

tackling child poverty; engaging the community; supporting families

**THE THREE YEAR STRATEGIC CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S
PLAN (2009-12)**

DRAFT

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[On the inside sleeve we will have a list of all the partners on our Children’s Trust Board who have jointly developed this plan and who will jointly deliver it over the next three years]

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1. Introduction

The landscape has changed significantly since we produced the first Tower Hamlets Children and Young People's plan in 2006. East London is preparing to host the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and new national and local priorities have emerged. In Tower Hamlets, our young population has grown and diversified.

Significantly, the Tower Hamlets Community Plan 2020 has recently been published. It explains how we plan to improve the quality of life for our residents over the next decade. The Community Plan features a number of priorities including those related to children, young people and their families in Tower Hamlets. This new Children and Young People's Plan sets out *how* we will deliver these priorities over the next three years.

With our partners, we have already achieved a great deal. Our 11 year olds are consistently achieving higher results than the national average in English and Maths and our GCSE results continue to close the gap with national averages. We have significantly reduced the number of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). And by developing 21 Children's Centres across the borough, we have ensured that young families can easily access a range of services from one place in their local community.

As a result of this activity and much more, in 2008 we were rated 'outstanding' by the Joint Area Review (JAR). This large multi-agency inspection, led by Ofsted, examined in detail our services as they are experienced by children, young people and their families. We also achieved national Beacon Awards for school improvement, reducing re-offending and, most recently, for our work to prevent and tackle child poverty.

However, we have a fierce ambition to do more for our children, young people and their families. Despite massive change and improvement, Tower Hamlets remains a place of inequality for too many. We have the highest rate of economic growth nationally and yet we remain the fourth most deprived borough in the country. Poverty is a major issue for us with half of our children currently living in households in receipt of benefits.

Our community is culturally very rich and we celebrate this fact. Over 78% of our young people are from Black and Minority Ethnic backgrounds. 59% of our young people are Bangladeshi, 21% are White and 9% are Black¹, including a significant and growing Somali community. We recognise that with this cultural diversity comes the need to engage more effectively with all of our communities about problems and solutions if we are to effect real, long-term change for the better. Families, including lone parent families, are the biggest single influence on children and young people's lives, giving us a big opportunity here in Tower Hamlets. In Tower Hamlets, more so than in any

¹ Our young population are also from Indian, Pakistani, Chinese and other backgrounds but in smaller numbers. Data taken from the Greater London Authority's 'Round Ethnic Group Projections' using projected 2009 data.

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other borough, the majority of our children and young people grow up in two parent and/or extended family households.

In this context we have identified three cross-cutting themes which run throughout this Children and Young People's Plan:

- Tackling child poverty;
- Engaging with the community;
- Supporting families.

The following sections set out our top priorities in each of the Every Child Matters areas² and what we'll do *differently* to address them over the next three years. The cross-cutting themes can be easily identified where the colour of the text corresponds with the colours above.

This plan does not attempt to outline *everything* that will be done over the next three years. External validation of our performance coupled with self-evaluation and hard data has given us confidence in the core elements of our approach and what we're already doing. This plan focuses on the key issues on which we haven't yet made the impact that our children and young people deserve.

Detailed delivery plans for each Every Child Matters theme along with a full consultation report and needs analysis can be found at **[add weblink]**.

[All statistics in this document to be updated and checked for accuracy prior to publication in May 2009]

² Be Healthy; Stay Safe; Enjoy and Achieve; Make a Positive Contribution; Achieve Economic Wellbeing as well as Excellent Children's Services

2. Be Healthy

Our vision

'We want our children and young people to be healthy in body and mind.'

This means investing in effective and culturally-appropriate health services for all children, young people and their families, especially those from more vulnerable groups. Early identification and intervention will also form an important part of our service delivery.

The story so far

We have experienced significant successes over the last three years in supporting children and young people to be healthy, across a range of different activities. These include:

- Improvements in maternity services. In 2007/8 62.2% of women booked their first appointment within the first 12 weeks of their pregnancy, compared with 49.7% in 2006/7. The Family Nurse Partnership, a project providing intensive maternity support to vulnerable young women, has also been successfully piloted.
- Additional investment means that we have eight more health visitor and school nurse posts since 2006.
- Improved health services for the most vulnerable children and young people. This is evidenced by an increase of almost 3% of Looked After Children having annual health checks, an 86% rise from 2005/6 to 2007/8 in young people accessing our integrated drug treatment service, and the establishment of a full-time health advisor for students in Pupil Referral Units.

But there are still areas where improvements can be made and new challenges met:

- Slowing down the rise in childhood obesity is one of the most significant public health challenges facing Tower Hamlets.
- Increasing immunisation rates – despite a significant increase over the last three years, coverage in Tower Hamlets is still below the national target of 90%.
- Support for children with disabilities needs to be improved, bringing together different services and agencies more effectively, and delivering greater personalisation in the way we deliver services.

Turning the vision into a reality

The following are our top five 'Be Healthy' priorities and what we'll do *differently* over the next three years.

PRIORITY 1: Slow down and reverse the long-term rise in obesity amongst children and young people.

Childhood obesity levels in Tower Hamlets are too high. In 2007/8 obesity rates for children in Reception Year were the fifth highest in the country.

Tower Hamlets has successfully secured funding to become one of nine designated 'Healthy Towns', piloting innovative approaches to tackling the wider environmental and social causes of obesity. We believe that being part of the national 'Healthy Towns' initiative over the next three years will provide a fantastic opportunity for tackling obesity in the borough. Through 'Healthy Towns' we will:

- Provide increased opportunities for regular physical activity including walking, cycling, active play, leisure, sport and dance, through 'Healthy Schools' and community initiatives.
- Increase the availability of healthier food choices in Children's Centres, schools, leisure and community centres, shops, cafes, restaurants and take-aways through incentive and award schemes and explore the possibility of limiting the locations at which fast-food outlets can open.
- Build health into existing and new parenting programmes to boost skills, knowledge and confidence and influence home environments.
- Expand and build on our targeted and specialist provision to support children and families with identified weight management needs, including a new early intervention service for families where one or both parents is overweight or obese.

