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Ref. No.	
Category: (Y/N)	
People	Yes
Place	
Corporate	
In Constitution	

# Children, Young People and Families plan 2020-23

## Policy Details

<p>What is this policy for?</p>	<p>The Children, Young People and Families' Plan 2020-23 is the overarching strategic plan for the Dorset Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People and sets out how the partnership will work together to improve outcomes for children and young people.</p> <p>The Children, Young People and Families Plan 2020-23 delivers the partnership's vision of: 'We want Dorset to be the best place to be a child; where communities thrive, and families are supported to be the best they can be'.</p> <p>The plan focuses on improving outcomes for all children and young people through six priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Best Start in Life</li> <li>2. Young and Thriving</li> <li>3. Good Care Provision</li> <li>4. Best Education for All</li> <li>5. Best Place to Live</li> <li>6. Delivering Locally</li> </ol> <p>The plan has been developed in partnership by the Dorset Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People with the input of lots of colleagues who work for the children, young people of Dorset (and their families), and the invaluable feedback from representative parents and carers.</p> <p>Dorset Council anticipate that this policy will have a positive impact for all children and young people in the Dorset area. It is a strategic plan and delivery plans will be developed to define how the priorities in this plan are delivered.</p>
<p>Who does this policy affect?</p>	<p>Children Families Parents Young people</p>
<p>Keywords</p>	<p>Children Families Parents Young people SEND NEET</p>

Author	Name : Claire Shiels Job Title: Corporate Director for Commissioning, Quality and Partnerships Tel: 01305 224682 Email: <a href="mailto:claire.shiels@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk">claire.shiels@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk</a>
Does this policy relate to any laws?	Section 10 of the Children Act 2004
Is this policy linked to any other Dorset Council policies?	Youth Justice plan Dorset LEP Placement strategy Communities strategy Safeguarding (County lines)? Climate and Ecological emergency strategy
Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)	<a href="#">Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA)</a> An EqIA was carried out and the impacts are generally positive or neutral. No group is negatively impacted by the policy
Other Impact Assessments	<a href="#">Financial Implications</a> None identified. The transformation priorities within this plan relating to services provided or commissioned by the Council are aligned to Council plans. The partnership has adopted 'Delivering best value for money - spending the Dorset £ in Dorset on the things that get the best outcomes for children and families' as one of its shared values and principles.  <a href="#">Climate implications</a> None identified. The Best Place to Live priority includes work to influence increased cycle lanes and improved public transport and to champion the use of green energy, reduction in waste, recycling and reduction in the use of plastic and work to reduce carbon emissions.  <a href="#">Risk Assessment</a> Having considered the risks associated with this decision, the level of risk has been identified as: Current Risk: LOW Residual Risk: LOW  <a href="#">Well-being and Health Implications</a> This plan will seek to ensure the involvement of voluntary and community organisations in the delivery of a plan to support the wellbeing of children and young people, including meeting our responsibilities as corporate parents.

### Status and Approvals

Status	Live	Version	
Last review date	2020	Next review date	2023
Approved by (Senior Officer/Director)	Theresa Leavy, Executive Director People, Children's	Date approved	6 <sup>th</sup> October 2020
Member/ Partnership Board Approval	Cabinet	Date approved	6 <sup>th</sup> October 2020



# Dorset Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People

Children, Young People and Families' Plan 2020-23



Dorset  
Council

This plan has been developed in partnership by the Dorset Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People with the input of lots of colleagues who work for the children, young people of Dorset (and their families), and the invaluable feedback from representative parents and carers.

**But most importantly**, this plan has been developed with the wonderful input of so many children and young people who told us about the things that are most important to them and their lives in Dorset.

The Strategic Alliance Board would like to say a heartfelt thank you everyone who has helped to develop this plan and shape the important priorities.

## Meet the Strategic Alliance Board

We are the Dorset Strategic Alliance Board and we have the great privilege of representing our organisations and sectors on this Board. We come together to work on the things that we think can make the biggest difference to the lives of children and young people in Dorset if we work in partnership.

Name	Job title and organisation representing
Councillor Peter Wharf	Deputy Leader of Dorset Council and Chair of the Strategic Alliance, Dorset Council
<b>Theresa Leavy</b>	<b>Executive Director Children's Services, Dorset Council</b>
Andrew Billany	Interim Corporate Director Housing, Dorset Council
Jo Wilson	Head of Programmes, Public Health Dorset
Sarah-Jane Smedmoor	Corporate Director Children's Social Care, Dorset Council
Mark Blackman	Corporate Director Education and Inclusion, Dorset Council
Claire Shiels	Corporate Director Commissioning, Quality and Partnerships
Councillor Andrew Parry	Portfolio Holder Children's Services, Dorset Council
Amanda Buttle	Partnership Manager, Department of Work and Pensions
Dave Thompson	Vice Chair and Representative, Dorset 0-25 Voluntary and Community Sector Forum
Seth Why	Head of Prevention, Area Manager, Dorset Fire and Rescue Service
David Webb	Youth Offending Services Manager, Dorset Youth Offending Services
Sally Sandcraft	Director of Primary and Community Care Directorate, Dorset CCG
Julie Fielding	Assistant Chief Constable, Dorset Police
Stewart Dipple	Superintendent, Dorset Police
Richard Bell	Superintendent, Dorset Police
Kate Harvey	Service Director Children and Families, Dorset Healthcare
Elaine Okopski	Parent/carer Representative, Dorset Parent Care Council
Helen Horsley	Representative of Local Alliance Groups (Chair)
Philip Jones	Chair of Schools Forum, Schools Forum Representative
<b>Lorraine Clarke</b>	<b>Early Years Representative and Director of Hopscotch Pre-school, Early Years Provider Forum Representative</b>
Karen Wrixon	<b>Primary School Representative and Head Teacher of William Barnes Primary, Dorset Primary School Representative</b>
Councillor Stella Jones	<b>Observer at the Board and Councillor Champion for Participation: Children, Young People, Families, Parents and Carers</b>

## Meet the Strategic Alliance Board

This document, our full Children, Young People and Families' Plan, aims to bring together the work the partnership will be undertaking in detail and will help the people who are going to deliver the plan to have a good overview of everything we've committed to do. This will help everyone to understand what each other's roles are and help us to co-ordinate our work effectively.

We will also be producing a summary for Children and Young People and an Easy Read version to sit alongside this document.



# Foreword

I am delighted to share with you our new Children, Young People and Families' Plan 2020-2023. I have the great honour of being the Chair of the Dorset Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People, the group of very dedicated colleagues from across the partnership who are all working hard to realise our collective vision for children and young people:

*We want Dorset to be the best place to be a child; where communities thrive, and families are supported to be the best they can be.*



In what has been a truly challenging year for all of us, we have listened carefully to the feedback from our children and young people, and the work of colleagues from across the partnership to help to shape this plan. The plan sets out all the things we commit to do together to achieve better outcomes for our children and young people.

We want our children to have the best start in life, we want our young people to thrive as they grow into independent young adults, where children need our care we want them to have the right support in place and for that to be in Dorset and we want all of our children and young people to experience the best education.

Over the summer we asked our children and young people to tell us what was important to them, they shared lots of their ideas, many of them agreed with our emerging priorities, but importantly children and young people told us they wanted Dorset to be the best place for children and young people to live - we have listened and this too is a priority within this plan.

So, this is where the important work begins as every one of us - our children, young people, their parents and carers, the people who deliver services and our wider community family, come together to deliver this plan.

On behalf of the Strategic Alliance, I would like to thank everyone who has taken part in helping to shape this plan, especially our children and young people who provided exceptional feedback, to you all - we were truly blown away by your ideas, your creativity, your talent - you should all be very proud of yourselves, we are certainly all very proud of you. We will now work hard to deliver your vision for Dorset - your Dorset, for your future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Wharf". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

**Councillor Peter Wharf**

Chair of the Strategic Alliance and  
Deputy Leader of Dorset Council

# Introduction

We want Dorset to be the best place to be a child; where communities thrive, and families are supported to be the best they can be.

Building on the work of the partnership so far and through the priorities in this plan we intend to deliver that vision. We will focus on improving outcomes for all children and young people through our six priorities:

- 1 **Best Start in Life** ..... Page 14
- 2 **Young and Thriving** ..... Page 19
- 3 **Good Care Provision** ..... Page 24
- 4 **Best Education for All** ..... Page 28
- 5 **Best Place to Live** ..... Page 33
- 6 **Delivering Locally** ..... Page 39

We will shape our services that: help children to have the Best Start in Life; enable our Young People to Thrive; deliver Good Care services and support for children when they need it; work to make sure that in Dorset we provide the Best Education for all of our children and young people; and do all we can to make Dorset the Best Place for children and young people to Live. We will Deliver our services Locally where we can, so they are easy to access and that they focus on the needs of the different communities in Dorset. We want all children and young people to be supported to have equality in outcomes.

As we have worked to shape this plan we have reflected on the partnership we want for the future, so alongside our priorities we have developed a set of values and principles that together we will make sure we 'live' in all we do. ►



## Introduction

### Our shared values and principles:

- Always putting children and families at the heart of everything we do - including in how we develop and shape services
- No child or family left behind - we will strive for equity of outcomes for our children, young people and their families
- Focussing on early intervention and prevention aiming to help early in the life of a problem and provide a graduated response to need - the right help, in the right place at the right time
- Working restoratively, doing things with families instead of to them, for them or do nothing
- Thinking Family and working together so that children and families receive a joined-up response and good transitions
- Focussing on strengths within families and communities, understanding the lived experience of children
- Staying with families until outcomes are delivered, embedded and change is sustained
- Being inclusive - we want our children and young people to be able to get the help they need in the county that is their home
- Empowering young people and families to use the information we give them to make decisions for themselves
- Delivering best value for money - spending the Dorset £ in Dorset on the things that get the best outcomes for children and families

## Introduction

### **As we develop our shared culture and approach to working in partnership further, we will:**

- Bring together our strategic commissioning intentions into one overarching partnership Joint Commissioning Strategy for Children and Young People.
- Work to align our partnership Workforce Development and where it makes sense to do so join up our workforce development activities so that colleagues across the partnership can work more effectively as one system.
- When developing the workforce, we will include parents and carers too - they have told us this is important.
- Work together with each other and children and families to co-produce services that reflect the needs of communities ensuring our activities are co-ordinated and people only have to 'tell us once'.
- Make the best use of our collective resources in times of increased demand and a challenging financial situation for all partners.

