

Title of paper:	Family Pledge	
Report to:	Children's Partnership Board	
Date:	13 th October 2010	
Director(s)/Corporate Director(s):	Candida Brudenell	Wards affected: All
Contact Officer(s) and contact details:	Jon Rea Jon.rea@nottinghamcity.gov.uk	
Other officers who have provided input:		
Relevant Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) objectives(s):		
Safeguarding and Early Intervention - Children, young people and families will benefit from early and effective support and protection to empower them to overcome difficulties		
Strong families - More families will be strong and healthy, providing an enjoyable and safe place for children to grow up	x	
Healthy and positive children and young people - Children and young people will be healthier, fitter, more emotionally resilient and better able to make mature decisions	x	
Achievement - All children and young people will leave school with the best skills and qualifications they can achieve and will be ready for work or further learning		
Economic well-being - Child poverty will be significantly reduced		
Summary of issues (including benefits to customers/service users):		
<p>The Family Pledge programme provides an integrated approach to engagement, participation and marketing work for all Nottingham Children's Partnership partners through a combination of communication and marketing tools, monitoring and evaluation systems and programme management processes, and support for structured marketing campaigns and structured service user governance groups and forums.</p> <p>The programme is underpinned by a Participation Strategy that provides the principles of participation and the Hear by Right standards for active involvement of children and young people within an organisational setting.</p> <p>Successful delivery of the programme will enable the Partnership Board to deliver on its commitment to participation as a cross-cutting principle of the new Children and Young People's Plan and meet cross-partnership assessment requirements.</p>		

The changes proposed under the Family Pledge programme are in line with Children's Trust statutory guidance on Inter-Agency Governance arrangements, and representation by and consultation with the local community.

Recommendations:

1	The Partnership Board formally adopts the Family Pledge as the agreed programme approach for participation work across the partnership.
2	All members of the Nottingham Children's Partnership adopt the Participation Strategy as the guiding strategic document for the partnership.
3	Members of the Nottingham Children's Partnership support the implementation of the Family Pledge programme, including through: i) support for and representation on the Participation Champions Network ii) the development of service-specific and organisation-specific plans for engagement with children and young people and their parents and carers. iii) committing their service or organisation to proactively use information gathered from service users to inform the commissioning process and shape service planning and delivery, and evidence the changes that have taken place as a result of service user engagement and participation iv) all partners aspiring to achieve an Outstanding grade for user engagement (as defined by Ofsted grade descriptors (Appendix one))
4	The Participation Strategy be refreshed to include the Family Pledge programme and other structural changes
5	The Board agrees the membership on the Children's Partnership Board of three young people representatives and that the Terms of Reference of the Board be amended accordingly, and the Board also amend its Terms of Reference to include a commitment to engagement and participation
6	The Board considers the creation of seats on the Children's Partnership Board for representatives from the Parents and Carers citywide forum.

1. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

(Explanatory detail and background to the recommendations)

1. The Children's Partnership Board is developing a Family Pledge to ensure children, young people, and their parents, carers and guardians participate in decision making and can demonstrate their ownership of the new Children and Young People's Plan.
2. Previous service user ownership mechanisms for the Children and Young People's Plan had focused on the setting up and management of formal Shadow Boards for different

service user groups, including Children and Young People, and Parents and Carers. Since the launch of the new Trust arrangements however some of these models had experienced mixed response and take-up from users. Furthermore the rather prescriptive, overly bureaucratic nature of the structure had been at odds with the more open and creative participation approaches already in use elsewhere in the Partnership. The concept of the Family Pledge allows for a wide variety of governance activities and interactions to enable the broadest possible engagement and participation and empower citizens to play an active role in decision-making.

