropriate allocation
- ◆ Performance management of statutory visits required for children in care and child protection was insufficiently robust.

Devon County Council responded swiftly. Some work started as soon as the informal feedback was provided. Consultants, Concorde Associates, were brought in and assessed these prime issues and the implications that stemmed from them. Workshops with staff examined practice and new guidance was issued as a result of the evaluation. The JAR Action Plan development was supported and guided by Concorde Associates.

In conjunction with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) there was a tender for further consultants and Outcomes UK were appointed to develop the work further. In addition, two experienced interim managers, including an assistant director, were appointed from November. There was a specific focus on improving social care as a priority and other work was reallocated to make this possible.

Additional resource and capacity was identified corporately to assist the improvement and close and rigorous scrutiny provided by

- ◆ CYPS Strategic Leadership Group
- ◆ Devon County Council Corporate Management Board
- ◆ Two sets of external consultants
- ◆ External Support Team chaired by GOSW
- ◆ Post JAR Action Plan Monitoring Group
- ◆ Overview and Scrutiny and Executive Committees
- ◆ Children's Trust Executive and Board

In addition there have been very effective peer monitoring methods developed which include:

- ◆ a monthly Performance Management Board drills down to significant detail and targets good and weaker practice, providing challenge in a transparent and professional way to develop a culture of continuous improvement within social care.
- ◆ quarterly performance monitoring meetings of practitioners and managers on practice and progress (diagonal or deep-slice groups) involving 100+ staff each time.

Structural changes have also increased clear responsibility and accountability. These are:

- ◆ realignment of children's care management services into five teams based on functions led by Heads of Service
- ◆ Renewal and relaunch of Independent Review Unit function as a quality assurance model

Significant improvements have been achieved. Some delays have resulted from the structural changes in Health, initially affecting the development of special needs service for those with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LDD) and CAMHS; but significant improvement can be evidenced.

In terms of impact at this stage, safeguarding and threshold concerns have been addressed as follows:

- ◆ 97.3% of Children in Care are allocated to a Qualified Social Worker
- ◆ 100% of Child Protection cases are allocated to a Qualified Social Worker
- ◆ Performance has significantly improved with regard to
 - Initial assessment: there has been a month-on-month improvement since January 2007
 - Statutory Visits: there has been a month on month improvement since January: May figure is 88.2%
 - Statutory Reviews (timeliness up from 77.1% 05/06 to 94.8% 06/07 (*DfES amended from 95.4%*) with increase in participation from 68.4% 05/06 to 89.1% 06/07)
- ◆ The application of consistent thresholds to social care is managed by two practice managers who gatekeep all threshold decisions across the County. The Children in Need (CIN) thresholds are being developed by a multi-agency group with consultation underway led by the AXS Project.
- ◆ The quality of case records is improving with revised systems and regular auditing in place.
- ◆ All social care employee principal files have been reconstructed in line with the JAR recommendation. This is now being extended to cover the whole of CYPS. Robust arrangements are in place for CRB checks and Audit.
- ◆ Fostering Service recent inspection judged as good in all areas: 67% of the young people interviewed expressed themselves as very satisfied that their views were listened to.
- ◆ Advocacy Services have been established through two contracts covering vulnerable children and young people, and young people with special needs. Increased capacity has been created.
- ◆ Home Start is now the provider for our family-based early intervention service: this is now a county contract to ensure greater fairness and equality of access aligned with Children's Centres.

A realignment of Social Care functions within CYPS has allowed for proper examination of caseloads. Whilst this is early days it is having a positive impact not only on the allocation of work, but also in the analysis of children in need. The service is well-placed for the development of a more integrated approach to working with vulnerable children and young people in Devon over the next 3-5 years.

Managers are now much clearer about their responsibilities and decision-making is more robust. This is showing in forms of allocation, consistency, a reduction in the number of children in care going to out of County placements and more innovative and positive approaches.

The number of first time entrants to the criminal justice system has fallen and is over target (7% reduction against 5% target) though Home Office pressure to increase police-sanctioned detections provides a major threat to continued high performance, as it does nationally.