The strategic priorities of our individual organisations have influenced the development of the priorities within this plan and our shared partnership values and principles. The work in this plan contributes to the Dorset Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, in particular: reducing inequalities, Starting Well and Living Well priorities. We want to work as a whole system to get the best outcomes possible for our children and young people.

### **Taking our learning from COVID-19 and using it to be even better**

Recent months have seen our partnership grow from strength to strength, coming together to support children and their families in our communities, the partnership mobilised, responded quickly, demonstrated agility and most importantly lived a one team, one Dorset, approach.

During the pandemic, services have been given greater permission to share information to better identify and support families with needs resulting in new ways of working, increased agility in the workforce and more timely and co-ordinated interventions.

We are taking forward the positive learning from our experience in COVID-19 to help us accelerate our work to deliver the best services for children and young people and to support professionals to work across organisational boundaries in the interests of improving family and child outcomes. Through our Strengthening Services Plan, which sits alongside this plan, we will ensure our services are strengthened and that we are continuously improving how we deliver services that support vulnerable children.

We do not yet know the full extent of the impact of COVID-19 on our children, young people and families, but together as partnership we will make sure we are able to respond effectively and through the work set out in this plan, we will transform the way we work to improve long term outcomes for children and young people. ►

## Introduction

### Outcomes

In delivering our plan there are the seven outcomes or conditions of wellbeing we want for **all our children and young people in Dorset**:

- To have the best start in life
- To be safe from harm and have the help they need
- To have healthy and active lives
- To be prepared for adult life
- To feel they can have their say and are listened to
- To enjoy growing up in Dorset
- To have a settled and happy education which enables them to achieve their full potential

### How the plan has been developed

This plan has been developed in partnership by the Dorset Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People with the input of lots of colleagues who work for the children, young people (and their families) of Dorset and the invaluable feedback from representative parents and carers.

But most importantly, this plan has been developed with the wonderful input of so many children and young people in Dorset who told us about the things that are most important to them.

### Engagement has included:

- **Partnership Planning Session - March 2020:** To consider performance gaps in outcomes for children and young people in Dorset, where outcomes for children are not yet where we want them to be
- **Think Tanks - June 2020:** On each of the emerging Children, Young People and Families Plan priorities. At these sessions, colleagues from across the partnership, including representative young people and parents and carers, came together in virtual workshops to talk about each priority
- **I Live in Dorset campaign - July 2020:** This campaign encouraged children and young people from Dorset to tell us about what would make Dorset the best place to grow up

Our priorities have been built on what we already know and throughout the planning process we have been feeding in what children, young people, parents and carers have told us is important to them through a range of research, consultations and co-production.

Our emerging priorities were shared with a wide range of colleagues from across the partnership, including elected members and the voluntary and community sector through newsletters and presentations.

Thank you to everyone who has provided their feedback and contributed to shaping this plan.

# About Dorset

Dorset is a beautiful coastal county.

Over half of Dorset is covered by the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designation and 7% of Dorset is protected as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).



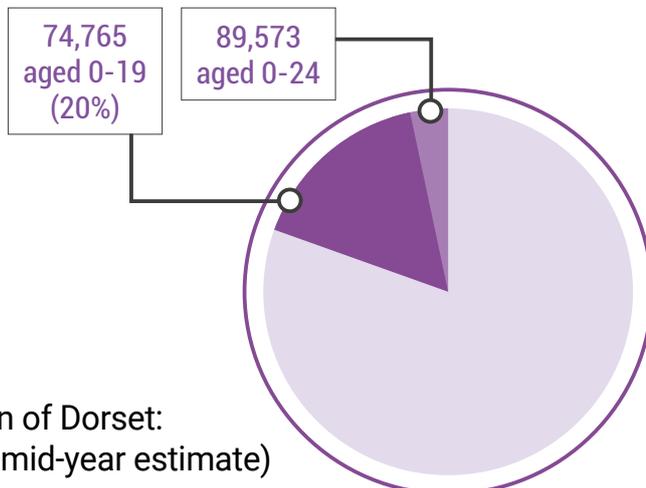
The Dorset rural idyll can conceal hidden deprivation, there are pockets of deprivation, mostly in urban areas. But there is also some rural deprivation due to isolation and difficulty accessing housing, transport and essential services. Crime is generally low in Dorset.

Affordability issues for many young people and keyworkers.

Dorset has no motorway but over 2,500 miles of roads.



Dorset has relatively low birth rates and younger people often move away from the area.



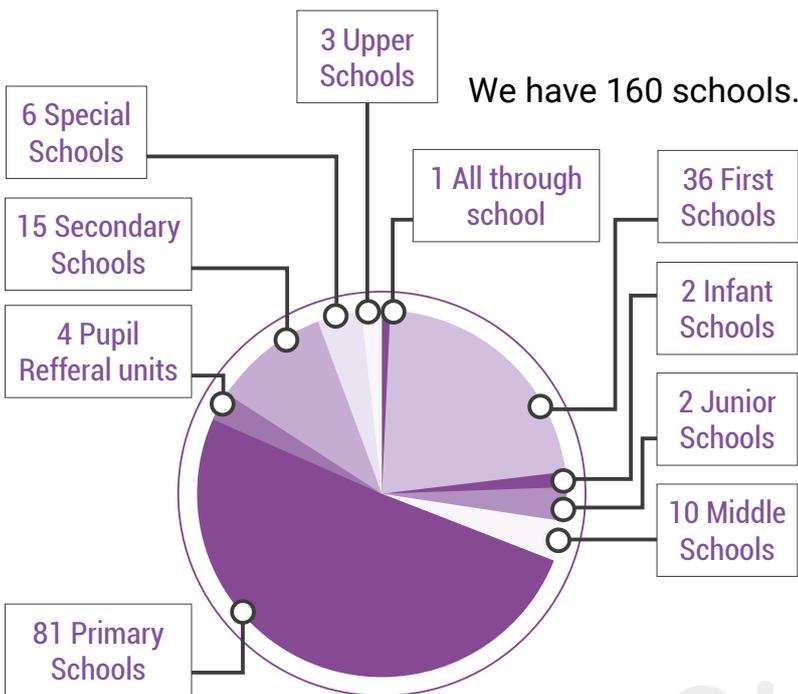
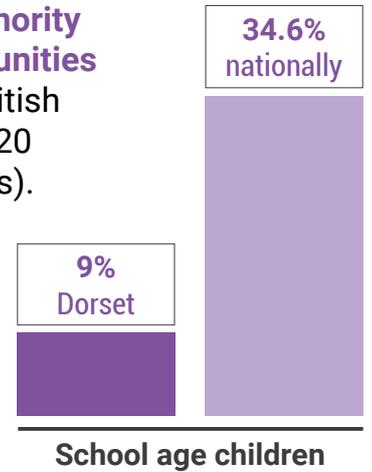
Total population of Dorset:  
**378,508** (2019 mid-year estimate)

# About Dorset



We have approximately **2,800** children with Special Educational Needs supported through an Educational, Health and Care Plan.

**Black and minority ethnic communities** (non-white British – January 2020 school census).



483 children in care and 261 care leavers.

There are **33 different languages** spoken in Dorset schools (January 2020 school census - children with a language other than English as first language).



# Working together

## Dorset Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People

The Dorset Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People is a multi-agency partnership which brings together senior people from police, health, schools and early years settings, voluntary and community sector to shape and transform services for children and young people that achieve improved outcomes.

## Strengthening Services Board for Children and Families

This multi-agency partnership board also brings together senior people who work with children and young people, their focus is to make sure services for vulnerable children are the best they can be. This group works closely with the Strategic Alliance.

## Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership

The Safeguarding Children Partnership makes sure that all practitioners and services that work to safeguard children follow the same policies and procedures, ensure these are implemented effectively and that staff have the training they need to deliver them.

Dorset is a large county and so we have six locality areas that are organised around schools in local areas and bring together partners in Family Partnership Zones. Services delivered at a local level include early help, children's social care, children's centres, special educational needs and disabilities services, educational psychology, education and inclusion services.

### Find out more

To find lots of useful information for children, young people and their families visit our Family Information Service at [✦ dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/family-information-service](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/family-information-service)

Dorset Council's Local Offer for children and young people from 0 to 25 years with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) provides information, advice and support for children and their families. For more information visit [✦ dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/local-offer](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/local-offer)

For information on the Pan-Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership visit [✦ pdscp.co.uk](https://pdscp.co.uk)

# What's important?

We invited children and young people to have their say on what was important to them. During July 2020 we held a social media campaign which asked our children and young people to tell us: What would make Dorset the best place to grow up? Here's a summary of what they said:

- Getting involved, having a say and making a difference - social action
- Having things to do, activities to go to and being able to play
- Being and feeling safe
- A kind and happy Dorset
- Being healthy - and having access to things that support good physical and emotional health
- Caring for each other and looking after people in the community when they need help
- Looking after the environment
- Places where everyone can get to - accessibility
- Being able to learn skills for the future - technology
- Being proud of our community and celebrating Dorset role models.

We have produced a full report of all the things that children and young people told us and the people who are leading this work are using this information to shape how we deliver the plan.



Edward, age 9

## Governance and oversight

The Dorset Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People will be responsible for the governance and oversight of this plan. Each priority within the plan will be led by a senior partner who will work with colleagues from across the partnership to ensure the commitments within this plan are delivered.