3. A cornerstone of the Family Pledge is the development and publication of both a Children's Charter and a Parents' and Carers' charter to set out what service users and their families both need and can expect from the Partnership. The Partnership is committed to giving every child, young person, parent, guardian and carer in the city the opportunity to shape the charter through a tiered-programme of citywide consultation, focused engagement, and detailed involvement. The agreed charters will be adopted by the Partnership Board and be supported by quality assurance work that links service provider outcomes to the various charter commitments, and requires providers to make provision for service user participation, as well as marketing and communication support to ensure the widest possible dissemination.
4. The quality assurance aspects of the programme include:
 - Development of an integrated process for monitoring and evaluation of participation work to for cross-partnership assessment and for partnership-wide information-sharing.
 - Development of engagement and participation workforce development offer through Workforce Strategy including toolkits for self-directed learning.
 - Development of the Participation Champions Network officers group to ensure representation in Family Pledge programme development by all partnership members and contribute to the roll-out and embedding the programme through information dissemination, joint programme planning and toolkit development.
 - Work to support the implementation and delivery of service user governance groups, including oversight of citywide, locality and neighbourhood-based participation group activities (Children's Council, Youth Council, Children in Care Council, Parent and Carer forums) and Councillor involvement.
 - Representation of partnership participation work at regional and national level, including East Midlands Regional Participation Leads group.
5. The Board has previously invited some members of the Youth Council to sit on the board. It is proposed that in accordance to the guidance provided in with Section 3.11 of the Children's Trust Statutory Guidance this arrangement is formalised by a change to the Terms of Reference to allow the creation of three seats for young members from the Youth Council

to represent children and young people; and an additional three seats for representatives of the Parents and Carers citywide forum (one from each locality) to represent parent and carer interests. Whilst not a *statutory* requirement of trust arrangements, the guidance deems such representatives to be essential to the effective governance of a Children's Trust.

2. RISKS

(Risk to the CYPP, risk involved in undertaking the activity and risk involved in not undertaking the activity)

1. Potential reputational damage amongst user groups if they perceive themselves to be left out of decision-making structures and processes. Mitigation: the Family Pledge programme's tiered engagement structure will provide participation opportunities at all levels of decision-making, from neighbourhood-level through to Board-level.
2. Previous Joint Area Review/OFSTED assessment has identified weakness within the partnership of engaging vulnerable and hard to reach children, young people and families. Mitigation: Family Pledge programme will enable identification of baseline of work currently undertaken across the entire partnership and provide an integrated approach to improving participation opportunities and measuring level of impact on service planning.
3. The Participation Strategy is over three years old and does not reflect the subsequent changes to services since, with potential negative consequence for assessment and inspection purposes. Mitigation: Refresh of Participation Strategy as part of Family Pledge programme will bring the strategy up to date.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

1. Resource support for launch of Children's Charter and Parent's and Carers' Charter, December 2010.
2. Resource support for development of Family Pledge marketing and communication materials, workforce development toolkits and online.
3. Administrative requirement for collation of monitoring and evaluation information.
4. Partners will need to ensure that their commitment to support the Family Pledge programme is reflected in the roles and responsibilities of both their managers and operational staff and that sufficient time is allowed to enable do work that contributes to the programme.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None identified.

5. CLIENT GROUP

All children and young people, parents and carers who access services provided for under the Children and Young People's Plan or who would benefit from such services.

6. IMPACT ON EQUALITIES ISSUES

1. The Family Pledge programme is aimed at all families in the city. As the officer group for the programme the Participation Champions Network is composed of members from across the partnership and includes Champions covering all the priority groups in the CYPP.
2. In addition to the Participation Strategy the programme is informed by the Inclusion Strategy and the Parenting Strategy.
3. The Children's Charter engagement work currently includes work with a wide-range of representative groups including Children in Care Council, disability and learning disabled youth participation groups, LGBT youth groups, asylum seeker and refugee groups, and other children identified as being disadvantaged, at risk or in need.