Re-offending rates have reduced in Devon by 8.9%. Re-offending amongst high risk offenders with high levels of need remains high and access to services post Youth Offending Team (YOT) involvement remains difficult.

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is fully established with agreed terms of reference, business plan, funding agreement and LSCB member responsibilities. The links and accountabilities with Stay Safe will be reviewed for clear alignment with the CYPP.

Although the JAR found that most children and young people felt safe, they have consistently identified bullying as their highest priority. A programme of school visits is refreshing anti-bullying policies and a working party to address these concerns is being established.

Priorities for action to improve Stay Safe are:

- Embed the new social care structure, maintaining and building upon recent improvements to improve quality
- Increase the participation of children, young people and families in decision-making. Young people in care are attending the Performance Management workshop in July.
- Assist children and families experiencing violence or discrimination to bring about change
- Ensure best use is made of available resources
- Develop and implement agreed thresholds across agencies and organisations for effective integrated working
- Develop a County-wide strategy to reduce bullying

Enjoy and Achieve

Following review of the evidence the judgement is that Devon County Council overall is making an adequate contribution to Enjoy and Achieve. There are areas of good and outstanding practice with good capacity to improve.

The challenges agreed in the CYPP were:

1. support children and young people, their families and communities to have high aspirations and expectations
2. raise achievement for all
3. raise the achievement of vulnerable and underachieving groups, including the lowest attaining 20% of children and young people
4. improve outcomes for Devon's looked after children
5. increase attendance in schools and enjoyment in learning

6. improve access to enjoyable, challenging and enriching opportunities for children and young people, with particular focus on those with special and additional needs and those in disadvantaged and isolated communities

This was underpinned by a detailed Raising Achievement Plan.

The JAR reflected these priorities particularly in identifying raising aspirations through challenging targets and improving the levels of achievement and attendance of children in care.

Resources were re-prioritised to support an integrated project approach to address the educational concerns for children and young people in care. This includes the deployment of officers from the advisory, educational welfare, educational psychology and social care services led by a senior manager. All pupils are now tracked both at school and LA levels. For example, all KS4 pupils have been entered for appropriate exams or support programmes are in place.

We are ambitious for these pupils. The progress made is a standing item in the Annual Review Visits in primary schools and in the 'Single Conversation' of School Improvement Partners with secondary schools with follow-up discussions where concerns exist about school support for these pupils. For care leavers a Rapid Improvement Group is focused on improving the level of engagement with education, employment and training.

Outcomes for children and young people in Devon continue to improve overall. Most pupils enjoy school and behave well. Support and challenge to schools has formed the cornerstone of the improvement programme, ensuring that schools set and are supported to achieve aspirational targets. The introduction of School Improvement Partners in Devon secondary schools has been well received and judged as good by the Regional Director of SIP National Strategies.

The targets for 2007 are achievable at all key stages. The targets for 2008 are more challenging at all Key Stages. Support to schools facing the biggest challenge in the most deprived communities is focussed on providing wide ranging, integrated, localised support. Further support is in a self-led project using Building Learning Power, supported by the Authority. Evidence of impact on pupil performance is expected from 2008 onwards.

An in-depth analysis of the distribution of the lowest attaining 20% of pupils was undertaken. This identified 21 primary schools and 4 secondary schools where there were statistically significant numbers or percentages of children in the lowest achieving 20%. These schools will receive enhanced support, including individual pupil tracking of progress as a standing item on the SIP/adviser visits. Officers are in discussion with DCC's Strategic Intelligence Unit and the Schools' Forum about targeting funding at deprived communities.