Progress against the plan will be monitored by the Strategic Alliance Board at quarterly meetings, outside of these meetings the senior partner leading each priority will be responsible for monitoring and driving progress. An annual report will be published to report on progress made every year.



### Other ways you can help

We have included a section within each priority in this plan where you will find lots of ideas of how we can all help. The ideas are a starting point and we will develop these ideas further over the course of the plan. We will make sure they are available to access through the Dorset Family Information Service.

# Best Start in Life

## Our aim

**Our aim is to support children to have the best possible start in life by supporting good child development, strengthening and changing how families that are expecting a new baby and have pre-school children are supported and improving school readiness.**

## Why is this important?

The first 1,000 days, the time spanning between conception and a child's second birthday is a unique period of opportunity where the foundations for health, growth, and neurodevelopment across the lifespan are established, but this time can also have potential for increased vulnerability.

How well or how poorly mothers and children are nourished and cared for during this time has a profound impact on a child's outcomes. Smoking, excessive alcohol, poor nutrition, and stress or the absence of a warm loving relationship can have significant short and longer-term negative impacts. The presence of a strong and consistent relationship with a trusted adult is important to support the development of good wellbeing.

Young children and their families have regular contact with a number of different services such as midwifery, health visiting, childcare, early education provision and a range of voluntary and community services. These Universal community services offer a timely opportunity to identify and intervene early, avoiding costly specialist services and improving outcomes for children and their families. When children and their families face challenges and need help, they should be able to easily access the support from their community and from professionals, with clear roles and responsibilities, who are able to respond confidently to deliver effective prevention and early intervention. Family friendly communities support good development and lifelong outcomes and reduce inequalities, providing supportive environments before conception, during pregnancy and following birth. We know that early years settings and other places and people within the community also play an important role in supporting families.

We have a unique opportunity to support families and communities in making most of the potential of our children in the early years. Working together we can lay the foundations, supporting good development for children to be ready for school. We know that there are some unfair and avoidable differences between some children and their peers. This can be seen through gaps in development with children facing more challenges such as poverty, poor housing, neglect or trauma than their peers. One example is in speech and language acquisition, which can have a negative impact not only on academic achievement but also increases risk of behaviour difficulties in schools, mental health problems and unemployment in adulthood. Supporting parents to enjoy talking, playing and reading with their children helps prepare children for school. ►

## Best Start in Life



### Where are we now?

Pregnancy and parenthood are times of great change. It is common for new parents to experience a range of emotions, both positive and negative, and many people find that pregnancy or having a baby is more challenging than they anticipated as they re-adjust to new routines. In Dorset we want parents to feel positive about asking for help, should and when they need it, and recognise opportunities to work together in reducing any stigma parents might feel accessing local support.

Dorset has been an Early Adopter for responding to the challenges highlighted by Better Births. A local transformation plan seeks to improve the safety and experiences of women (and their families) from conception to the early post-natal period. There are strengths in both the programme delivery and engagement of women in shaping services, however, some families have greater challenges, including those known to social care and those that have experienced multiple children removed into care. By working together, we can make this even better by developing co-ordinated wrap around support, including community assets and specific social, emotional and practical interventions.

The time between 0-5 years of age is the most sensitive time for brain development, more than 90 percent of brain growth occurs during this time. Studies show that children who receive quality childcare enter school with better maths, language, and social skills. These skills give children a good start to succeed in school and in life. In Dorset the take-up of childcare funding for children is high (89% of eligible 2-year olds and 96% of 3/4-year olds) and the proportion of childcare providers that are good or outstanding is also high. ►

## Best Start in Life

Many children in Dorset develop well and start school healthy, happy, communicative, sociable, curious, active and equipped for the next phase of life and learning, but this is not the case for all children. A key indicator of this is the proportion of children who have a 'a good level of development' at age 5. In Dorset there is a gap in development between children from poorer households that are eligible for Free School Meals and for children from black and minority ethnic groups.

In Dorset, there are some stark differences between where children grow up and the chances they have of doing well in adult life, with Weymouth and Portland ranking one of the lowest areas for social mobility in the whole country. This means that some of our children are less likely to do well at school, find a good job and have a good standard of living than children from other areas.

Children with social workers or who have experienced care can face a range of challenging social and health outcomes, including poorer educational results, higher rates of mental health problems and even higher rates of homelessness and unemployment later in life. In Dorset children aged 0-4 years represent the highest number of new Child Protection and Children in Care cases. There are a small number of families for whom, repeated children are taken into care, where evidence based intensive support programmes could delay and better prepare parents for any subsequent children. ►



## Best Start in Life

### What are the things we are going to do?

- We will develop a multi-agency agreement on how we provide intensive support to women who have had multiple children removed from their care.
- We will work together to strengthen the local maternity system developments with a community wrap around offer, to support pre-/post birth (preparing for parenthood) and to improve pathways of support between maternity services, health visiting and local authority services.
- We will improve how we share information to better support families within their communities.
- Deliver evidence-based interventions to improve outcomes for 0-5's, with a particular focus on reducing inequality, focusing on:
  - Language development
  - Strong bonds between parents and children
  - School readiness
  - Community and parent led approaches
  - Supporting good home learning environments
- We will focus on putting the needs of children first and ensure processes don't get in the way of providing good support, a graduated response to need – the right help, in the right place at the right time.
- We will champion childhood immunisations and adult health improvement throughout the partnership workforce e.g. workforce development/campaigns.
- Promote the creation of child-friendly spaces and places.
- Work with Early Years settings to ensure there is sufficient childcare available for children in Dorset and promote take up of the early years offer.
- Support childminders and other early years settings to identify and address issues early, drawing on support from a range of local professionals.
- Make sure information and services are accessible in communities across Dorset, integrated and whole family focused.
- Explore the development of Family Hubs - where people of all ages can get help and support from a range of professionals.

## Best Start in Life

### Other ways you can help

Take a look at the Maternity Matters website for information on becoming a new parent and for support during pregnancy, labour and after the birth

🖱️ [maternitymattersdorset.nhs.uk](https://maternitymattersdorset.nhs.uk)

Sign up to be a Breastfeeding Peer Supporter with 🖱️ [familiesandbabies.org.uk](https://familiesandbabies.org.uk)

Visit the Professional Association of Child Care and Early Years website and online videos for lots of useful information for providers and parents.

🖱️ [pacey.org.uk/working-in-childcare/spotlight-on/2-year-olds/home-learning-environment](https://pacey.org.uk/working-in-childcare/spotlight-on/2-year-olds/home-learning-environment) and 🖱️ [youtube.com/c/PACEYorgUK/videos](https://youtube.com/c/PACEYorgUK/videos)

Volunteer at your local library and local charitable organisations.

Read, talk and sing to your children, follow these links for some great ideas and useful information: 🖱️ [bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/science-and-facts](https://bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/science-and-facts)

🖱️ [booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/reading-tips](https://booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/reading-tips)

🖱️ [ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/parents](https://ican.org.uk/i-cans-talking-point/parents)

🖱️ [afasic.org.uk](https://afasic.org.uk)

Visit the Dorset Reading Partners website to see how you can help

🖱️ [dorsetreadingpartners.org.uk](https://dorsetreadingpartners.org.uk)

Make sure your child is registered with their GP and Dentist, visit the NHS choices website for more information 🖱️ [nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-practice](https://nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/gps/how-to-register-with-a-gp-practice)

Sign up for Change4Life 🖱️ [nhs.uk/change4life/about-change4life](https://nhs.uk/change4life/about-change4life)

Get involved with Live Well Dorset 🖱️ [livewelldorset.co.uk](https://livewelldorset.co.uk)

Visit the Dorset Family Information Service and sign up to our newsletter for lots of useful information for families 🖱️ [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/family-information-service](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/family-information-service)

If you're a parent or carer and would like to know more about parenting tips, information about long term illnesses or where to go if you feel your child is having problems with their emotions, visit Wessex Healthier Together 🖱️ [what0-18.nhs.uk](https://what0-18.nhs.uk)

If you have questions about your child's development, visit 🖱️ [dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/healthvisiting](https://dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/healthvisiting) or speak to your local health visiting team via the contact details above

# Young and Thriving

## Our aim

**Our aim is to set our young people up for success in adulthood for them to have good emotional wellbeing and mental health; to be able to be cared for by their families; and that they will be supported to stay out of the youth justice system.**

## Why is this important?

Young people are concerned about how prepared they are for work and wider adult life. Information from successive Young Researcher reports indicate that young people want access to work experience and good careers advice, as well as wider personal development opportunities.

The numbers of young people in care have risen significantly over the last ten years in Dorset and there has been a trend of young people coming into care for the first time during adolescence. This is both expensive to the public sector and does not lead to better outcomes for young people.

Preparing young people for adulthood has been a consistent theme of engagement with young people including feedback from Dorset Youth Council, Dorset Young Researchers and our care leavers. As a corporate parent we want to ensure that we have done all we can to ensure that those leaving our care have the best possible start in life. Our young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) do less well than their peers and are less likely to be able to access employment opportunities. Parents and carers of children with SEND have told us that transition to adults' services is a worrying time for them and that we could do more together to prepare our young people for a settled adulthood. ▶



## Young and Thriving

Feedback from young people has consistently highlighted the concerns they have about access to support around their emotional well-being. Significant work has already been undertaken to understand the offer to young people in its widest context, but there is still more to do to co-ordinate this wide range of activity and ensure young people can access help and support in a timely way.

We know that the numbers of young people in Dorset who become involved with the criminal justice system is relatively low and has fallen over the last year. Nonetheless, for those that do, the impact on their lives can be significant. It is important that we remain focused on different strands of this work, including prevention at scale, focused intervention with those on the periphery of crime and, effective interventions with those engaging in criminal activity, including those leaving custody. ►



## Young and Thriving

### Where are we now?

We know that there are a small proportion of young people that struggle as they progress through adolescence. This may be around their emotional well-being, poor behaviour in school, anti-social behaviour, poor attendance and substance misuse. Many of these young people go on to become NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). For many young people a positive adult in their life can be a significant protective factor in preventing these issues from escalating into a bigger concern. It is important we have a range of interventions available to support this cohort of young people.