PRIORITY 2: Support the health needs of young people by ensuring they are able to access effective support, information and advice in appropriate settings

Young people tell us that where and how they access health services is important to them. There are also changing demands. For example, Tower Hamlets is seeing an increase in problem drinking amongst young people. We will:

- Identify, at an early stage, hidden pockets of drug and alcohol misuse in different communities educating target groups of young people in school as well as their parents.
- Prevent young people from taking up smoking by enforcing the law on underage sales of cigarettes and extending peer-led approaches to smoking prevention.

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- Radically redesign existing services in community sexual health clinics, integrating sexually transmitted infection management and contraceptive provision into a walk-in one-stop shop with extended opening hours.
- **Implement an innovative new project, ASPIRE, offering individual support to the most vulnerable young women, at highest risk of becoming pregnant.**
- Employ a Young People's Alcohol Health Improvement Officer to equip teachers and youth workers with knowledge and skills needed to deliver alcohol awareness messages to young people.

PRIORITY 3: Better support parents and families in giving children the best, healthiest, start in life

Early intervention and parental engagement have been shown to be crucial to improving health, as well as economic and social outcomes, for both parents and their children. We will:

- **Strengthen and improve our maternity services by working with targeted community groups to provide tailored outreach support and improve user engagement.**
- **Extend intensive pre and post pregnancy support for vulnerable mothers, based on the work of the Family Nurse Partnership, to at least 50 more families and conduct national research into the outcomes of the programme for families.**
- Identify children who have not been immunised and develop systems to ensure that all children who miss their immunisations are followed up, alongside targeted campaigns to raise awareness of the importance of immunisation amongst parents in communities with the lowest uptake, drawing on the evidence of which approaches have been effective elsewhere.
- Expand the breastfeeding support team based in Children's Centres to include weaning support.
- Strengthen child health promotion in accordance with the new Child Health Strategy, published in February 2009 by the Department of Health and the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

PRIORITY 4: Improve access to care for children and young people with disabilities through a coordinated, multi-agency approach

A recent government review highlighted this as an area in which Tower Hamlets could make improvements. We will:

- **Expand the hours that the Children's Community Nursing Team operate, moving towards a 7-day service.**
- **Increase short-break provision for children and families.**
- **Establish a group for parents and children with complex health needs in order to increase parents' confidence and reduce isolation.**
- Increase access to coordinated, multi-agency support for all disabled children with ongoing health needs, focusing on those who have less

severe problems and therefore fall outside of the Integrated Service for Disabled Children.

- Improve services related to the transition between children's and adult health and social services.

PRIORITY 5: Support children and young people to be mentally and emotionally healthy

This has been highlighted by young people as their top health priority and we know that we need to improve access to mental health services for children and young people. We will:

- Deliver services in more accessible settings within the community such as Children's Centres, schools and GP surgeries.
- Target provision at specific groups who have a history of not accessing mental health services – for example, teenage boys.
- Review the existing provision of services to support emotional health and wellbeing, to inform and shape the service, in line with the recommendations outlined in the national CAHMS review published in 2008.

Measuring progress

The following are the key indicators and targets we will use to help us measure progress over the next three years:

Indicator	2008/9 (baseline)	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
NI 56: Obesity among primary school age children in Year 6	23%	23.6%	23.7%	23.8%
NI 112: Under 18 conception rate	-20.8	-53	-55	-55
Immunisation rate in the first two years of life (Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio)	80	86	90	95

A detailed delivery plan for Be Healthy can be found at [add weblink]

3. Stay Safe

Our vision

'We want our children and young people to grow up free from harm, fear and prejudice.'

This means ensuring that children and young people are effectively safeguarded from the risk of harm and neglect, reducing the involvement of young people in crime, both as victim and perpetrator, and protecting young people from bullying and harassment.

The story so far

During the last three years we have strengthened safeguarding arrangements for children in Tower Hamlets, for example:

- Raised awareness about domestic violence within our communities has led to an increase of 80% in domestic violence referrals to Children's Social Care over the last two years (Sept 2006-Oct 2008).
- We have invested additional resources in our frontline professionals and developed common training arrangements to ensure safeguarding is everyone's business.
- In Tower Hamlets, 75% of young people reported that they feel safe in the local area, 85% feel safe going to and from school, 71% feel safe on public transport, 85% feel safe in school and 95% feel safe at home³. In all cases these figures are either equal to, or above the national average.

Building on these successes we recognise that there are areas we need to address over the next three years which include the following:

- We know there are a lot of young carers in Tower Hamlets and we are concerned that relatively few of them are accessing support services.
- Although we have made real progress in increasing the reporting and tackling of youth on youth crime, community safety remains a significant concern for children, young people and their families in Tower Hamlets.
- We have done a lot to tackle bullying in the borough but we know that it still happens and remains a major concern for our children, young people and their families.

Turning the vision into a reality

The following are our top five Stay Safe priorities and what we'll do *differently* over the next three years.

³ Data taken from the Tell-Us Survey, 2007

PRIORITY 1: Protect children and young people from harm and support them to feel safe and confident in their area and beyond

We need to ensure that all of our children and young people are protected from harm, both at home and out and about in the borough. Community safety remains a significant concern for our children and young people so we need to do more. We also need to ensure that young people foster independence and that perceptions of 'unsafe areas' are challenged. We will:

- Implement integrated pathways to secure earlier referral to appropriate intervention for children at risk.
- Increase the visibility of police and enforcement teams, creating an environment that feels safer, particularly in crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots.
- Strengthen the role of schools in identifying and supporting children and young people at risk of harming themselves.
- Extend the Choice and Opportunity On-Line (COO-L) card and free Oyster card scheme, encouraging young people to travel within and outside of the borough.
- Develop and implement an E-Strategy which will put in place safeguarding measures to protect children and young people from the potential dangers of the digital world.
- Implement ContactPoint, a shared database which will provide a quick way for professionals working with children to find out who else is working with the same child.

PRIORITY 2: Significantly reduce bullying

We've done a lot to reduce bullying in Tower Hamlets and offer support to those who have been the victims of bullying. However, it remains a real concern for too many of our children and young people and we need to do more. We will:

- Evaluate the impact of the anti-bullying helpline pilot, due to conclude in May 2009, to inform how to take it forward.
- Support those schools with inadequate anti-bullying policies and practice to ensure that all schools reach the standard set by Tower Hamlets.
- Run the electronic bullying survey in all secondary schools and half of primary schools to ensure that pupil opinions are incorporated into plans to tackle bullying.