Analysis of the achievement of pupils in the lowest attaining 20% shows that their rates of progress are broadly similar compared with other attaining groups for KS1 to KS2 and KS2 to KS3; but for KS2 to KS4 their progress is not as good as other attainers. Although the Increased Flexibility programmes have secured greater participation of students and thus impacted positively on good NEET (school leavers not in education, employment or training) (6%), Devon identifies that the actual outcomes are not yet good enough. Strategies for the coming year focus on

the lowest attaining 20% across all Key Stages and specifically at KS4 through the collaborative approaches which are seen as critical to improving pupil engagement and outcomes. A newly established second tier post, combining strategic leadership of 14-19 diplomas, the developing Integrated Youth Support Services (IYSS) and the formalised school partnerships, including trust pathfinder schools, will ensure these programmes focus on improving the outcomes for vulnerable pupils.

The quality of education provided in Devon schools is good, including special schools and Pupil Referral Units. Procedures for monitoring, intervention and challenge are good with low numbers of schools in categories and good improvement rates for those that are. (Recently a school in Special Measures emerged with some 'outstanding' areas, and the Authority's support was said to be 'Excellent'). A good basis has been established to respond to the requirement in recent legislation to intervene early where standards are causing concern. Currently recommendations arising from a review of the processes of monitoring, support and challenge to all schools, including those causing concern, are the subject of consultation in conjunction with schools.

Overall standards of attainment in Devon's primary schools are good. KS1 results showed significant improvement in 2006. The relative position nationally and with statistical neighbours has improved. KS2 results are good. Overall standards in secondary schools are good. At KS3 performance is in the second highest quartile nationally.

KS4 results indicate improvement in 5 GCSE A*-C to 57.5% (up 3%) and continues a steady rise. With the inclusion of mathematics and English this figure reduces to 46% in line with the national picture. In some individual schools (including some of the higher performing schools) the gap is wider between the two measures, and the LA is prioritising improvement in the 'with mathematics and English' measure in targeted schools.

The outcomes of Ofsted inspections have improved between 05-06 and 06-07 (to present time) so that an 8.3% improvement (to 111) in satisfactory or better schools, and a 6.9% improvement (to 68) in good or better schools. These figures are based only on the schools' overall effectiveness grade, and group primary, secondary and specials together.

An emerging strength in Devon are pupil outcomes at the end of Key Stages 2, 3 and 4. Improvements have been secured by the Intensive Support Programme, investment in the Reading Recovery programme, focus on pupil tracking and early intervention and the continued strength of transition arrangements within Devon's Local Learning Communities. Priorities for improvement are to close the attainment gap in specific areas (see below).

The current needs analysis also indicated the need to improve the progress made by specific black and minority ethnic pupil groups. An example is the attainment of Afro-Caribbean pupils primarily at KS4.

Early Years education is well distributed across the whole of the county in a wide variety of settings in the private, voluntary, independent and maintained sectors. 97% of 3 and 4 year olds and almost all children in care attend early years'

provision. Improvements to the quality of early years' provision are focused on building capacity to:

- ◆ improve advice and challenge to settings
- ◆ target areas with lowest outcomes relating to the 3% of Private, Voluntary and Independent (PVI) settings with unsatisfactory Ofsted outcomes.
- ◆ identify and offer early support to children with special educational needs (SEN).

The development and implementation of the SEN framework, a tool for provision mapping, planning and focus on pupil outcomes, enables schools to provide evidence for self-evaluation. Schools are being supported in its use. One of the outcomes of this is to target work more effectively to schools to improve outcomes for children.

Children and young people have good opportunities to engage in recreational, cultural and leisure pursuits with good use made of Devon Music Service, Devon Discovery (learning outside the classroom) and DAISI (Devon Arts in Schools Initiative) and are actively contributing to the Every Child Matters agenda, the core offer of ESS and raising standards, aspirations and self-esteem. 48% of schools provide the full varied menu of activities and study support for their pupils. Schools and the Authority worked together to publish a Learning for Sustainability Strategy based on the five outcomes and learning beyond the classroom. Access to opportunities for vulnerable pupils is less consistent across the county with no overall strategy for improving participation and action to address this is a priority.

The work to develop Local Learning Communities' capacity to collaborate has progressed well. The development of the AXS networks through nine pathfinders is critical to developing early intervention strategies for swift and easy referral to integrated support.