The rate of children in care per 10,000 in Dorset is significantly above both the national rate and that of our statistical neighbours. We know that outcomes for children who enter care during adolescence are not always good and not enough young people are supported to return home to their families. We have an increasing number of care leavers and are one of eight authorities to participate in the national New Belongings programme which seeks to improve our support to care leavers. We already know that a small number of young people have issues accessing suitable accommodation and that only 50% of care leavers are in education, employment or training.

We know that many young people struggle to access support for emotional wellbeing and mental health. Our NHS Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services only has sufficient resources for approximately 25% of young people with a mental health condition. This disproportionately affects vulnerable young people. Plans are in place to increase access in line with the NHS Long Term Plan and Dorset has two areas (North Dorset and Chesil) which are pilot areas for Targeted Mental Health in Schools. In addition, there are a broad range of other support services which contribute to young people's well-being, which includes some provision which is commissioned by Children's Services. However, there is work to do to ensure that these services join up to provide the right help at the right time. In addition, we know there is a specific issue of young people transferring from CAMHS to Adult Mental Health services.

The Dorset Youth Offending Service has made significant progress in supporting young people entering the youth justice system. In the Dorset Council area, there has been a 26.4% reduction in the number of Dorset young people who received a substantive outcome and a 22% reduction in the number of offences in the twelve months to 30 June 2020. In the same period, Dorset young people received fewer substantive Out of Court Disposals (OOCs), with Youth Cautions reduced by half and Youth Conditional Cautions by a third. We want to maintain this momentum and remain focused on preventing young people from coming into the Youth Justice System for the first time and prevent those that do from re-entering. ►

## Young and Thriving

### What are the things we are going to do?

- Ensure young people receiving our services will be involved in decisions about how we help them, where professionals listen to them and understand their needs.
- Create and publish a range of personal development opportunities through developing community-based volunteering opportunities; peer support and peer mentoring programmes; Youth Hubs for 16-24 year olds who are unemployed or at risk of unemployment/redundancy and work with employers and businesses to improve their offer.
- We will support the provision of a wide range of positive activities for young people, including access to youth work such as open access youth clubs, detached youth work, one-to-one and virtual/online youth work and targeted issue based group work programmes to support vulnerable young people whose needs might otherwise escalate and we will work with partners to deliver these programmes locally, in line with the other priorities within this plan.
- We will support young people at risk of coming into care (and their family) to remain in their family home through the development of edge of care services and we will improve our support for adolescents to return home following time in care.
- We will support young people that have been in care to be ready for adulthood, by planning early and having a clear offer for Care Leavers. Partners will offer care leavers work experience and apprenticeship opportunities.
- We will prepare young people with SEND for settled adulthood through developing a range of employment options and support young people to develop the skills required for employment and independent living.
- We will work to reduce the inequalities in physical and mental health for young people with SEND and focus on improving transitions between services for all young people entering adulthood working together with adults' social care and health services to deliver a new Conception to Settled Adulthood Strategy.
- We will make sure young people have access to a wide range of support to promote their emotional well-being and address their mental health concerns. We will implement the NHS Long Term plan ambitions for increased access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and implement the evidence based Thrive Framework for a system wide approach to emotional wellbeing and mental health developed by the Anna Freud Centre and the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust.
- We will evaluate the Targeted Mental Health Service in schools with a view to expanding it to other areas of Dorset. We will also improve transitions between children's and adult mental health services. ►

## Young and Thriving

- We will support young people to avoid entering the youth justice system and to prevent re-entry through restorative and creative approaches to low level offending; avoiding the criminalisation of young people that are being exploited; developing a diversionary offer for young people vulnerable to exploitation; increasing uptake of substance use services.

### Other ways you can help

Make young people feel welcome in communities.

Create opportunities for young people to get involved.

Take a look at our current information for young people [✎ dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/youth-link](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/youth-link)

Promote the range of information regarding emotional health and wellbeing:

Kooth [✎ kooth.com](https://kooth.com)

Chat health [✎ publichealthdorset.org.uk/your-health/children-and-families/chat-health.aspx](https://publichealthdorset.org.uk/your-health/children-and-families/chat-health.aspx)

Discovery Project Dorset [✎ dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/our-services-hospitals/mental-health/discovery-project](https://dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/our-services-hospitals/mental-health/discovery-project)

Mental Health Support Teams in Schools Dorset [✎ camhsdorset.org/about-camhs/mental-health-support-teams-mhsts](https://camhsdorset.org/about-camhs/mental-health-support-teams-mhsts)

CAMHS [✎ camhsdorset.org](https://camhsdorset.org)

If you are an employer offer work experience or apprenticeships for young people – prioritising children in care and children with SEND.

Visit these useful webpages regarding support to work:

Dorset Skills for Young People [✎ cswgroup.co.uk/dorset-skills-for-young-people](https://cswgroup.co.uk/dorset-skills-for-young-people)

Information Advice and Guidance [✎ ansbury.co.uk](https://ansbury.co.uk)

National Careers Service [✎ nationalcareers.service.gov.uk](https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk)

Skills and Learning Dorset [✎ skillsandlearningace.com/apprenticeships](https://skillsandlearningace.com/apprenticeships)

Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership [✎ dorsetlep.co.uk/apprenticeships](https://dorsetlep.co.uk/apprenticeships)

Flying Start Dorset [✎ sunoutreach.org/resource-category/flying-start-dorset-wide](https://sunoutreach.org/resource-category/flying-start-dorset-wide)

# Good Care Provision

## Our aim

**Our aim is to keep our children close to home and to be the best corporate parents that we can be. Where we can, we want to support families to stay together, but where children and young people do need care, we want to make sure this is in family-based care where possible. We want to make sure that we have the right educational and housing options for our children in care and care leavers, and that we improve their health and wellbeing. In addition, we want to make sure that there are a range of short breaks available to support families with children with SEND to be able to continue to care for their children.**

## Why is this important?

Currently too many of our children and young people who need care are in placements that are outside of Dorset.

We know that being in a placement that is in a family environment is a good option for lots of children and young people. We know that we have more to do to develop the right provision for our children and young people locally so that they are able to stay close to their friends, family, communities and schools when they need help.

When a child or young person needs care, if they are closer to their home and community the people and services they already know will be able to continue to help them, this helps to ensure better outcomes for young people. ►



## Good Care Provision

We know that supporting families in different ways in the community can help them to continue caring for their children and prevent children coming into care.

External placements for children in care have significant financial implications as they are often high-cost placements and out of county.

### Where are we now?

We have seen our children in care figures gradually rise and we know we have more to do to support families and their networks. Children who come into care in an emergency or in an unplanned way face poorer outcomes and placement choice. Most children who come into care in this way in Dorset are already known to us, so these situations are avoidable.

We don't have enough residential provision in Dorset to meet the needs of our children, and we have insufficient numbers of in-house foster carers. We also know we do not have enough availability of specialist residential provision.

Currently 69% of children in care live with foster carers, we would like that to be much higher. Not as many of our young people stay with their foster families as they become care leavers as we would like.

Too many of our children in care are living more than 20 miles from home. Around 40% of children in care are living outside the county of Dorset, away from family and friends. ►



## Good Care Provision

Placing children outside of Dorset most importantly impacts on children and young people. We also know that this does not provide value for money as it is often costly and does not always achieve the best outcomes for children and young people. Out of County placements are resulting in substantial budget pressures that are not sustainable. There is more to do to support children in care with their emotional health and wellbeing with access to services, capacity and flexibility.

Our partnership is developing all the time, but we know there are many more opportunities to look at how we join up our resources for better outcomes for children and young people.

Foster carers are sometimes unable to continue to care for children and young people because they do not have the experience and skills to support the most vulnerable.

### What are the things we are going to do?

- Undertake better planning for children in need to ensure that they do not enter care in an unplanned way.
- Strengthen fostering services ensuring we meet sufficiency needs and provide a robust service for the most vulnerable teenagers and children that avoids breakdown and escalation.
- Establish a service using the learning from the No Wrong Door model to support young people in the care system to have more stable placements and to remain or return to foster care where it is appropriate to do so.
- Establish a new children's home as part of our overall residential strategy.
- Review our residential provision and identify a model of practice and delivery which better meets the needs of the most vulnerable young people.
- Review our young people's supported housing and ensure there is sufficient and good quality supported accommodation in the right location to support the most vulnerable young people in their transition to adulthood and independent living.
- Embed our joint protocol between children's services and housing to ensure that young people who are at risk of homelessness receive a robust response that is focused on the best outcomes for young people.
- Establish a new service that enables for children in care proceedings or subject to a child protection plan to have quality family time and contact.
- Develop the therapeutic offer in Dorset so that children and young people who have experienced trauma get the help they need, when they need it. ►

## Good Care Provision

- Develop market capacity and both commission and facilitate a comprehensive Short Break Offer which supports families and prevents escalation to care or inpatient status.
- Ensure that all people that work with and are involved in the lives of children in care and care leavers can play a proactive part in Corporate Parenting and doing everything they can to help children and young people to have great outcomes.
- Explore the use of Family Group Conferences as a restorative and preventive service so that they take place earlier in the family journey.

### Other ways you can help

Talk to us about becoming a Fostering Friendly employer - we'll be developing information to support this as part of this plan and will post on our Fostering website.

Consider becoming a foster carer with Dorset Council, follow this link for more information [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/fostering](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/fostering)

Offer supported lodgings for a young person. Follow this link to find out more [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/become-a-supported-lodgings-carer](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/become-a-supported-lodgings-carer)



## Best Education for All

### Our aim

**We want to be an education community that delivers the best outcomes for our children and young people, together.**

We want to make sure that our schools and educational settings are supported to deliver the best education possible and that our children achieve their full potential.