PRIORITY 3: Protect children and young people from the risk of sexual exploitation

Although this only affects a small group of children and young people in the borough, it's an extremely important issue that needs to be tackled quickly and effectively. We will:

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- Act on the research into the potential risk of sexual exploitation of children and young people in Tower Hamlets.
- Lead a coordinated multi-agency response to improve the protection of the children and young people at risk, recognising the crucial role that schools have to play in this.
- Act on the consultation that has taken place with local faith communities to inform the multi-agency response and support strategies.

PRIORITY 4: Support parents and families to provide a safe environment where children and young people thrive and achieve their full potential

Prevention is better than cure. In order for prevention to be more successful in Tower Hamlets we need to do more work to put those families who are at risk at the centre of service planning and delivery. We will:

- Implement our Young Carers Strategy, to be published in 2009, ensuring that young carers in the borough are accessing the services they need.
- Deliver more targeted support to the most vulnerable families – those with children who are not accessing the opportunities available to them, particularly those at risk of offending - putting the family at the centre of service planning and delivery.
- Roll out the Baby Family Intervention Programme, a pre-birth intervention and support service for families in need, implementing lessons learned during the pilot to ensure its improvement and link into the Family Nurse Partnership.

PRIORITY 5: Ensure that looked after children live in stable environments

In Tower Hamlets, at the end of March 2008, 63% of looked after children had been in their current placement for at least two years. This is below the national average of 66% and we need to make improvements. We will:

- Roll out the fostering training programme to Children's Services staff and foster carers. The training helps foster families to manage challenging behaviour thus improving the stability of placements.
- Expand the role of the new Placement Stability Worker to monitor placement plans for all children and young people at risk of placement breakdown.
- Respond to what young people in care have told us they need and make sure they have more face-to-face contact with their social workers.

Measuring progress

The following are the key indicators and targets we will use to help us measure progress over the next three years:

Indicator	2008/9 (baseline)	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
NI 69: Children who have experienced bullying	40.8%	39.1%	37.4%	35.7%
NI 62: Stability of placement of LAC - number of placements	9.91% (07/08)	10.75%	10.25%	9.5%
NI 63: Stability of placement of LAC – length of placement	60.75%	64.75%	68.75%	72.75%
Percentage of young people indicating in the Tell-Us Survey that they feel very safe or quite safe	80%	81.7%	83.4%	85%

A detailed delivery plan for Stay Safe can be found at [add weblink]

Enjoy and Achieve

Our vision

'We want our children, young people and their families to grow up enjoying life, feeling proud of where they live and what they have achieved.'

This means raising aspirations as well as investing in high-quality provision for children, young people and their families so they are supported to excel, providing first class schools and settings for our children and young people and an excellent range of learning, leisure, play and cultural opportunities for families.

The story so far

Over the last three years we have realised many successes in supporting our children and young people to enjoy and achieve in Tower Hamlets, for example:

- In 2008, 41% of young people in Tower Hamlets achieved five A*-C grade GCSEs including English and Maths compared to 34% in 2006.
- Since April 2006, the numbers of students learning a musical instrument has risen by over 1,000%.
- We have seen a 48% reduction in the number of permanent exclusions from school since 2006, coupled with an improvement in behaviour as evidenced by judgments made by Ofsted inspectors.

However, we always strive to do better and areas we have identified for further improvement include the following:

- Although our children and young people continue to achieve better results year on year, we need to maintain a sharp focus on supporting all of our children and young people to achieve their potential - in particular from birth to five years, and 16 years and above, where our results remain below the national average despite significant improvements.
- Our children and young people are accessing more sporting, cultural, play and leisure activities than ever before. However, we still need to improve access to these activities, especially for children from low income families and those with learning difficulties and disabilities. We also need to make the offer more family-focused.
- Although the take-up of our parental engagement agenda has been very good, we need to strengthen our work with whole families - particularly families with teenagers - the age at which families have told us they need the most support.

Turning the vision into a reality

The following are our top five Enjoy and Achieve priorities and what we'll do *differently* over the next three years.

PRIORITY 1: Develop a broader, more creative and engaging curriculum which will inspire our children and young people

A curriculum that captures the imagination of our children and young people will raise their aspirations, develop a wide range of skills and enable them to fulfil their potential. We need to drive forward work on making the curriculum more creative and engaging. We will:

- Develop creative and interactive curricular resources linked to sport and the Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- **Develop a cultural offer for all children, young people and their families which is reflected in the curriculum, maximising the opportunities Tower Hamlets will have as part of the national Find Your Talent programme.**
- Maximise the opportunities brought by Building Schools for the Future, Primary Strategy for Change and greater extended services in schools; providing different learning environments, addressing sustainability issues, and embedding ICT throughout the curriculum.

PRIORITY 2: Ensure that all of our children and young people have high aspirations and a positive attitude to learning

We need to consistently ensure that all of our children and young people have different avenues for learning at their fingertips, whatever the subject matter, so they have the confidence to learn. We will:

- Raise the aspirations of teachers, pupils and their parents by further developing and embedding personalised learning, making sure that all schools are using assessment for learning effectively.
- Use evidence-based research to develop innovative practice, ensuring all students see themselves as leading their own learning, and supporting others to learn.
- **Address the needs of newly identified vulnerable groups (for example young carers, Somali children, children whose families are in temporary accommodation and young people leaving home) and address their specific needs using cross-agency expertise and mentoring opportunities.**

PRIORITY 3: Accelerate the achievement and progress of all our children and young people

We need to retain our rigorous focus on standards and ensure that all of our children and young people are making sufficient progress during each phase of their education. We will:

- Make sure that all of our schools and services are assessing pupils' progress effectively, from the start of the early years foundation stage through to beyond 16; the information from which will feed into a smarter, borough-wide data system on pupils' progress and attainment.

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- Identify the lowest achieving 20% of pupils, target evidence-based intervention and extended school support appropriately, and rigorously track each pupil's progress.
- Develop the speaking and listening skills of pupils to drive literacy attainment (particularly in writing) at all key stages.