7. OUTCOMES AND PRIORITIES AFFECTED

(Briefly state which of the five CYPP objectives and seventeen key priorities will be affected)

Strong Families - Improving corporate parenting

Healthy and positive children and young people - Strengthening positive behaviour

8. CONTACT DETAILS

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Grade Descriptors

Making a positive contribution

<p>Outstanding (4)</p> <p>Services are having a very strong impact on improving outcomes for children and young people. In particular, there is a clear and demonstrable narrowing of the gap between the outcomes for most children and young people and those who are the most vulnerable.</p>	<p>In addition to meeting the requirements for a grade 3:</p> <p>Children and young people and their parents/carers report that services closely meet their needs and have resulted in real change and in high levels of satisfaction. Children and young people and their parents/carers, including looked after children and those with learning disabilities and/or difficulties are routinely involved in quality assurance and evaluation and their contributions are leading to the continual improvement and design of services.</p> <p>Services are having a demonstrable impact on children and young people's ability to work through, cope with and manage difficulties before they become problems.</p> <p>Mechanisms for consultation with children and young people, including looked after children and those with learning disabilities and/or difficulties, are embedded in practice, ensure that their voice is heard and include formalised links at strategic level. Agencies have agreed key principles for engagement, and standards against which the success of active involvement can be judged and training and participation accredited. Children and young people, including looked after children and those with learning disabilities and/or difficulties, are involved fully in issues that affect them and that their views are built into decision-making processes and demonstrably inform the shaping of services.</p> <p>Strategies include capacity building to ensure that there is a regular number of children and young people, including looked after children and those with learning disabilities and/or difficulties, who are willing and able to take on lead roles. The responses of most children and young people indicate it is easy to involve them in decision-making and that they are able to make a notable difference in key areas.</p> <p>Accreditation programmes are widely used to recognise children and young people's achievements and these are celebrated and promoted across communities. There is effective in-depth family work by appropriate agencies, based on clear assessment of need, service agreements and monitoring of progress, leading to improved outcomes.</p> <p>Children and young people report there are places to go, things they like to do, and that they are highly satisfied with services. There has been a sustained reduction in youth offending and re-offending rates, and levels of offending are lower than in similar areas/authorities. There are much higher numbers of supervised juveniles in full time education, training and employment than in similar areas/authorities. There is very little anti social behaviour and/or a sustained reduction in levels of antisocial behaviour.</p> <p>Mechanisms for consulting looked after children are embedded in practice and include formalised links at a strategic level. The views and opinions of looked after children are increasingly informing strategic planning and the range of provision available. These children are routinely involved in the QA/evaluation process and their contributions are leading to the continual improvement of services. Looked after children demonstrate effective communication skills and have the confidence to speak out on issues that matter to them. Care leavers report positive in-care experiences and high satisfaction with their continued support. Looked after children, and particularly care leavers, have high aspirations and are achieving well in further and higher education.</p> <p>Consultation opportunities for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are embedded in, and integrated with, wider systems for consulting children and young people, and this ensures their voice is heard.</p> <p>Outcomes are considerably better than in similar areas/authorities.</p>
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<p>Good (3)</p> <p>Services are having a strong impact on improving outcomes for children and young people. In particular, there is a clear narrowing of the gap between the outcomes of most children and young people and those who are the most vulnerable.</p>	<p>In addition to meeting the requirements for a grade 2:</p> <p>There is close and successful targeting of mentoring and other support from a wide range of multi-agency services for individuals and groups of children who are not developing socially and emotionally.</p> <p>Highly valued, sharply focused parenting programmes are available for those that need them. Children and young people, including looked after children and those with learning disabilities and/or difficulties, are involved in the design, delivery and evaluation of training and support programmes.</p> <p>Effective inter-agency work is informed by a shared understanding of community safety issues. Anti-bullying strategies are well established, effective and linked clearly to the wider agenda of keeping children and young people safe and healthy. Ongoing support is offered to children and young people considered vulnerable to anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>There are sharply focused and successful parenting programmes for those that need them. Information, advice and counselling provision is signposted well and targeted effectively. Young carers can access specialist support and study support; they can socialise, participate in out-of-school activities and have time for themselves.