We want to improve the proportion of schools that are good or outstanding across the county; improve educational progress of children; reduce the number of exclusions from school, improve school attendance and support children that are educated at home.

### Why is this important?

We want our children and young people in Dorset to have the best education in good or outstanding schools.

We want our schools to be inclusive settings for all of our children and young people and that our children who are vulnerable and those that have special educational needs and disabilities have the right support at the right time and are enabled to have a stable and settled education.

We want our children and young people to be able to achieve their goals so that they are prepared for adult life and go on to successful futures. ►



## Best Education for All



Education settings provide the ideal environment to deliver support to children and young people outside of healthcare settings, as they are flexible places in which a diverse range of interventions can be offered and are safe spaces where children are more likely to engage in new initiatives. We know that by optimising opportunities to work together as a wider partnership we will support our children and young people to have better outcomes.

Our education community has never worked more closely together. Through a period of crisis, schools, education settings, community partners, health partners, children, young people and their families with the Council have generated innovative solutions to challenges faced during Covid-19.

As we move forward, the need to focus on the development and learning experience of our children and young people, as a whole system is more important than ever.

### Where are we now?

Pupil achievement in Dorset is at or around the national average in the early years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 4 and Key Stage 5. At Key Stage 2 Dorset is some way below National, the South West, and Dorset Statistical Neighbours.

At the earlier end of primary stage, Dorset pupils achieve at a rate similar to the national average; the percentage of reception pupils who achieve a 'Good Level of Development' is the same as the national figure, whilst the Year 1 Phonics results are 1% below the national. Children who receive Free School Meals (FSM) are broadly in line but SEND pupils below national averages. ►

## Best Education for All

At Key Stage 1 attainment has improved and is now broadly in line at the expected standard. SEND pupils (with EHC) attain above their South West counterparts, but FSM pupils achieve below their National and South West peers. In 2019 Dorset Key Stage 2 subject attainment at the expected standard moved out of the bottom 20% of LAs for the first time in some years, although the combined RWM (reading, writing, maths) is still in the bottom 20%. In most cases attainment is still below National and South West. This overall picture of low Key Stage 2 achievement is mirrored for most groups of vulnerable pupils. Whilst progress between KS1 and KS2 is slowly improving, Dorset remains in the bottom 20% for all subjects.

Progress in Primary schools, except for Mathematics, is now broadly in line with the national average, however this is not the case with Dorset Middle Schools who make up around a third of year 6 pupils.

Attainment at Key Stage 4 is broadly in line or above National. Pupils taking languages also tend to achieve below their national counterparts. Progress between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 is in line with the National, except languages.

Dorset has an academic emphasis on Post 16 provision, with over half of provision delivered in 6th forms. Attainment at Key Stage 5 is broadly in line with National and South West, although the participation of 16 and 17 year olds in learning has dropped.

75% of Schools in Dorset have Good or Outstanding Ofsted outcomes (as at May 2020). This compares to 83% in the South West and 86% nationally. Dorset ranks 147th out of 150 LAs for this measure.

We have high numbers of fixed period exclusions and permanent exclusions in Dorset. There are increasing numbers of children Electively Home Educated. Historically our persistent absence has been above national average. Overall Pupil Absence in Dorset is higher than national and other comparators - Secondary is higher, primary slightly lower. Exclusions have been rising since 2016, most notably in the primary sector.

Our Special Educational Needs (SEN) Support and EHCP (Educational, Health and Care Plan) cohort perform in line with national averages. We have approximately 2,800 children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities supported through an Educational, Health and Care Plan.

There is no doubt that COVID-19 will have impacted on the learning of our children and young people, and we do not yet know the full extent of this. We know that some of our children have thrived using online learning in a home environment. ►

## Best Education for All

### What are the things we are going to do?

- Every child is different and unique - we will take a person-centred approach that emphasises the importance of working with our education community to enable children, young people and their families to enhance their learning. Person-centred planning will become a cornerstone of our joint working approach and will enable us to work with children and their families to coproduce solutions that make a real difference.
- Every child and young person has a different life experience and we need to think flexibly to support them in different ways and intervene early when things are not working. We will ensure that children and young people can be supported within a school setting through a graduated response and in an inclusive way that creates safe, engaging and exciting learning environments where they thrive.
- We will strengthen our education system from early years through to Post-16 provision and strong transitions will be key to ensuring every child receives the best possible education. We will work together as an education community to ensure that every child receives a positive learning experience and makes progress.
- Where children require an Education, Health and Care Plan we will ensure this is of high quality, person centred and co-produced with children and their families.
- We will work as a whole system, our education community will strengthen our leadership through collaboration by sharing exemplary practice, business intelligence and creating opportunities to innovate, to ensure our education provision can achieve the best possible outcomes.
- We will strengthen our multi-agency working in our education community. Collaboration across our education community through a mutually supportive culture will be key to our success. The sharing of information and working together on strategies across our community has helped us target need to our most vulnerable children, in particular at a time of crisis, we want to build on this.
- We will identify the need for support for children and young people early – using a multi-agency approach which will allow the right support to be delivered, at the right time. We know that bringing together the important networks in a child or young person’s life with partner agencies and our schools working together can achieve outstanding outcomes.
- Through our multi-agency approach, together we will ensure that our education community continuously improves to remove the barriers and enable us to act responsively. This will mean better coordination of support and stronger communication focused on the child, young person and their family at the centre. ►

## Best Education for All

- Building on our partnership work so far, we will develop and implement an Education and Inclusion Strategy focused on improving educational outcomes for all children and young people including vulnerable children and improving our offer to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
- We will promote Free School Meals to families and encourage those who are entitled to take up the offer.
- We will continue to support the development and delivery of more vocational education courses including T levels to provide more options for young people. We will work with employers through our Post 16 Skill Plan to support the Post 16 curriculum.

### Other ways you can help

Follow this link to find lots of useful information about schools in Dorset

👉 [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/schools-and-learning](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/schools-and-learning)

Become a School Governor - school governors play a key role in leading, supporting and improving schools 👉 [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/school-governors](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/school-governors)

For more information on school governance visit the Inspiring Governance website

👉 [inspiringgovernance.org](https://inspiringgovernance.org)

Ask your local school how you can help and volunteer for example joining the Parent Teacher Association.

Promote the Dorset Council's Local Offer for children and young people from 0 to 25 years with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) that provides information, advice and support for children and their families. For more information visit 👉 [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/local-offer](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/local-offer)

## Best Place to Live

### Our aim

**Our aim is to make Dorset the best place to live and grow up. Our children and young people will live in thriving communities, where they can safely live, learn, and play and where all voices are valued and respected. Our young people want to be able to get to and participate in positive activities and for us to work together to actively protect the natural environment.**

### Why is this important?

Our children and young people provided us with feedback on the issues that are important to them and we are committed as a partnership to responding to these. They have told us that they aspire to live, learn and grow in places where people are kind, honest and accountable and where they feel safe (Dorset Youth Voice; Children in Care Action Plan; Young People's Manifesto).

Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child sets out the right of children to be listened to in decisions which affect them. Young people have told us they want to be involved and we know that they both benefit individually from being involved but make extremely valuable contributions. They want to have opportunities to contribute to communities and make a difference on issues that are important to them.

Our children and young people want to have opportunities to get involved in positive activities in their schools and in their communities. We know that this will enrich their lives, build friendships and develop interests and skills for the future. There is strong evidence that children and young people that grow up in places that meet their needs are better equipped to deal with any issues that come their way and to succeed in adult life. As one of our young people has said 'Happy children make better learners and save money in the long run'. ►



Oliver, age 7

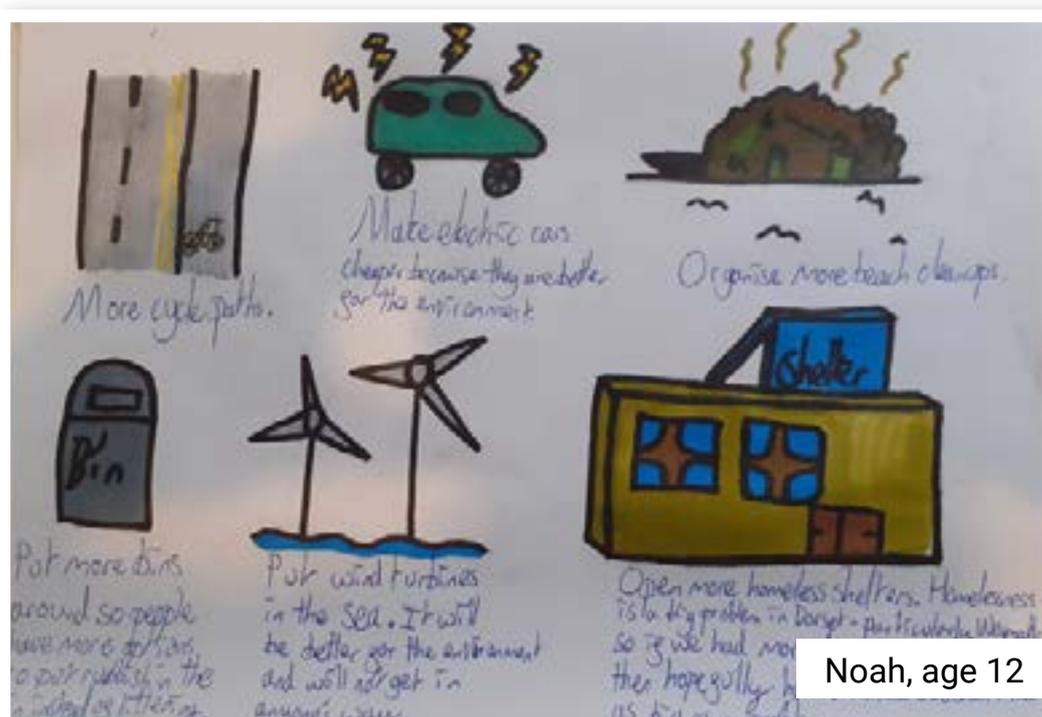
## Best Place to Live

They want access to play opportunities, outside spaces and outdoor learning. They want to be able to safely travel around independently to activities and work using accessible footpaths, cycle-paths and public transport.