PRIORITY 4: Better support children and young people at key points of change in their lives

We know that with the right support vulnerable children and young people can deal positively with key transition points in their lives to achieve their potential – we need to ensure that the right support is provided every time. We will:

- Use ICT to continuously support children and young people through key transition stages, to ensure that information and support does not “get lost” along the way
- Adopt more creative approaches to exploring transition issues using the mediums of sport; art; drama; music; peer support etc, paying particular attention to children with additional needs.
- Develop specific transition programmes to support the move from primary to secondary school and into compulsory post-16 education, addressing universal, targeted and specialist needs.

PRIORITY 5: Provide a learning, play and cultural offer for families

We need to provide more opportunities for families to enjoy and achieve together. We will:

- Expand parental engagement and learning programmes in secondary schools to enable parents and carers to develop their skills and learn with their children.
- Provide incentives for families with young children to engage with their local Children's Centre and become involved in activities that support their child's development.
- Secure access to a rich cultural offer for families through the Find Your Talent programme.
- Provide more opportunities for play through the Play Strategy and Fair Play Pathfinder Programme.

Measuring progress

The following are the key indicators and targets we will use to help us measure progress over the next three years:

Indicator	2008/9 (baseline)	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
NI 76: Reduction in the number of schools where fewer	21 (provisional data)	1	1	Target to be confirmed

than 65% of pupils achieve level 4 or above in both English and maths at Key Stage 2.				
NI 78: Reduction in the number of schools where fewer than 30% of pupils achieve 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE and equivalent including GCSEs in English and maths.	2	0	0	0
NI 72: Achievement of at least 78 points across the Early Years Foundation Stage with at least 6 in each of the scales in Personal Social and Emotional Development and Communication, Language and Literacy	38.9*	45.3	46	Targets are only set for 1 year by schools and DCSF
NI 93: Proportion of pupils progressing by two levels in English at Key Stage 2	87.9*	92	93	Targets are only set for 1 year by schools and DCSF
NI 94: Proportion of pupils progressing by two levels in Maths at Key Stage 2	79.2*	85	88	Targets are only set for 1 year by schools and DCSF

*2007-8 figure – 2008-9 figure to be inserted

A detailed delivery plan for Enjoy and Achieve can be found at [add weblink]

5. Make a Positive Contribution

Our vision

'We want our children and young people to grow up understanding differences, confident and courageous about the future, able and willing to make a positive contribution to a strong and cohesive community.'

This means engaging young people in constructive and law-abiding activities, and actively involving children, young people and their families from all walks of life in decision making.

The Story so far

Over the last three years we have realised many successes in supporting our children and young people to make a positive contribution in Tower Hamlets, for example:

- Record numbers of young people have become active in local democracy – 6,385 young people voted for the young mayor this year, an increase of almost 50% on the previous year's voting figures.
- Volunteering opportunities have increased by 400 in the last year, far exceeding the target of 200. We also secured the Investing in Volunteers Award, and the National Youth Agency Quality Mark.
- The number of young people engaged in positive activities for young people almost doubled during 2007/8, from 1,807 to 2,605. We also continued our community cohesion programmes, developed 'no place for hate' crime workshops, and co-organised a number of youth events with the East London Mosque.

However, we always strive to do better and areas we have identified for further improvement include the following:

- We need to promote a safe, cohesive community for all our residents, continuing to reduce the number of first-time entrants to the Youth Justice System.
- Increase the numbers of young people making decisions in their community, taking responsibility for their local surroundings.
- Ensure that the Olympic and Paralympic Games become an opportunity for young people within the borough, increasing sports activity, volunteering, and pride in a sense of place.

Turning the vision into a reality

The following are our top five 'Make a Positive Contribution' priorities and what we'll do *differently* over the next three years.

PRIORITY 1: Extend children and young people's influence in decision making

We need to build on the success of the young mayor programme, promoting deeper engagement of young people with service planning and delivery, and securing the involvement of younger children, and disadvantaged groups. We will:

- Strengthen the voice of young people by hosting a Young Advocate in Children's Services, directly electing young people to Local Area Partnerships and ensuring representation from school councils on partnership forums.
- Use the skills of parents and carers to develop services, and build upon the launch of the 'Family Voice' initiative, utilising parents and young people as peer mentors.
- Embed the Every Disabled Child Matters Local Authorities Charter so that disabled children and young people are involved in service design.

PRIORITY 2: Increase community cohesion among our children, young people and their families

Tower Hamlets benefits from a diverse population and we will strive to continue to our work in securing cohesion in the community. We will do this by building and strengthening links between different community groups, promoting interaction between children and families from different backgrounds, and challenging the small minority who encourage division or extremism. We will:

- Extend youth service provision across the borough, giving providers clear targets for engaging young people from all of our communities.
- Develop citizenship classes and good quality benchmarks for mother-tongue after-school classes, helping children and young people to understand and be proud of the country they live in.
- Address questions of cohesion within the curriculum and the school environment.
- Provide training on how to settle individual and group conflict across the borough, with schools, Tower Hamlets College, police, the council's youth service and the Youth Offending Team.
- Identify disaffected young people on the edges of crime and work with their families and schools to re-engage them with the community.

PRIORITY 3: Extend the range of positive activities available outside school hours, and ensure all children and young people have access to them

We already have very good take-up of positive activities, especially youth clubs and outdoor activities, but we want to broaden the offer and ensure that all young people have access to them, regardless of their background. We will:

- Invest in young people who are gifted and talented in sport as part of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.
- Run the 'Safe Place to Be' project, offering positive activities to target 11 to 14 year olds, who have been identified as vulnerable by their school or who have working parents. This project will offer activities during term time and for nine weeks of the holiday period in each year from 2009 until 2011.
- Offer five hours of cultural activity every week to all children and young people in the borough through the Find Your Talent programme.
- Improve and extend 28 playgrounds in the borough for 8 to 13 year olds and offer more positive activities for babies and children under three years and their families.

PRIORITY 4: Effectively target support and information, advice and guidance for children and young people

Young people live increasingly complex lives and need access to reliable information, support and advice about critical decisions they will have to make. To deliver this, we will:

- Implement the recommendations of the London Youth Resettlement Pledge, ensuring young people leaving custody are equipped with the information they need in advance, and are given proper support on their return to the borough.
- Offer bespoke packages of information, guidance and support for teenage parents.
- Support the children and families of offenders, in and out of school, offering appropriate welfare support including access to family learning, life-skills training and peer mentoring. This will reduce further alienation and encourage positive engagement.