</p> <p>All groups of children and young people are encouraged strongly to participate in decisions that affect them across health, education and social care. All children and young people know and understand, and have experience of, the decision-making processes that affect them, and know how to make representation. Consultation is routine, frequent and inclusive, and engages traditionally hard-to-reach, vulnerable and other groups of children and young people. Consultation builds on successful models of active involvement of children and young people, including local and national initiatives, for example, school councils, the British Youth Council, the youth parliament, the National Council for Voluntary Youth Service and the National Looked After Children Youth Forum. The views and opinions of children and young people have helped to shape and make a discernible difference to services.</p> <p>There is a comprehensive range of activities that all children and young people, including looked after children and those with learning disabilities and/or difficulties, can access. Services are concentrated in trouble spots at times when they will be most effective. Children and young people respond well to services, and there is increased take-up, for example, of places at youth clubs. Accreditation programmes are used to celebrate children and young people's involvement/achievement.</p> <p>Attendance and school exclusion figures are better than in similar areas/authorities. Services target and provide effective support for the hard to reach, vulnerable and most difficult children and young people and their families. More children and young people are in education, employment and training than in similar areas/authorities. Incentives are effective in promoting sport and leisure.</p> <p>Youth offending trends indicate offending rates are reducing over time. Compared with similar areas/authorities, an above average proportion of young people who offend are in full time education and attend regularly. There is very effective intervention when young people first offend, efficient procedures from arrest to sentence, and highly focused support to help offenders, and their parents, face up to offending behaviour and take responsibility for it. The use of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and similar measures is well coordinated and effective.</p>
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	<p>Looked after children and young people and those with learning disabilities and/or difficulties report that their views and opinions are listened to by adults and acted on. They feel fully involved in making decisions about their own life and they, and their parents/carers, value independent advocacy services and the representation and complaints procedure. They believe that foster and residential placements take account of their diverse needs and that transition support is effective and valued. Looked after children and those with learning disabilities and/or difficulties are consulted on procedures and provision and their views taken into account. Effective mechanisms are in place to hear their individual and collective views and opinions and these are integrated within wider systems for children and young people's consultation. These children and young people's successes are celebrated and strengthen self-esteem.</p> <p>Children and young people with learning disabilities and/or difficulties report they have clear plans for their future and feel well prepared and supported. Their parents/carers have access to and highly value impartial information, advice and guidance on ETE opportunities. These children, and their parents/carers, report that extended day and respite care is sufficiently comprehensive to meet their needs.</p> <p>Outcomes are better than in similar areas/authorities.</p>
<p>Adequate (2)</p> <p>Services are having a positive impact on improving outcomes for children and young people. A number of important initiatives are beginning to show that they are narrowing the gap between the outcomes of most children and young people and those who are the most vulnerable. Some initiatives are more recent and have not yet had a discernible impact on outcomes.</p>	<p>There is a wide range of opportunities for children and young people within schools and the wider community to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - learn - share - be tolerant - listen to others - communicate thoughts and feelings positively - develop responsibility - experience team working - develop secure relationships with adults - care for others and the environment around them. <p>Mentoring and other support, including that given by children and young people themselves, is provided for those having difficulty in developing and maintaining positive relationships with others. Parenting programmes are available, when needed, to help promote positive relationships between parents/carers and their children.</p> <p>The assessment and review of vulnerable and other groups of children and young people is supported by clear criteria for accessing services and undertaking assessments. Children and young people and their parents/ carers are supported well at key transition points, especially at times of transfer of schools. Children and young people coping with traumatic events and major changes are supported satisfactorily in dealing with the issues affecting them, can access specialist service where necessary, and plan and move on in their lives.</p> <p>Vulnerable and other groups of children and young people, including those who are looked after by the council, are involved fully in making decisions about their own lives. They and their parents/carers have access to independent advocacy services and procedures for making representations and complaints. Young carers are known and have access to some support, especially someone to talk to who will listen. There is regular consultation with children and young people, especially through representative groups, and some evidence that their views have made a difference. Children and young people are encouraged to take part in and to initiate voluntary activities and the majority feel involved in and well supported by their local communities.</p>