There has been some improvement in levels of attendance across Devon secondary schools. Devon is no longer a DfES priority LA for improvement although persistent, long-term unauthorised absence remains a concern in three secondary schools. Improving data-tracking in relation to individual schools and vulnerable pupil groups, together with the termly scrutiny of data has been supported by the appointment of an additional member of Educational Welfare Service (EWS) staff. The SIP visits to secondary schools will include a focus on attendance targets, bringing greater coherence to target-setting and promoting the priorities within the inclusive education strategy.

The continued integration of EWS with other associated teams working in the most deprived communities, as part of the roll-out of the AXS pathways, will significantly strengthen the impact of this service.

Permanent exclusion figures have risen to the level of previous years from the very low base in 04/05 achieved through Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) pump-priming money the previous year. This is disappointing, even though comparatively the numbers are on a par with neighbours, at 98 permanent exclusions and 9604 days lost in fixed term exclusions to date this year. There is positive engagement by secondary headteachers in collaborative approaches to

managing challenging pupils, some organised around the 14-19 partnerships. Recent data indicate an improvement in the proportion of fixed term exclusions.

Pupil Referral Units are judged by Ofsted to be at least satisfactory. Steps to reduce exclusions and improve reintegration include:

- ◆ increased capacity through three additional preventive intervention posts in KS3 and increased capacity in PRU in KS4
- ◆ relocation of a PRU as a model of good practice for facilities for young people
- ◆ LA supported re-integration panels and a further decline in numbers of permanently excluded pupils is anticipated by the end of this academic year
- ◆ a case study approach with schools is beginning to build on the good practice (some schools in areas of disadvantage have very low rates of exclusion) for dissemination to all Devon schools
- ◆ improvements to 14 - 19 curriculum offer
- ◆ increased support and challenge in relation to the progress made by pupils from specific vulnerable groups
- ◆ the roll out of the Primary Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) initiative has been effective and well-received and will shortly be extended to the secondary and special schools sector

A key concern is the unacceptably high number of statemented pupils permanently excluded - typically over 30% of all permanent exclusions. A protocol has been designed to ensure rapid joint intervention by LA support services when a statemented pupil is at risk of exclusion.

There is good provision for children and young people not in school with the Hospital Education Centre (HEC). Ofsted Inspection in November 2006 evidenced that the quality of the education provided by the HEC is good with some outstanding features.

Link Education is used to support some pupils permanently excluded from school. This is being reviewed. A target has been set of zero permanently excluded secondary phase pupils on Link Education by April 2008.

Some schools involve pupils in the recruitment of staff and in strategic and operational decision-making. Schools and the Youth Service have established a number of effective opportunities to listen and respond to children and young people. Kongamana is an annual residential event which is well-attended and used to great effect. Children and young people are being increasingly involved in curriculum design including school design. Opportunities to gain feedback from children and young people on school improvement could be developed more. This is the subject of research and planning currently, particularly focused on learning from projects in Local Learning Communities.

There is much good work with parents and the recent appointment of a lead on this area will help develop the strategic approach to ensure best use is made of existing practice and resources. There are many effective strands to this including innovative work in schools and children's centres. There are local and county forums for parents /carers of children with LDD and work is in hand to

improve the Parent Partnership Service. Parents and carers are represented on the Children's Trust Board. The positive possibilities of this area were agreed across all outcome areas during the review. The Corporate Parenting Forum is well supported by members and senior officers.

Admission arrangements are good in Devon and we will increase support to vulnerable groups by improving first choice admissions to identified groups and tracking in year admissions. 96.7% of first preferences for primary school places allocated with 74.5% of applications made on-line (2006: 28% applied on-line) and 93.65% of first preferences for secondary school places allocated with 57% of applications made on-line (2006: 19% applications made on-line).

The recent appointments of Choice Advisers and the processes established to support their work has been well received and adds significantly to our capacity to support vulnerable families.

A key feature of the CYPP is to develop partnerships, including the development of formal federations, for which Devon has a national reputation.