PRIORITY 5: Increase the quality, quantity and diversity of volunteering opportunities and inspire children and young people to take action in their community

Over the next three years plans for the Olympic and Paralympic Games mean that we must increase our numbers of volunteers, to ensure that the borough is fully engaged in what will be a huge, international celebration on our doorstep. We will:

- Deliver the new cross-agency volunteering strategy, ensuring that we all work to common principles and share training and support mechanisms, so that safe and structured volunteering opportunities are maximised.
- Engage young people in full-time volunteering opportunities within the local authority, offering them training at Level 2, as appropriate to their placements, helping them into jobs when they leave.
- Double the numbers of young people trained to volunteer on the Youth Opportunities Panel.

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- Train Olympic ambassadors, to raise aspirations for young people and encourage participation in every aspect of the games.

Measuring progress

The following are the key indicators and targets we will use to help us measure progress over the next three years:

Indicator	2008/9 (baseline)	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
NI 110: Young people's participation in positive activities	70.3%	75%	80%	85%
NI 19: Rate of proven re-offending by young offenders	Mid-April 09	113	108	Target will be set once baseline data received
NI 46: Young offenders' access to suitable accommodation	93.4% (07/08)	95%	95%	95%

A detailed delivery plan for Make a Positive Contribution can be found at [add weblink]

6. Achieve Economic Wellbeing

Our vision

'We want our children and young people to have the skills and opportunities to embark on fulfilling careers and contribute to prosperous communities.'

This means creating more employment, education and training opportunities for our young people and ensuring they access and benefit from the global markets on our doorstep. This is more important than ever in the current economic climate. The Olympic and Paralympic Games, Thames Gateway and continued growth of the Canary Wharf Estate generate unprecedented opportunities for Tower Hamlets. As a borough we also host cutting-edge creative industries and are an established centre for culture and tourism.

The story so far

There have been some real successes over the last three years in supporting our children and young people to achieve economic wellbeing, for example:

- Over that last three years we have reduced the number of young people who are not in education, employment or training from 10.9% in 2006/7 to 6.7% in 2008/9 through early intervention and targeted approaches. Part of this success is due to our work in targeting vulnerable groups such as care leavers and young offenders.
- We have significantly improved the number of young people achieving Level 2 qualifications by the age of 19, narrowing our gap from the national average.
- We have increased by 100% the number of young people aged up to 25 who have been helped into paid employment through Skillsmatch recruitment and work placement programmes.

Looking ahead to the next three years, we have identified the following as areas for improvement:

- We need to tackle high levels of child poverty and intergenerational worklessness in our families.
- Although more of our young people than ever are going onto higher education, we are committed to increasing this further and to ensuring that more young people from low income backgrounds access these opportunities.
- We want our young people to secure higher A-Level grades. At the same time, we also want to build other routes to higher education or career success.

Turning the vision into a reality

The following are our top five Achieve Economic Wellbeing priorities and what we'll do *differently* over the next three years.

PRIORITY 1: Improve young people's employment-related skills, linking in to local and regional labour market opportunities

We want to make sure there are clear and secure steps from learning into work. Many local employers are keen to support our young people and we want to make the most of their contribution, particularly on opportunities such as the Olympic and Paralympic Games. We will:

- Put in place career progression routes for young people linking with local education and work-based training providers.
- Roll out the 'Passport to Employability' project across the borough so that the majority of schools are participating by 2012.
- Provide targeted learning programmes for every significant group of 14 to 18 year old learners at risk of being NEET, including increased work experience opportunities for those leaving care.

PRIORITY 2: Enhance the choice of learning options for 16 year olds

Every pupil who joined our secondary schools in 2008 will be planning to stay in learning to the age of 18. While they stay in education we want every person to have a learning option that they find relevant, engaging and in line with their personal needs. We will:

- Make sure every young person has the best impartial guidance so they are able to choose the option that is best for them. This guidance will be available in different forms including drop-in sessions, roadshows and online.
- Provide programmes that combine classroom learning with practical, real-life experience in workplaces. These programmes will be linked to all 14 Diploma lines for which there will be clear progression paths.
- Develop a comprehensive apprenticeship scheme in the public sector and launch an additional 600 apprenticeships through public, community and voluntary partners.
- Implement the new reforms for 14 to 19 year olds, entitling them to choose between the four new learning routes: general, Diplomas, apprenticeships and foundation programmes.

PRIORITY 3: Improve the quality of learning and student attainment

Tower Hamlets has seen impressive improvements in attainment at age 16 but we need to see more young people achieve at age 19. We are also concerned about young people who drop out of post-16 programmes or fail to make the grades they need to progress after 16. We will:

- Share and implement best practice on how to raise qualification levels by age 19 while narrowing the attainment gap for those from lower income households.
- Ensure that all schools, colleges and work-based learning providers are supporting all learners to achieve the best they can, and evidence that they are adding value.

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- Further involve our university partners in preparing more young people for higher education and support a third of young people into university at age 18, creating formal links between schools and higher education institutes.

PRIORITY 4: Support specific vulnerable groups such as looked after children, young carers, young people who have spent time in the youth justice system and young people with disabilities, to achieve economic wellbeing

We know that some of our young people face individual challenges in moving on to fulfilling and independent adult lives. Some young people have particular difficulties and need extra support. We will:

- Deliver the best possible foundation programmes designed to provide early steps on the ladder to success.
- Track vulnerable learners and provide the timely support they need.
- Offer flexible programmes that are relevant and engaging for those who need a different way of learning.
- Prioritise the needs of these vulnerable children and young people to ensure they receive appropriate levels of advice and support about education, employment and training options.

PRIORITY 5: Break the worklessness cycle amongst our families

We know that young people from workless families can find it especially hard to present themselves successfully to employers. Many young people in Tower Hamlets need to have the chance to experience the workplace for themselves and receive advice from those already in work. We will:

- Publish and deliver a borough-wide child poverty strategy and action plan.
- Deliver programmes that ensure young people from workless families understand and can meet the demands of the workplace.
- Offer structured support opportunities for parents and carers to gain employment, including access to childcare.
- Remove financial barriers to employment for families in temporary accommodation.