Our young people have told us that it is really important that the place they live is inclusive in all senses, where all young people are treated fairly regardless of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, identity or disability. They want to have equality of opportunity and outcome.

Dorset, along with many other counties, has seen a rise in **contextual-safeguarding concerns**. We know that there are several active 'County Lines' into Dorset and, at a lower level, concern from communities about young people becoming involved in anti-social behaviour. Feedback from our Young Researchers programme indicates that feeling safe is a high priority for young people.

Our children and young people are passionate about protecting the natural environment of Dorset and addressing climate change. They want to see more initiatives to address climate change and for adults to do as much as they can to make a difference. There is clear scientific evidence to show that climate change is happening and is due to human activity. This includes global warming and greater risk of flooding, droughts and heat waves. ►



## Best Place to Live

### Where are we now?

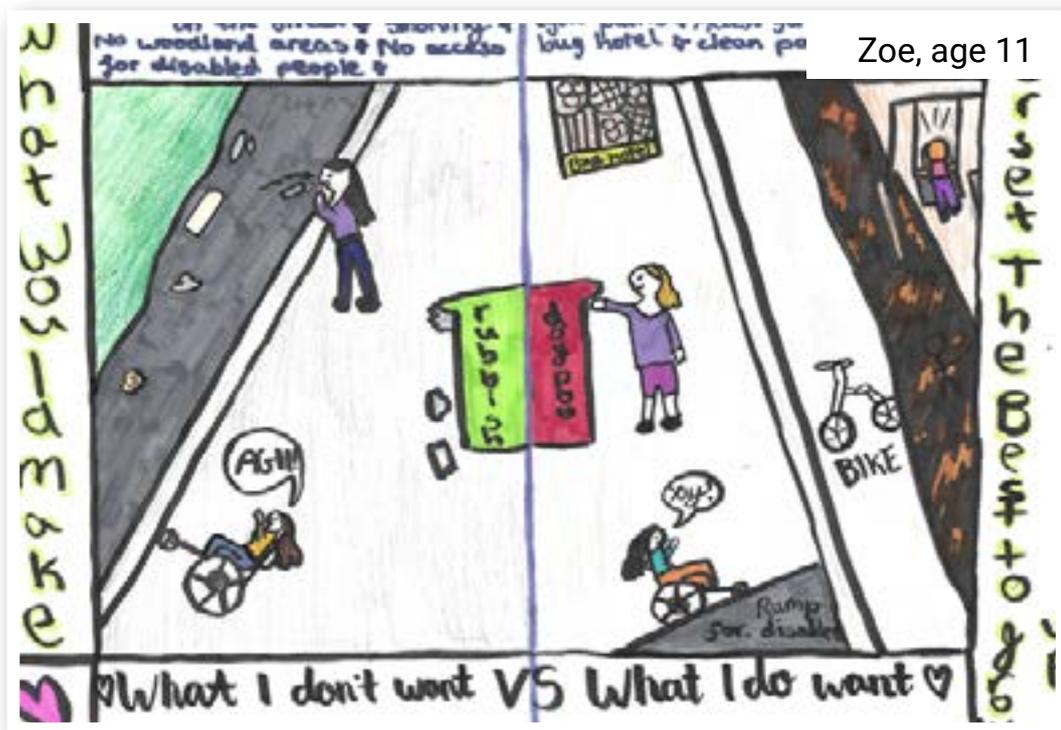
There are a range of opportunities for young people to express their voice such as a School Councils, Dorset Youth Council, Young Inspectors, Young Researchers, Children in Care Council and the Care Leavers Forum, however we know that we need to do more to ensure greater representation and true co-production across all our services. Partners within the Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People have made considerable commitment to co-production and in some cases have co-production policies in place, we want to build on this and do more to identify where input from young people has influenced decision making and make sure young people are aware of how getting involved in co-production is making a difference.

There are a wide range of positive activities available for our young people, but for some they are too difficult to get to or are not affordable. Our 'Summer in Dorset' programme, provided a range of fun activities for children and young people during the Summer of 2020 and we want to build on this participation. There are some opportunities for volunteering and getting involved in communities, but this is not as wide reaching as it could be and it can often be difficult for young people to know where to find out more.

Our young people do not always experience kindness or feel included in their communities. Their successes and contributions are not always celebrated, and, in some cases, they can be portrayed as problems rather than as valued members. Some of our young people have told us that they have experienced bullying, discrimination or racism and we know that some young people from particular places experience poorer outcomes or have fewer opportunities than their peers living in other parts of the county. ►



## Best Place to Live



Young people with physical disabilities have told us that they can miss out on accessing Dorset's countryside and beaches and can find it difficult to get around. Our young people in rural areas can sometimes feel isolated as public transport options are limited. We know that having an accessible Dorset is important to all our children and young people.

Although Dorset is a relatively safe area with low levels of crime, we know that not all young people feel safe in the area where they live, and we want to be able to improve this. We are also worried for small groups of young people that may be vulnerable to being exploited, sometimes because they have been excluded from school or because they have been targeted by organised criminal gangs through County Lines. We need to do more to promote community safety and staying safe online and help communities and professionals be aware of and respond to risks early. We need to work together to adopt a contextual safeguarding approach that helps support the development of safe communities.

Our young people are a huge asset to Dorset and are very committed to making Dorset a great place to live. ►

## Best Place to Live

### What are the things we are going to do?

- Create and publish more opportunities for children and young people to get involved in their communities and to develop the skills to create change on issues that are important to them.
- We will ensure that information on activities and opportunities for children and young people is easily accessible and promoted to young people, including the use of social media.
- Work together and with wider partners so that there are a range of different places to go and things to do for children and young people including play spaces; arts, music and sports activities; leisure and outdoor learning; physical activity; environmental and youth activities – making the most of schools and community spaces such as community gardens and allotments.
- Provide a range of opportunities for young people to influence our strategic decision making including a Youth Council, a Children in Care Council, a Care Leavers Forum and children and young people with learning disabilities groups. We will also involve young people in our recruitment and selection and commissioning arrangements.
- Work together to ensure that communities, services, and businesses are welcoming and inclusive places, where young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities are able to make friends and be included in community life.
- Promote the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and ways of creating schools and communities that respect these rights.
- Promote anti-discriminatory and anti-racist education and practices, listening carefully to and acting on the experiences of children and young people from Black and other minority communities in Dorset.
- Work together to create safe communities.
- Adopt a contextual safeguarding approach to keeping our children and young people safe, recognising the importance of the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online and how these can impact on their safety and wellbeing.
- Advocate for ensuring that children and young people's education, wellbeing and leisure needs are considered in any building and future housing developments.
- Work with our colleagues to improve accessibility in the countryside and local beaches; increase cycle lanes and improve public transport.
- Champion the use of green energy, reduction in waste, recycling and reduction in the use of plastic and work to reduce carbon emissions from all our organisations.



# Delivering Locally

## Our aim

**Our aim is to join up services in Dorset to become a whole system that strengthens families' ability to care and sustain their children through embedding the new model of children's services, identifying opportunities for service integration and building on community assets that already exist.**

## Why is this important?

There is significant evidence that place-based approaches lead to positive outcomes for children by enabling people to come together to address complex health, social and economic issues, which no one individual or agency can solve alone. We know that many organisations and professionals carry out similar activities in the same locations contributing to duplication and waste.

Many children are living in difficult family circumstances. Without early help difficulties can get worse and children can be more at risk of suffering serious harm. There is strong evidence that systemic approaches to prevention and early help that focus on supporting the whole family, can do more to meet needs and reduce abuse and neglect than reactive services and this is most effective when local partners share accountability and coordinate services together.

Communities have many areas of strength and building on these is important for improving outcomes for children and families. There is strong evidence that working with families and communities on issues that are important to them can improve engagement, ownership and outcomes. This type of approach enables relationships to grow and form, between children, families and communities and with service providers and professionals working in the area and help develop solutions that are most likely to be effective in particular areas.

Our children and young people have told us that the environment is really important to them, therefore we want to play our part in reducing carbon emissions by reducing travel and basing our staff in local areas, close to where children are. ☒



## Delivering Locally

### Where are we now?

The new integrated model for Children's Services delivery, Dorset Children Thrive, has started to become a reality. We have a range of colleagues such as social workers, early help and education professionals all working together in locality areas to provide more holistic care and support to our children and families. There is strong commitment to the delivery of care closer to home through the NHS Long Term Plan and our Primary Care Networks - groups of GP practices working together to focus on local care are developing well. Groups of local schools are working together and there is a real opportunity to build on this and integrate our work further.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, services have been given greater permission to share information to better identify and support families with needs. This has resulted in new ways of working, increased agility in the workforce and more timely and co-ordinated interventions. There is a real opportunity to build on this to support professionals to work together across traditional organisational boundaries to better meet needs. Children, young people and families have repeatedly told us that they want to receive services from professionals that work together in a coordinated way.

We are worried about the fact that we have too many children coming into care, in many cases this is because we are not sufficiently focused on helping families to remain together

and providing the type of high quality early help that addresses the need of the whole family, preventing problems from getting worse. We have collectively invested in early help and need to make sure that this is able to demonstrate impact and focused on where it is needed most. Many of our professionals have adopted a whole family approach and are confident in undertaking early help assessments, we will continue to build on this and improve the quality of our offer and make sure that it is easy for children, families and young people to know how to get help and help themselves.