Priorities for Action to improve Enjoy and Achieve include:

- attendance of:
 - children and young people in care
 - children and young people in targeted schools
- reducing permanent and fixed term exclusion of all children and young people but particularly those:
 - in care
 - with a statement of special educational need
- provision for those excluded from schools to ensure better outcomes and use of resources including development of the capacity of Pupil Referral Units, to increase numbers of places in the short term and steadily increase preventive work in schools as part of a network of behaviour support
- attainment and achievement of
 - children and young people in care
 - children and young people from black and ethnic minorities
 - lowest attaining 20% of children and young people
 - the 12 priority communities identified corporately
 - boys in Key Stage 1 in writing (at national average)
 - English at level 6 at Key Stage 3
 - English and Mathematics A*-C in targeted areas
- embedding and improving the support and challenge to providers of Foundation Stage education
- early support to children with SEN
- access to recreational, cultural and leisure opportunities for more vulnerable children and young people
- participation of children and young people in school improvement
- Parenting strategy development and implementation
- information sharing with post 16 providers
- better understanding of young carers and the support they need

Making a Positive Contribution

Overall performance in this area is good; good progress has been made in taking forward important initiatives like participation and volunteering, while key outcomes in achievement and reducing offending for children and young people have continued to improve. There is a good and increasing range of opportunities in schools, colleges and the Youth Service, with successful alternative programmes in targeted localities to meet a range of needs.

Significant improvements for vulnerable children and young people have been made through care plan reviews. The strategic overview of targeted youth support work has significantly improved with the establishment of a commissioning board; and plans to give young people more say have been implemented. Work has gone forward to reduce bullying and encourage positive behaviour, with a stronger multi-agency approach. Offending has reduced. Exclusions from secondary schools have returned to pre LPSA levels (see above).

The challenges for 'Making a Positive Contribution' identified in the CYPP were

1. support parents, carers, families, schools and communities to promote positive behaviour
2. encourage children and young people to participate in a wide range of service planning and development activities
3. provide young people with access to a range of safe spaces and facilities in which they can meet and engage in positive activities
4. provide young people with increased opportunities to take up volunteering and community involvement
5. provide children and young people who are at risk of school or social exclusion with access to preventative services that will help them stay out of trouble

The key areas for improvement identified in the JAR were not in this area, with its recognised strengths. There are related areas, however, such as advocacy, access to services for vulnerable young people and targeted provision for young people at risk of disengagement. The development of effective school and school-college partnerships to enhance 14-19 opportunities will also help to address behaviour and participation issues in communities.

The voice of young people is well developed in Devon, with links to elected members and the Executive and strong participation in the youth parliament. Six local youth networks have just been established across the county and youth participation workers are already jointly employed by the Youth Service and Connexions. 'Hear by Right' has been achieved at advanced standard. There are strong foundations here for an integrated service.

The participation of young people in recruitment has been introduced by the NHS and some DCC departments; there are plans to make this universal. Young people were involved recently in choosing the independent chair of the Children's Trust and the (CYPS) Head of Strategic Planning. Consultation on planning for services which affect them is likewise well developed in some areas but will be taken yet further under the auspices of the new Integrated Youth support Service, for example in relation to shaping services for the most vulnerable.

The development of positive activities at safe locations is a core strand of the Children's Trust development for young people, given the significance of partnership with the district councils and with Active Devon to develop leisure provision for young people. Youth service staff are trained in aspects of advice and counselling such as mental health. A directory of opportunities for young people will be completed by March 2008 and there is good involvement of the voluntary sector.

Volunteering has increased. For example, the number of young people achieving the Devon Award has risen by 18% from 05/06 to 06/07. A key element of this Award is commitment to voluntary activities. Young people have been involved in shaping the voluntary work strategy for Devon, to some effect. 12 - 25 year olds were consulted across Devon and made important contributions on how to increase participation, for example by letting young people try out activities, letting volunteers know the benefits to them and in developing organisational skills. There is an increase in the opportunities provided by Children and Young People's Services for volunteering.