Measuring progress

The following are the key indicators and targets we will use to help us measure progress over the next three years:

Indicator	2008-9 (baseline)	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
NI 79: Achievement of level 2 qualification by age 19	Baseline available mid-May	69.5%	71.8%	Waiting for 08/09 baseline figure to set targets
NI 80: Achievement of level 3 qualification by age 19	Baseline available mid-May	43%	46%	Waiting for 08/09 baseline figure to set targets
NI 116: Proportion of children in poverty	Baseline available mid-May	43.5%	41.9%	Waiting for 08/09 baseline figure to set targets
NI 117: Number of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training	6.7%	6.25%	6%	Compulsory education extended to 18 - target not required
NI 106: Number of young people from low income backgrounds progressing to higher education	Baseline data TBC	Targets to be set based on baseline data	Targets to be set based on baseline data	Targets to be set based on baseline data
NI 118: Take up of formal childcare by low-income working families	7% (2004/5) 2008/9 baseline due July 2009	9%	10%	Waiting for 08/09 baseline figure to set targets

A detailed delivery plan for Achieve Economic Wellbeing can be found at [\[add weblink\]](#)

7. Excellent Children's Services

Our vision

'We want all our children, young people and their families to receive excellent services informed by their views, which are easy to access, targeted at needs, and delivered locally to make a difference to their lives'.

This means engaging children, young people and their families in shaping services which meet local needs and further developing a high-quality, flexible and joined up children's workforce to deliver these services.

The story so far

Over the last three years we have had many successes in delivering excellent children's services in Tower Hamlets, for example

- We have successfully undergone a major structure change, integrating education and children's social care into Children's Services, ensuring a more joined-up and family-centred approach to developing and delivering services.
- We have undertaken consultation to produce the Children's Workforce Development Strategy, now published and shared by all partners. We have also produced the first brochure listing all centrally-organised training and development opportunities for children's workforce across the council, and its partners.
- We have developed 21 Children's Centres, recognising the impact of integrated, cross-agency working to support young families.

However, we always strive to do better and areas we have identified for further improvement include the following:

- Although the integrated Common Assessment Framework (CAF) was successfully launched and we have good evidence of its impact, we now need to ensure that all professionals are consistently using it as the assessment of choice.
- Over the last three years we have implemented a consultation and engagement strategy, incorporating service users' views into how we shape services. However, we now need to develop more creative ways to engage and communicate with children, young people and their families to find out what they want.
- We need to find ways to manage and share information, research and data more effectively with partners to better target and inform the services offered.

Turning the vision into a reality

The following are our top five Excellent Children's Services priorities and what we'll do *differently* over the next three years.

PRIORITY 1: Recruit, develop and maintain a skilled, flexible and diverse workforce, making Tower Hamlets the borough of choice for employees

The staff we employ within Children's Services are our most important asset and retaining that talent is one of our top priorities. We will:

- Establish a staff talent pool (based on a skills audit) so that peoples' skills are recognised and used flexibly across organisations and during joint succession planning.
- Undertake a review to establish which professionals are not using the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) so this can be addressed and develop a Family Common Assessment Framework.
- **Run a targeted recruitment campaign to attract members of our under-represented ethnic communities with the appropriate skills, to apply for vacancies in Children's Services.**

PRIORITY 2: Improve information technology and data analysis tools across Children's Services

In the twenty-first century we recognise the need to update and make full use of our Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) systems across the Tower Hamlets Partnership to deliver world-class services. We will:

- Deliver a smarter, borough-wide information system on pupils' progress and attainment, building on existing systems.
- Increase the use of mobile technology to ensure that services are delivered where they are needed, and the workforce is able to work flexibly.
- **Provide world-class ICT equipment to all of our schools through the Building Schools for the Future Programme.**
- Investigate the potential to join up existing systems to provide more efficient and coordinated services.
- Establish a joint workforce database which logs skills, training opportunities, vacancies and informs joint succession planning.

PRIORITY 3: Plan and deliver major capital programmes and manage existing assets for maximum community benefit

Over the next three years we will be rebuilding or refurbishing all of our secondary schools and many of our primary schools through the Building Schools for the Future (secondary schools) and Primary Strategy for Change (primary schools) national programmes. These are the largest capital programmes that schools have seen for over 20 years and will impact positively on the whole community. We will:

- Rebuild or refurbish all of the secondary schools in the borough and many of our primary schools through Building Schools for the Future and Primary Strategy for Change, **ensuring that wider community facilities are factored into the plans wherever possible.**

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- Build on the existing extended schools programme in secondary schools by extending the opening hours, the services provided and the range of locations from which services are offered. Other community locations will include Children's Centres and primary schools to better meet the needs of families.
- Build environmentally sustainable buildings, re-using existing buildings wherever possible.
- Consult more widely and more innovatively with local communities about what they want out of new building projects in their locality and show how consultation responses have informed subsequent plans.

PRIORITY 4: Ensure the services we commission and deliver are integrated, of a high quality, and give value for money

Resources are limited and we constantly need to ensure that we are maximising their impact and robustly ensuring value for money. We will:

- Strive to personalise services, empowering people to determine how money allocated to them is spent, building on 'direct payment'.
- Establish common quality criteria and monitoring and evaluation methods, in line with the World Class Commissioning Standard, to be used when jointly commissioning any services for children, young people and their families.
- Implement better financial modelling, linking money spent and its impact.
- Develop and implement a consistent approach across the partnership to needs analysis and provision mapping to help us identify which services we need to provide and how we should provide them.

PRIORITY 5: Continue to improve Children's Services in Tower Hamlets through better communication and creatively responding to user views

Effective, two-way communication with children, young people and their families is critical if we are to deliver effective services. We need to be more innovative in thinking about how we communicate and with whom, making sure we capture everyone's views. We will:

- Consistently ask a wide range of users what they think of the services provided, offering feedback incentives for those who would not normally offer their opinion.
- Communicate with children, young people and their families in more engaging and innovative ways using opportunities provided by the Olympic and Paralympic Games and the Find Your Talent programme.
- Gather retrospective user views from those who were 'failed' by Children's Services to try and better understand why, and adapt service provision accordingly (for example asking: 'what might have made you stay on at school?' etc.)
- Provide residents with more feedback on our response to consultations, for example: 'you told us x and as a result we did y'

Measuring progress

The following are the key indicators and targets we will use to help us measure progress over the next three years:

Indicator	2008/9 (baseline)	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Number of new Common Assessment Frameworks (CAFs) completed each year	540 (April 08 to present date)	900	900	900
Sickness absence of Children's Services staff	7.69	7	6.5*	Target to be set
Percentage of the top 5% earners who are from Black and Minority Ethnic groups	15.68	22*	27*	Target to be set

* These are council targets and are not specific to Children's Services.