We have some examples of good partnership working that builds on the strengths of communities but too often we do not engage with people living in communities and involve them in co-production or service design and delivery. ►



## Delivering Locally

### What are the things we are going to do?

- Make our services easy to access by being based locally in communities and explore virtual and digital service offers to complement face-to-face support.
- Work together in multi-professional teams to wrap the right support around children and families - taking a whole family approach.
- Seek opportunities to co-locate or integrate our services where this could improve child and family outcomes and value for money.
- Coordinate our work through six Local Alliance Groups that bring together local partners to understand local needs and develop local plans that make the most of collective resources and address issues that are important to local communities.
- Update our partnership Early Help Strategy and Plan.
- Focus on providing more early help by making sure that all practitioners have the tools they need to initiate and provide early help.
- Define and publish the early help offer of all partners and make sure that it is easy to access for children, young people, families and professionals.
- Develop mechanisms for understanding the amount of early help delivered by all partnership organisations and its impact.
- Embed whole family approaches, with a particular focus on addressing the needs of children living with parental substance use, mental ill-health or domestic abuse.
- Map the existing assets and resources (e.g. people, places, community groups, buildings, schools, organisations) in local communities that we can build on to meet the needs of children and families and work with communities to address gaps.
- Explore investment in capacity building for communities and staff to be able to work in different ways.

### Other ways you can help

Visit our Family Information Service webpages and sign up to our newsletter

🔗 [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/get-help-for-your-family/family-information-service.aspx](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/children-families/get-help-for-your-family/family-information-service.aspx)

Visit the webpages of Dorset Council's Local Offer for children and young people from 0 to 25 years with special educational needs and/or disability (SEND) providing information, advice and support for children and their families

🔗 [dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/local-offer](https://dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/local-offer)

# How will we know we've made a difference?

We will use a range of indicators and measures to monitor the impact of our plan on improving outcomes for children and young people. These indicators will form the basis of the Performance Framework setting out baselines and targets, that we will develop to support this plan and our progress reporting.

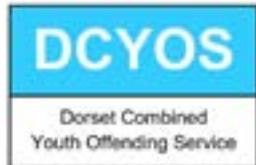
## Some of the key indicators:

- Number of children in care
- Number of children and young people with child protection plans
- Percentage of children in care placed more than 20 miles from Dorset
- Percentage of children in care in placements out of County
- Percentage of care leavers in Staying Put arrangements
- Smoking at time of delivery rates
- Take-up of 2-year old funded early education (childcare) by eligible families
- Number of children accessing their entitlement to early education at age two, three and four
- Ages and stages questionnaire results (ASQ)
- School Readiness: Percentage of children achieving a Good Level of Development at EYFS
- National Child Measurement Programme - reception and year 6
- Rate of conceptions per 1,000 females aged 15-17
- Percentage of 10-17 year olds offending
- Numbers of children entering the criminal justice system (including vulnerable groups)
- Rates of under 18s alcohol related hospital admissions
- Children and young people's views and satisfaction on emotional health and wellbeing and mental health services
- Percentage of Dorset schools that are good or better
- Percentage with good achievement at the end of primary school
- Percentage gaining five good GCSEs including English and maths
- Achievement gaps at 5, 11, 16 and 19
- Level 3 qualifications at 19
- Number of exclusions from school (permanent and fixed)
- Percentage Total Absence by phase of education
- Percentage of young people NEET/not known
- Destinations of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities and care leavers
- Proportion of 16-17 year olds participating in education, employment or training
- Number of children in Independent Specialist Placements (ISPs)
- Children and young people's views on growing up in Dorset

# Partners



DORSET & WILTSHIRE  
FIRE AND RESCUE



## Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA)

Before completing this EqIA please ensure you have read the guidance on the intranet.

### Initial Information

Name:	Claire Shiels
Job Title:	Corporate Director Commissioning Quality and Partnerships
Email address:	Claire.shiels@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk
Members of the assessment team:	
Date assessment started:	1 <sup>st</sup> June 2020
Date of completion:	
Version Number:	0.3

### Part 1: Background Information

Is this (please tick or expand the box to explain)

Existing	
Changing, updating or revision	
New or proposed	✓
Other	

Is this (please tick or expand the box to explain)

Internal (employees only)	
External (residents, communities, partners)	✓
Both of the above	

What is the name of your policy, strategy, project or service being assessed?

**Children, Young People and Families Plan 2020-23**

What is the policy, strategy, project or service designed to do? (include the aims, purpose and intended outcomes of the policy)

The Children, Young People and Families' Plan 2020-23 is the overarching strategic plan for the Dorset Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People and sets out how the partnership will work together to improve outcomes for children and young people.

The Children, Young People and Families Plan 2020-23 delivers the partnership's vision of: *'We want Dorset to be the best place to be a child; where communities thrive, and families are supported to be the best they can be'*.

The plan focuses on improving outcomes for all children and young people through six priorities:

1. Best Start in Life
2. Young and Thriving
3. Good Care Provision
4. Best Education for All

5. Best Place to Live
6. Delivering Locally

- **Best start in life:** focused on: re-imagining how services are delivered to families who are expecting and have pre-school children; ensuring the best possible start in life; and improving school readiness.
- **Young and thriving:** focused on: setting up our young people for success in adulthood; ensuring young people have a strong voice; good emotional wellbeing and mental health; preparation for adulthood; and preventing family breakdown.
- **Good care provision:** focused: on keeping our children close to home; ensuring partners are the best corporate parents; making sure there is sufficient care provision locally (foster care, residential and short breaks); supporting young people at risk of homelessness; and suitable and safe housing for care leavers.
- **Best education for all:** focused on: supporting schools and educational settings to deliver the best education possible; ensuring all children and young people can achieve their full potential; meeting the needs of children with SEND and building inclusive school cultures.
- **Best place to live:** focused on: ensuring our children and young people have accessible things to do and places to go; can get involved and influence decision making; that they experience safe, welcoming and inclusive places; contextual safeguarding; and that we work as a partnership to provide a cleaner, greener environment for our children and young people to grow up in.
- **Delivering locally:** focused on: joining up services in Dorset to become a whole system that strengthens the ability of families to care and sustain their children; embedding the new model of children's services; identifying opportunities for service integration; and building on community assets.

There are 7 outcomes or conditions of wellbeing that the partnership wants for all children and young people in Dorset:

- All children have the best start in life
- All children and young people are safe from harm and have the help they need
- All children and young people have a settled and happy education which enables them to achieve their full potential
- All children and young people have healthy and active lives
- All children and young people are prepared for adult life
- All children and young people feel they can have their say and are listened to
- All children and young people enjoy growing up in Dorset.

We anticipate that this policy will have a positive impact for all children and young people in the Dorset area. It is a strategic plan and delivery plans will be developed to define how the priorities in this plan are delivered.

What is the background or context to the proposal?

Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the requirement for the local authority to promote that partners co-operate to improve wellbeing of children and young people. Best practice is for Local Authorities and their partners to produce and deliver a Children and Young People's Plan bringing together in one strategic overarching plan the partnership's shared commitment to work together to improve outcomes for children and young people.

In Dorset the Council has maintained its commitment to improve outcomes for children and young people in producing and publishing a Children and Young People's Plan as part of its constitution and formal Policy Framework.

The current partnership Strategy for Children and Young People in Dorset comes to an end in 2020. During 2019 Dorset Council, with partners of the multi-agency Strategic Alliance for Children and Young People, agreed to undertake the work to develop a new 3-year Children, Young People and Families Plan.

## Part 2: Gathering information

What sources of data, information, evidence and research was used to inform you about the people your proposal will have an impact on?

Information regarding who is affected by this plan is contained within the 'Our County' and the 'Why is this important?' sections within the Children, Young People and Families Plan itself.

- Partnership Planning Session - March 2020: To consider performance gaps in outcomes for children and young people in Dorset, where outcomes for children are not yet where we want them to be.
- Think Tanks – June 2020 (attended by over 100 professionals from the partnership): On each of the emerging Children, Young People and Families Plan priorities. At these sessions, colleagues from across the partnership, including representative young people and parents and carers, came together in virtual workshops to talk about each priority.
- Diagonal Slice employee engagement – July 2020: Interactive sessions that provided the opportunity for staff to input and shape the plan.
- I Live in Dorset campaign – July 2020: This social media campaign encouraged children and young people from Dorset to tell us about what would make Dorset the best place to grow up.
- Each priority within the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2020-23 has a summary of: Why is this important? and Where are we now? – these sections contain the drivers (policy, local and national information) for each of the priorities.

What did this data, information, evidence and research tell you?

- As above - each priority within the Children, Young People and Families Plan 2020-23 has a summary of: Why is this important? and Where are we now? – these sections contain the drivers (policy, local and national information) for each of the priorities.
- Feedback from children and young people on what would make Dorset the best place to grow up (I Live in Dorset campaign) is summarised below:
  - Getting involved, having a say and making a difference – social action
  - Having things to do, activities to go to and being able to play
  - Being and feeling safe
  - A kind and happy Dorset

- Being healthy - and having access to things that support good physical and emotional health
- Caring for each other and looking after people in the community when they need help
- Looking after the environment
- Places where everyone can get to - accessibility
- Being able to learn skills for the future – technology
- Being proud of our community and celebrating Dorset role models.

The feedback from children and young people has influenced the development of the plan and resulted in an additional priority, Best Place to Live.

Is further information needed to help inform this proposal?

No

### Part 3: Engagement and Consultation

What engagement or consultation has taken place as part of this proposal?

- Strategic Alliance workshops and meetings (multi-agency partnership including senior people from police, health, schools and early years settings, voluntary and community sector)
- Think Tank sessions
- Social Media campaigns for Children and Young People
- Promoting the development of the Children, Young People and Families Plan through the Family Information Service
- Inviting feedback and contributions from staff and partners throughout the development of the plan.

How will the outcome of consultation be fed back to those who you consulted with?

A summary of key themes identified by children and young people is contained within the plan itself. A summary version of the plan for children and young people is to be prepared and published and this will explain how feedback has influenced the plan.

A thank you to those who provided feedback is being planned for in communications that will support the launch of the plan (following endorsement and adoption of the plan by Full Council).