Co-operation between agencies in targeting particular trouble spots and groups of young people is generally good. There have been particular successes in reducing levels of anti-social behaviour and increasing participation in healthier life choices such as the case study of the South Hams Youth Nights. Across four towns the Youth Service teamed up with local leisure centres to attract young people into a wide (and in some cases exciting) range of activities. As well as reducing anti-social behaviour, which the police report favourably on, the initiative has helped reduce smoking and encourage regular exercise by participants. The lessons from this successful collaboration will be taken to other communities. Despite this criminal damage has continued to increase, by about 8 -10 per cent overall. The 12 schools with the highest rates of criminal damage have been targeted for action.

The plan for an Integrated Youth Support Service has been agreed, which envisages commissioning for targeted work as well as an entitlement to advice across the County. Access pathways for vulnerable children and young people are being piloted in 9 localities. Key indicators for children and young people have continued to improve. The proportion of young people who are NEET is relatively low at 6% (based on the new count) with a further 1.2% engaged in personal development opportunities, and that of unknowns very low. Achievement by 19 at level 2 and 3 has improved. As detailed above offending has fallen significantly, while substance misuse services have no waiting lists for referrals.

Priorities for Action to improve Making a Positive Contribution include:

Medium term:

- Improved co-ordination of the work in support of parents, to enable judgements of impact and so further improvement,
- Establishing access to integrated advice, support and guidance
- Taking the lessons from Youth Nights to other communities across Devon.
- Ensure the participation of young people in all relevant recruitment.

- Build upon the existing good practice in the participation of children and young people in planning and evaluation across all service provision.

Longer term:

- ◆ involve young people in shaping the new Integrated Youth Support Service.

Achieve Economic Wellbeing

Following review of the evidence the judgement is that Devon County Council is making an adequate contribution to achieving economic well-being. There are areas of good practice with capacity to improve.

The challenges within the CYPP were:

1. support families who are dependant on benefits or low incomes to improve their wellbeing and be economically active
2. ensure children are offered the best start in life through Children's Centres and high quality early years and play provision
3. improve transport accessibility and promote sustainable transport solutions for young people in rural areas
4. work with local schools, colleges and employers to create opportunities for all 14-19 year olds to pursue a course of study where they will learn in a style that suits them and in subject areas which motivate them
5. ensure that impartial, comprehensive and high quality information, advice, guidance and support is available to all young people, in proportion to need, to assist them in making successful transitions to further learning and work
6. support homeless and vulnerable young people or families with dependent children to sustain safe, secure and stable accommodation and engage in employment, education or training

The JAR echoed elements of this and recommended action on driving forward the 14-19 strategy and joined up working on housing needs for more vulnerable young people.

There has been good progress in some significant elements of 14-19 strategy, but the strategy has yet to have a full impact on all consortia of providers and therefore outcomes for young people. The result of Devon's gateway bids for the first five of the new diplomas was disappointing, with only two provisional approvals in Exeter where we had hoped for four approved pathfinders to explore the implications for different learning communities. The September Guarantee for 14-19 was in place in 2006 and monitored between Connexions and the Learning & Skills Council.

Employers are represented on the 14-19 leadership group through Devon and Cornwall Business Council and the Devon and Cornwall Training Provider Network are also present. Devon Education Business Partnership Board has strengthened employer representation through the addition of representatives from Devon and Cornwall Business Council, the Federation of Small Businesses and is now chaired

by an employer. The quality of Devon Education Business Plan's work has recently been recognised through the award of the National Education Business Plan Network quality award. The majority of Devon schools hold the Investors in Enterprise and work-related learning award.

Access, particularly to new 14-19 provision, continues to be an issue. The development of a co-ordinated rural transport strategy to assist young people to access new 14-19 provision and positive activities is a priority. Its development will be supported by the current audit of staffing, skills and expertise which will inform the geographical distribution of demand and provision.