A detailed delivery plan for Excellent Children's Services can be found at [add weblink]

Local priorities

We realise that to achieve precision in targeting services to the needs of young people, children and their families we must achieve greater local differentiation in what we offer and how we deliver it. This map of the borough shows the Local Area Partnership (LAP) areas. It highlights some of the key characteristics of each LAP and outlines a local priority for each particular area as well as how we are going to tackle it.

[The following information will be presented on a centre spread map of Tower Hamlets in the final version]

LAPs 1 and 2

Bethnal Green North, Mile End and Globe Town, Weavers Spitalfields and Banglatown, Bethnal Green South

Key characteristics of LAPs 1 and 2:

- LAPs 1 and 2 have some of the highest levels of children under five with untreated tooth decay, both in Tower Hamlets and London, indicative of poor health amongst our young people.
- Instances of childhood obesity are also high in this part of the borough, particularly in LAP 2.
- With 29 schools and a Pupil Referral Unit, LAPs 1 and 2 have the largest volume of schools in the borough.

LOCAL PRIORITY: Promote healthier lifestyles amongst children and young people, utilising local facilities and assets

In order to lead a healthy, active life, our young people need access to local facilities, and encouragement to use them regularly. We will:

- Ensure there is good access for local young people to leisure facilities, including discounted prices and dedicated provisions for girls.
- Develop Out of School Learning Hours Learning (OoSHL) Programmes that encourage schools to work together in promoting healthier lifestyles opening up unique resources on specific school sites.
- Employ health trainers to communicate and promote what's on offer locally for young people (for example: smoking cessation workshops etc.) especially through schools and the Wessex Sixth Form.

LAPs 3 and 4

St. Dunstan's and Stepney Green, Whitechapel, St. Katharine's and Wapping, Shadwell

Key characteristics of LAPs 3 and 4:

- LAP 3 has the highest population of young people in the borough with 25% of the residents aged 15 or under.
- LAP 3 is home to the most recorded number of young people who are not in education, training or employment (NEET).

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- Shadwell in LAP 4 has some of the highest levels of overcrowding in households in the borough while St Katharine's and Wapping has some of the lowest levels.
- The area has more families with three or more children than other parts of the borough.

LOCAL PRIORITY: Increase the variety and quality of activities at youth clubs, making sure that diverse groups of young people are engaged

High levels of overcrowding in this part of the borough mean that young people lack their own space at home. Young people have told us they would like the local youth clubs to be open for longer, to attract young people from all communities and to offer a more varied menu of activities with better facilities for music, sports and learning activities. We will:

- Invest in the Haileybury Youth Centre so there are more after-school, weekend and holiday activities, providing children and young people with a safe and fun place to be.
- Invest in new facilities for the Redcoats and Wapping youth groups.
- Improve coordination of the different youth activities available by creating a provider network.
- Develop activities for girls and young women as well as opportunities for young people from different ethnic backgrounds to participate in joint activities.
- Extend and improve outdoor play facilities, creating new parks and open spaces such as in Braham Street in Aldgate.

LAPs 5 and 6

Bow East, Bow West

Mile End East, Bromley-by-Bow

Key characteristics of LAPs 5 and 6:

- LAP 5 and 6's population is expected to expand from 49,000 currently to 71,000 by 2021.
- 27% of residents in LAP 6 are aged 15 or under, one of the largest populations of young people in the borough, but a low participation rates in youth and community activities and facilities.
- These LAPs border Fish Island and the Olympics site, bringing regeneration and the potential for positive change, as well as likely increases in population.

LOCAL PRIORITY: Establish additional youth services, particularly in the west of LAP 5, the British Street Estate, Mile End and the Eleanor Street Travellers' Site

There is a perception of poor youth service provision in LAPs 5 and 6 and an identified lack of provision in the aforementioned locations. We will:

- Deliver targeted joint events and activities to engage more girls, bring young people from different ethnic backgrounds together and begin to address territorial and intergenerational concerns.
- Identify and support voluntary groups operating in the area to build their capacity, particularly in LAP 5.
- Improve coordination of the different youth activities available by creating a provider network.
- Establish a School Promoters scheme with the three secondary schools in LAPs 5 and 6, encouraging students to promote what's on offer.

LAPs 7 and 8

*East India and Lansbury, Limehouse
Blackwall and Cubitt Town, Millwall*

Key characteristics of LAPs 7 and 8:

- LAP 7 has some of the highest levels of worklessness and child poverty in the borough.
- LAP 8 contains very mixed residential areas with affluent and deprived areas co-existing very closely together.
- LAP 7 and 8's population is expected to expand from 58,000 currently to 111,000 by 2021.

LOCAL PRIORITY: Tackle the cause and effect of child poverty with a particular focus on LAP 7

Living in poverty is a reality for many of our children and young people in this part of the borough. They and their families often have low aspirations in terms of educational attainment and employment. We will:

- Support local parents and carers in developing the skills and confidence necessary to make the most of local employment opportunities.
- Signpost parents and carers to affordable and practical local childcare opportunities so that childcare is not a barrier to employment.
- Mitigate the effects of child poverty by supporting schools to develop a more varied menu of learning, sporting and cultural opportunities to take place outside of school hours.
- Deliver more volunteering programmes placing young people in community organisations and businesses.

9. Monitoring Progress

The Children and Young People's Plan is owned by the Children and Families Trust which is Tower Hamlets' Children's Trust Board.

The Children and Families Trust is a local partnership which brings together the organisations responsible for services for children, young people and their families in Tower Hamlets. All of the organisations in the partnership share a commitment to improving children's lives in the borough. More information can be found at:

http://www.onetowerhamlets.net/governance/delivery_groups/children_and_young_people.aspx

The Children and Families Trust is accountable for delivering the Children and Young People's Plan, monitoring and reviewing progress made on a regular basis, and taking action where necessary. The Trust also has members from the LAPs to ensure progress against local priorities for children, young people and their families as well as the borough wide priorities.