	<p>Successful action is taken to identify those at risk and to reduce anti-social behaviour. Agencies cooperate well, know where services are needed and deliver successful programmes in local trouble spots. Services effectively target hard to reach, vulnerable groups and problem families. Interventions are leading to improved attendance and exclusion from schools. Children and young people report that relationships with care and other workers are good and that their work with them results in changed behaviour.</p> <p>Policing methods complement work by other agencies and have impact on antisocial behaviour. There are only a few signs of antisocial behaviour in communities (for example graffiti). Rates of youth offending are in line with similar areas/authorities and/or are not increasing. Strategic oversight is provided by a management board at which all the statutory partners and other relevant bodies are actively represented. The youth offending team is resourced according to statutory requirements. Interventions are targeted at local trouble spots. Arrangements are in place to ensure that those who offend receive specific guidance and support. Offending rates are in line with similar areas/authorities. Services are available to address the specific mental and physical health needs of young offenders. Work with families and individual young people are satisfactory, helping to reduce offending behaviour and strengthen children and young people's self-esteem. Arrangements are in place to support offenders on release from custody that include the areas of health, family support and use of leisure time.</p> <p>Elected members know and understand their duties and responsibilities as corporate parents, and their actions and responses are sound. They meet children and young people regularly to hear their views. Looked after children receive sound support at key transition points.</p> <p>Children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are involved in making decisions about their own lives. These children and their parents/carers have access impartial information, advice and guidance on ETE opportunities. They know how to make formal representations and complaints and receive appropriate responses and receive sound support at key transition points. Opportunities for the integration of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities into the community are being developed and promoted.</p> <p>Outcomes are broadly in line with similar areas/authorities.</p>
<p>Inadequate (1)</p> <p>Services are having limited impact on improving outcomes for</p>	<p>There is a failure in one or more respects to meet the requirements for a grade 2.¹</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are insufficient opportunities for children and young people, including looked after children and young people and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to receive the support they need to develop secure and positive relationships with adults and other children. Support for parents/carers having difficulties in maintaining positive relationships with their children is limited or

¹ Failure to meet one requirement does not necessarily result in a grading of inadequate. The seriousness of the failure is considered carefully to determine whether it should affect the overall judgement. Inspectors' professional judgement is used to weigh and balance the issues against other aspects and judgements.

<p>children and young people. The gap between the outcomes of most children and young people and those who are the most vulnerable is not closing.</p>	<p>they report that services do not meet their needs and are having little or no effect. Children and young people, including looked after children and young people and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are not supported sufficiently at key transition points in their lives or in coping with traumatic events and major changes. Children and young people, including looked after children and young people and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, report their needs are not being met and the lack of support is affecting their social and emotional well-being. Children and young people, including looked after children and young people and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, are not consulted regularly or sufficiently engaged in decisions that affect them as individuals. The majority of children and young people report consultation is no more than tokenistic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antisocial behaviour is not reducing. Agencies are not working effectively together to tackle issues. Rates of youth offending are above those in similar areas/authorities and/or are increasing. There is insufficient action to help offenders, and their parents, to face up to their behaviour and take responsibility for it. • Looked after children and young people and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not involved making decisions made about their own life and do not have access to an independent advocacy service. They do not know how to make formal representations and complaints. Most elected members do not know or understand their duties and responsibilities as corporate parents. Foster and residential placements do not take into account the diverse needs of looked after children. Contact and access arrangements for those placed away from home are not promoted appropriately. • Children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and their parents/carers, do not have access to impartial information, advice and guidance on ETE opportunities. They do not know how to make formal representations and complaints. Extended day care and respite care for with children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is insufficient. • Outcomes are notably poorer than in similar areas/authorities.
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