Adequate support is available to young people in Devon to help them access decent and affordable housing. Good support of vulnerable young tenants is available from a fully integrated Devon-wide Youth and Housing Advice Service developed through a range of providers and linked to generic housing advice services. Supporting People grants have been used to strengthen young people's advice/support arrangements and a joint Supporting Young People's/Persons' contract to provide floating tenancy support has been agreed, tendered and let. Young people were actively involved in the tendering process. The statutory homelessness acceptances for 16 and 17 year olds and 18 - 21 year old care leavers have fallen from 30 in quarter 3 2005-06 to 10 in quarter 3 2006-07. An area for development is prioritising access for those in the greatest need.

Arrangements to commission Connexions services in 2008 are well developed and were recently approved by the County Council. Good information, advice and guidance (IAG) is available and provided in proportion to need. Access to advice and guidance in rural areas is available through the area-wide prospectus and a variety of statutory and voluntary provision. Young people with complex needs receive good advice, evidenced through the Youth Offending Team inspection and the Youth Service inspection. Quarterly meetings take place to review and plan a response to the employment, education and training needs of vulnerable groups such as care leavers and young offenders. A transitions protocol, supported by Joint Agencies Teams, for children with special needs is now in place across Devon. Pathway plans are now in place for all care leavers.

Integrated development through the roll out of the Children's Centres is good with exemplary commissioning processes, well supported by the effective implementation of the early years workforce strategy. Childcare is well-distributed across the county in a wide variety of settings. Providers receive comprehensive business support to ensure their sustainability and the strategy for securing sufficient places is embedded. Childcare places, including those targeted at disadvantaged areas, increased by slightly above the national average.

There is a policy in place for health visitors to refer young parents to Connexions for advice on learning and work. In order to ensure that new childcare provision helps deliver economic benefits Jobcentre Plus are involved in identifying areas requiring more childcare provision, contribute to the appraisal panel for new children's centres and liaise with each Children's Centre. Families were closely involved in the needs analysis and tendering process for Children's Centres and this has received national acclaim. To develop provision further a wide spread consultation exercise will be undertaken this year with families (including disadvantaged families), employers and providers to assess needs.

Access to programmes of adult and community learning is adequate. In 2005-06 there were 179 courses in family learning, an increase of 15% from 2004-05 involving 1,573 families. The courses were distributed across the county and delivered through extended schools, Children's Centres and other community provision. Courses are free of charge and there is support for learners with childcare and crèche facilities available at the majority of courses. The feedback from the families involved show that 96% said they had developed new skills and 97% were more confident in supporting a child's learning as a result of attending a family learning course.

Projects are in place to help families of children with special needs take up benefits. For example, a project in North Devon has received 420 referrals, 259 potential entitlements, 102 successful claims; £423,000 has been gained in benefits. This is now being rolled out to Exeter and Mid Devon.

The children's information systems in Devon are good. The children's information service achieved the NACIS national quality award in 2005 and is working towards renewal in early 2008. Hits to the Devon Information Service for Children (DISC) website have gone up on average 35% per year and to the Devon Information Service for Children Plus (DISC+) website on average 26% per year. Calls to the helpline average around 500 per month. 98% of people surveyed said that they found the DISC service useful. The need to develop the Children's Services Directory into a more comprehensive and accessible directory which will integrate the special needs information and other relevant data has been identified.

Devon is good at knowing what its young people are doing post 16 in terms of employment, education and training. Connexions is in contact with over 99% of 16-18 year olds compared to a national average of 93.4%. 95.2% of 16-18 year olds were in learning, work or personal development opportunity in November 2006 which is adequate when compared to statistical neighbours. The proportion of year 11 school leavers remaining in full-time education has risen from 71.3% in 2003 to 77.7% in 2006. This improvement has been particularly significant in Exeter which had the lowest levels of engagement in the county where the proportion staying on in full-time education has risen from 58.7% to 72.3% between 2003 and 2006. Raising standards in Exeter was a council priority and in a long term project this is evidence of the positive impact of significant strategic planning and investment.