### Please refer to the Equality Impact Assessment Guidance before completing this section.

Not every proposal will require an EqIA. If you decide that your proposal does **not** require an EqIA, it is important to show that you have given this adequate consideration. The data and research that you have used to inform you about the people who will be affected by the policy should enable you to make this decision and whether you need to continue with the EqIA.

**Please tick the appropriate option:**

An EqIA is required (please continue to Part 4 of this document)	✓
An EqIA is <b>not</b> required (please complete the box below)	

This policy, strategy, project or service does not require an EqIA because:

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Name: Claire Shiels  
 Job Title: Corporate Director, Commissioning, Quality and Partnerships  
 Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020

Please send a copy of this document to [Diversity & Inclusion Officer](#)

**Next Steps:**

- The EqIA will be reviewed by Business Intelligence & Communications and if in agreement, your EqIA will be signed off.
- If not, we will get in touch to chat further about the EqIA, to get a better understanding.

**Part 4: Analysing the impact**

Who does the service, strategy, policy, project or change impact?

- If your strategy, policy, project or service contains options you may wish to consider providing an assessment for each option. Please cut and paste the template accordingly.

For each protected characteristic please choose from the following options:

- Please note in some cases more than one impact may apply – in this case please state all relevant options and explain in the ‘Please provide details’ box.

Positive Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the proposal eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and/or fosters good relations with protected groups.</li> </ul>
Negative Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protected characteristic group(s) could be disadvantaged or discriminated against</li> </ul>
Neutral Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No change/ no assessed significant impact of protected characteristic groups</li> </ul>
Unclear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not enough data/evidence has been collected to make an informed decision.</li> </ul>

Age:	<i>Positive impact</i>
What age bracket does this affect?	Children and young people up to the age of 25 years and their families.
Please provide details:	The plan seeks to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families through 6 key priority areas: 1. Best Start in Life

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Young and Thriving</li> <li>3. Good Care Provision</li> <li>4. Best Education for All</li> <li>5. Best Place to Live</li> <li>6. Delivering Locally</li> </ol>
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Disability: (including physical, mental, sensory and progressive conditions)	<i>Positive impact</i>
Does this affect a specific disability group?	Children and young people with special educational needs & disabilities (SEND).
Please provide details:	<p>The plan seeks to better support the early identification and support of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to better meet their needs early.</p> <p>It will help to better prepare our young people with SEND for a settled adulthood including developing the skills required for employment and independent living and focus on improving transitions between services.</p> <p>Building on our partnership work so far, the plan will develop and implement an Education and Inclusion Strategy focused on improving educational outcomes for all children and young people including vulnerable children and improving our offer to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.</p> <p>The plan promotes working together to ensure that communities, services, and businesses are welcoming and inclusive places, where young people with Special Educational Needs Disabilities are able to make friends and be included in community life.</p> <p>Furthermore, the plan seeks to review our residential provision and identify a model of practice and delivery which better meets the needs of the most vulnerable young people.</p> <p>Additionally, the plan will make sure that there are a range of short breaks available to support families with children with SEND to be able to continue to care for their children.</p>

	<p>Through the Best place to live priority the plan will see partners work with colleagues to improve accessibility in the countryside and local beaches.</p> <p>Through the Young and Thriving priority we intend to make sure young people have access to a wide range of support to promote their emotional well-being and address their mental health concerns. We will implement the NHS Long Term plan ambitions for increased access to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services and implement the evidence based Thrive Framework for a system wide approach to emotional wellbeing and mental health developed by the Anna Freud Centre and the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust.</p> <p>We intend to evaluate the Targeted Mental Health Service in schools with a view to expanding it to other areas of Dorset and improve transitions between children's and adult mental health services.</p> <p>We expect that young people having access to the support they need, when they need it and experiencing improved transitions between children's and adults' services will result in positive impacts.</p>
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Gender Reassignment & Gender Identity:	<i>Unclear impact</i>
Please provide details:	At this stage we are unclear of the specific impacts however we expect work to strengthen young people's access to emotional health and wellbeing services will be a positive step.

Pregnancy and maternity:	<i>Positive impact</i>
Please provide details:	<p>The plan aims to provide supportive environments before conception, during pregnancy and following birth.</p> <p>Significant opportunities have been identified for the partnership to develop an asset-based approach to community resilience which wraps around pregnancy and parenthood and to harness and capitalise on the rapid improvement in joint working within community settings. For instance, the plan includes working together to strengthen the local maternity system developments with a community wrap around offer, to support pre-/post birth (preparing for parenthood) and to improve pathways of support between maternity services, health visiting and local authority services.</p>

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Race and Ethnicity:	<i>Positive impact</i>
Please provide details:	<p>The plan promotes anti-discriminatory and anti-racist education and practices by seeking to listen carefully to and acting on the experiences of children and young people from Black and other minority communities in Dorset.</p> <p>As referred to at the beginning of this EqIA, how this action is progressed will be defined by the Best Place to Live delivery plan.</p>

Religion or belief:	<i>Neutral impact</i>
Please provide details:	No specific impacts identified

Sexual orientation:	<i>Unclear impact</i>
Please provide details:	<p>At this stage the impacts are unclear, however there are a range of actions within the plan that we expect to have a positive impact as they are developed in more detail. For example:</p> <p>We will ensure young people receiving our services will be involved in decisions about how we help them, where professionals listen to them and understand their needs.</p> <p>We will support the provision of a wide range of positive activities for young people, including access to youth work such as open access youth clubs, detached youth work, one-to-one and virtual/ online youth work and targeted issue based group work programmes to support vulnerable young people whose needs might otherwise escalate and we will work with partners to deliver these programmes locally, in line with the other priorities within the plan.</p> <p>We will make sure young people have access to a wide range of support to promote their emotional well-being and address their mental health concerns.</p> <p>We intend to create and publish more opportunities for children and young people to get involved in their communities and to develop the skills to create change on issues that are important to them.</p> <p>We will also be promoting that through the plan partners work together to ensure that communities, services, and businesses are welcoming and inclusive places.</p>

Sex (consider both men and women):	<i>Positive impact</i>
Please provide details:	<p>Through the Best Start in Life priority we intend to provide intensive support for women who have had multiple children removed from their care.</p> <p>Work to support expectant parents as they prepare for parenthood will also take place.</p> <p>Family Hubs, early help and edge of care services will provide support to parents and carers.</p> <p>Through our Delivering Locally priority we intend embed whole family approaches, with a particular focus on addressing the needs of children living with parental substance use, mental ill-health or domestic abuse.</p>

Marriage or civil partnership:	<i>Neutral impact</i>
Please provide details:	No specific impacts identified

Carers:	<i>Positive impact</i>
Please provide details:	<p>The plan recognises the importance of carers and when developing the workforce, we will include parents and carers too – they have told us this is important.</p> <p>The plan includes actions to strengthen fostering services which will include ensuring a robust service for the most vulnerable teenagers and children that avoids breakdown and escalation.</p> <p>Foster carers will be considered as the new service is developed to support young people in the care system to have more stable placements and to remain or return to foster care where it is appropriate to do so.</p> <p>A key action within the plan is to develop market capacity and both commission and facilitate a comprehensive Short Break Offer which supports families and prevents escalation to care or inpatient status.</p>

Rural isolation:	<i>Positive impact</i>
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Please provide details:	<p>The plan seeks to work with colleagues to improve accessibility in the countryside and local beaches; increase cycle lanes and improve public transport.</p> <p>The plan also aims to coordinate work through six Local Alliance Groups that bring together local partners to understand local needs and develop local plans that make the most of collective resources and address issues that important to local communities.</p>
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Single parent families:	<i>Neutral impact</i>
Please provide details:	No specific impacts identified

Social & economic deprivation:	<i>Positive impact</i>
Please provide details:	<p>The plan aims for partners to address low social mobility and work together to develop co-ordinated wrap around support, including community assets and specific social, emotional and practical interventions. For instance, in Dorset, there are some stark differences between where children grow up and the chances they have of doing well in adult life, with Weymouth and Portland ranking one of the lowest areas for social mobility in the whole country.</p> <p>There is significant evidence that place-based approaches lead to positive outcomes for children by enabling people to come together to address complex health, social and economic issues, which no one individual or agency can solve alone.</p>

Armed Forces communities	<i>Neutral impact</i>
Please provide details:	No specific impacts identified

## Part 5: Action Plan

Provide actions for **positive**, **negative** and **unclear** impacts.

If you have identified any **negative** or **unclear** impacts, describe what adjustments will be made to remove or reduce the impacts, or if this is not possible provide justification for continuing with the proposal.

Issue	Action to be taken	Person(s) responsible	Date to be completed by
	All positive impacts are related to actions within the Children, Young People and Families Plan.	<p>Progress against the plan will be monitored by the partnership's Strategic Alliance Board at quarterly meetings.</p> <p>An Annual Report will be prepared and published to report on progress made every year throughout the duration of the plan.</p>	Actions within the Children, Young People and Families Plan will be delivered by 2023.
	Where impacts are unclear at this stage, as further work is undertaken to develop the detailed delivery plans for each priority within the Children, Young People and Families Plan the impacts will be reviewed.	Progress against the plan will be monitored by the partnership's Strategic Alliance Board at quarterly meetings.	Actions within the Children, Young People and Families Plan will be delivered by 2023.

## EqIA Sign Off

Officer completing this EqIA:	Claire Shiels	Date:	23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020
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Equality Lead:		Date:	
Equality & Diversity Action Group Chair:		Date:	

**Next Steps:**

- Please send this draft EqIA to: [Diversity & inclusion Officer](#)
- The report author will be invited to an Equality & Diversity Action Group (these are held monthly - dates are available on the intranet)
- The Equality & Diversity Action Group will review the EqIA and you may be asked to make some alterations
- EqIAs are signed off and published
- The report author is responsible for ensuring any actions in the action plan are implemented.

DRAFT