A progress review against the priorities and activities outlined in this plan will be published on an annual basis so that we can let all stakeholders know how we're doing. These will be published on **[add weblink]**

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10. Glossary

Building Schools for the Future (BSF)	BSF is a national programme of investment in rebuilding or renewing every secondary school in England.
Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)	CAMHS promote the mental health and psychological wellbeing of children and young people by providing high quality, multidisciplinary mental health services to all children and young people with mental health problems and disorders.
Children's Centre	A multi-agency centre offering integrated early learning, childcare and a wide range of health and family support to children under five and their families.
Children's Trust	Children's Trusts are local area partnership arrangements that bring together key agencies delivering services for children, young people and their families. Tower Hamlets' Children's Trust is called the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Group (CYPSPG).
Common Framework Assessment (CAF)	The CAF for children and young people is a standardised approach to conducting an assessment of a child's additional needs. The CAF has been designed to help practitioners assess needs at an earlier stage and work with families, alongside other practitioners and agencies to meet those needs.
Community Plan	Launched in January 2009 this is the overarching strategic plan which all members of the Tower Hamlets Partnership are working towards.
ContactPoint	ContactPoint is a shared database which will provide a quick way for people working with children to find out who else is working with the same child
COO-L Card	The Tower Hamlets COO-L (Choice and Opportunities On-Line) Scheme aims to increase young people's participation in positive activities by giving them £40 per month which they can spend on leisure and cultural activities advertised on the COO-L website.
Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)	EYFS is the national framework which sets the standards of learning, development and care for children from birth to five.
Every Child Matters (ECM)	ECM is the programme that sets out the Government's aim for every child, whatever their background or circumstances, so that all children are supported to be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution; and achieve economic wellbeing. The Every Disabled Child Matters programme sits alongside this.
Extended School	This is a school that is open to pupils, families and the wider community during the normal school day

	and beyond at weekends and during school holidays. Extended schools provide a core offer of services including childcare in primary schools, parenting support and a range of additional activities.
Family Intervention Project	Family Intervention Projects have developed from the government's antisocial behaviour strategy, to improve the behaviour of challenging families and reduce their impact on their community. They bring stability to families' lives, prevent homelessness and improve opportunities for children and young people.
Family Nurse Partnership	The Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) is a pilot project that offers, nurse-led home visiting for vulnerable, first time, young parents. FNP nurses visit parents from early pregnancy until the child is two years old, building a close, supportive relationship with the whole family and guiding parents to adopt healthier lifestyles, improve their parenting skills, and become self-sufficient.
Find Your Talent	Find Your Talent is a government programme which will trial different ways of giving all young people aged up to the age of 19 access to a broad range of creative and cultural activity for up to five hours a week in and out of school. Tower Hamlets is one of just ten areas around the country selected to take part in the programme.
Foundation Programmes	The foundation learning tier (FLT) is a part of the wider 14–19 and vocational qualifications reform programme. It aims to improve the skills of learners working below level 2, aged 14 and over, through developing high-quality credit-based qualifications at Entry level and level 1 in the Qualifications. Through personalised learning programmes based on progression pathways, the FLT reform will increase learners' participation, achievement and progression.
Healthy Towns	Healthy Towns is a new government initiative through which nine local authorities (including Tower Hamlets) will trial innovate ways of encouraging communities to be more physically active and make healthy food choices.
Joint Area Review (JAR)	A large, multi-disciplinary inspection of Children's Services, led by Ofsted. It examines how services are contributing to the wellbeing of children and young people in terms of the five Every Child Matters outcomes.
Key Stage	The National Curriculum is organised around four key stages. The key stages are broken down as follows: Key Stage 1: pupils aged 5 to 7 (year groups 1 and 2) Key Stage 2: pupils aged 7 to 11 (year groups 3 to 6)

	<p>Key Stage 3: pupils aged 11 to14 (year groups 7 to 9)</p> <p>Key Stage 4: pupils aged 14 to16 (year groups 10 and 11).</p>
Local Area Agreement (LAA)	The LAA is a framework for addressing local priorities in Tower Hamlets, and is designed to accelerate the delivery of improved outcomes in areas which really matter to local people. The Tower Hamlets Partnership agreed an LAA with central government to run from June 2008 to March 2001.
Local Area Partnership (LAP)	The borough has been divided into eight LAP area based on local wards. LAPs are a key strand of the Tower Hamlets Partnership and provide a platform through which local residents can have their say on the improvements in their local area and can influence how changes are carried out.
Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)	Members of LSCBs include local authorities, health bodies and the police. The boards exist to ensure that all members are coordinated and effective in their work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
NEET	NEET young people who those who are not in education, employment or training.
Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted)	Ofsted is a non-ministerial government department accountable to Parliament. It now brings together the wide experience of four formerly separate inspectorates and inspects and regulates care for children and young people, as well as education and training for learners of all ages.
Passport to Employability	The Passport to Employability programme seeks to improve the future prospects of 14-19 learners. It offers a personal package that starts with an individual assessment of need and ends with a nationally recognised employability qualification.
Play Pathfinder	Play Pathfinders are local authorities which have been successful in securing additional funding from the government to build and upgrade facilities for play in the local area. Tower Hamlets is a Play Pathfinder.
Primary Strategy for Change	This capital programme will support local authorities in renewing at least half of all primary and primary-age special schools by 2022-23. Started in April 2008, the programme will invest a total of £1.9 billion over three years.
Special Educational Needs (SEN)	A child is defined as having special educational needs if he or she has a learning difficulty that needs special provision. A learning difficulty means that the child has significantly greater difficulty in learning than most children of the same age.

Tell-Us Survey	The Tell-Us Survey is a national web-based survey involving children and young people across a sample of schools and age groups. It asks children and young people their views on their local area, with questions based around the five Every Child Matters outcomes.
World Class Commissioning	The World Class Commissioning programme has been introduced by the Department of Health to deliver a more strategic and long-term approach to commissioning services, with a clear focus on the delivery of improved health outcomes.

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ANNEX A

Resourcing the Children and Young People's Plan

[This section will include an analysis of total spending by all partners and how it is divided amongst each of the six themes]

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