Achievement at both level 2 and level 3 at 19 has improved by 3% and 4% respectively in line with statistical neighbours. Completion rates for apprenticeships have improved from 42.9% in 2004-05 to 58.3% in 2005-06. Engagement of vulnerable groups is in line with similar authorities. A good range of provision has been developed for the most vulnerable young people across Devon including those at school and those who have left full-time education. The Learning & Skills Council and Connexions have secured European Social Fund finance to provide an innovative range of pre-entry level programmes across the county to help vulnerable young people. For example the "Positive Pathway" programme, where the personal adviser acts as a budget-holder, has helped almost 200 young people over the last twelve months. Support is also available to those young people who have been unemployed for six months or more through

the Activity Agreement pilot (132 starts in the year to April 2007) which performs well compared to other pilots nationally.

A significant minority of young people are in jobs without training although most recent figures indicate a fall (from 17.1% in April 2006 to 16% in April 2007). Strategies are in place to engage these young people in learning agreements (190 starts in the year to April 2007) and the Learning & Skills Council is increasing the number of apprenticeships.

There has been a reduction (to 69% against a target of 90%) of young offenders getting entry to employment. There are increasing difficulties in attracting providers able and willing to work with the most challenging 16+ offenders. However, the Positive Pathway Programme (above) is one example of local initiatives which are engaging some of the hardest to help young people in this group. Although they do not reach the 25 hours of engagement required to count against this particular target it does demonstrate positive steps towards engagement.

Significant progress has been made in the engagement of 19 year old care leavers and it is anticipated that Devon will be in the top category based on the PAF A4 count in 2007.

Priorities for Action to improve Achieving Economic Wellbeing

Short term

- ◆ Further work will take place with employers and Devon and Cornwall Business Council to convert jobs without training to apprenticeships

Medium term

- ◆ Transport strategy linked to community strategy to support access to education, employment, training, cultural, leisure and physical activities for those who are 14+
- ◆ There will be a roll out of projects to help families claim full benefit entitlement across the whole County
- ◆ Target 'hot-spots' to reduce under 18 conception rate

Longer term

- ◆ Full implementation of the 14 - 19 strategy supported by an integrated youth support strategy
- ◆ Build on existing partnerships to ensure appropriate housing particularly for vulnerable young people

Conclusion

The review of progress in managing and delivering improved outcomes for children and young people leads Devon to conclude that its services are adequate in all categories apart from Making a Positive Contribution, where they continue to be good.

There are increasing examples of good or excellent practice, and although it is too early to demonstrate evidence of outcomes from the initiatives now established Devon is determined to acquire a 'good' judgement in 2008.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- AXS: Devon's Multi Agency Integrated Working, Access To Services
- CAMHS: Child And Adolescent Mental Health Services
- CIN: Children In Need
- CP: Child Protection
- CYPP: Children & Young Peoples Plan
- DAISI: Devon Arts In Schools Initiative
- DCC: Devon County Council
- DFES: Department For Education And Skills.
- DISC: Devon Information Services For Children
- EET: Education, Employment Or Training
- ESF: European Social Funds
- ESS: Extended Services In And Around Schools
- EWS: Educational Welfare Service
- GOSW: Government Office South West
- HCHIR: Hospital Improvement Review
- HEC: Hospital Education Centre
- IAG: Information Advice And Guidance
- IYSS: Integrated Youth Support Services
- JAR: Joint Area Review

- KS: Key Stage
- LA: Local Authority
- LAA: Local Area Agreement
- LLD: Learning Difficulties And Disabilities
- LPSA: Local Public Service Agreement
- LSCB: Local Safeguarding Children Board
- NACIS: national Association Of Children's Information Service
- NEET: Not In Education, Employment Or Training
- NHS: National Health Service
- PAF : Performance Assessment Framework
- PCT: Primary Care Trust
- PRU: Pupil Referral Unit
- PVI: Performance Value Indicator
- SEAL: Social And Emotional Aspects Of Learning
- SEN: Special Educational Need
- SIP: School Improvement Officer
- YOT: Youth Offending Team