

**EVERY
CHANCE**
for **EVERY
CHILD**

**TOWER HAMLETS
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES STRATEGY
2019 - 2024**

CONTENTS

Foreword	3
Introduction	4
Summary demographics	5
What do local children and families think?	6
Our Charter	9
Our priorities for children and families	10
Priority 1: Aspiration to Action	11
Priority 2: Healthy Families	15
Priority 3: Safe and Secure	20
Making it happen	25
Our partners	26



FOREWORD

We are proud to introduce the new Children and Families Strategy 2019-2024. Our ambition for Tower Hamlets is simple:

Together, we will seize every chance for every child or young person in Tower Hamlets to be healthy, safe and successful.

We believe all agencies and organisations in the borough should make children and young people their priority. To do this, we will ensure that every chance and opportunity is taken advantage of for our children and young people to be happy, healthy, respected and valued contributors to this borough.

Our Strategy will take an innovative, bold approach which is different from what has previously been done: it will be focused on outcomes for residents and not on services and outputs from individual organisations. To stay true to this approach our work will need to be iterative. Whilst we believe the actions identified in this Strategy are right, with outcomes at the forefront of our work, over its lifetime we will need to review the actions to remain dynamic.

The Children and Families Partnership has thought long and hard about where we focus and how – do we focus on the most vulnerable or cater to the needs of the majority? We want to do both. This Strategy looks at how we support all of our children and young people by beginning with a commitment to early help, but also lays the groundwork for more specific focussed work in relation to the most vulnerable: those experiencing neglect, violence and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), for example.

We will amplify and champion good work, but also use our joint resources and influence to unpick entrenched and developing issues alongside other leading local partnerships: the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Community Safety Partnership and the Growth and Economic Development Partnership. Therefore, while the Children and Families Partnership will be the owner of this Strategy, in order to be successful, our priorities will need to be delivered across a range of partnership groups, embedded in single agency approaches and built into commissioning intentions, with specific agencies taking the lead where appropriate.

In a borough as diverse as ours, there are many areas which the Children and Families Partnership could choose to focus on. We recognise that we stand a greater chance of success if we select and champion a few key priorities.

Our children deserve every chance to live fulfilling, enriching lives, and be valued members of our community. Together, we will support them to seize those opportunities.



Mayor John Biggs
Chair of the
Tower Hamlets
Partnership
Executive Group



Cllr Danny Hassell
Chair of the
Children and Families
Partnership

INTRODUCTION

Our Children and Families Strategy sets out the strategic direction for Tower Hamlets which we believe will deliver the best outcomes for the children, young people and families who live here. It builds on the Tower Hamlets Plan's five-year vision of tackling inequality by building a strong, inclusive and fair borough to deliver a better deal for children and young people.

To deliver a better deal, we need to understand what our local population needs and we can't meet those needs unless health services, the Local Authority, schools, the police, the voluntary sector and other agencies work together. The Children and Families Partnership is the structure we have for working together and each of our organisations is committed to delivering the support needed to drive forward positive outcomes for local children, young people and families.

Our priorities for change over the next five years will be planned and delivered through this Strategy. The Strategy will also direct partnership work for children, young people and families across the borough, including within the decisions taken by the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Community Safety Partnership and the Tower Hamlets Partnership, the multi-agency partnerships working in the best interests of the borough and local residents.

We arrived at our strategic direction through discussion with professionals and the local community, from nursery school pupils up to those leaving the care system to understand where we as a local area need to do better. We have also looked at the local Joint Strategic Needs Assessments which are completed or in development in relation to Special Educational Needs and disabilities (SEND), Adolescence, Youth Violence and Mental Wellbeing. We have also reviewed data which tells us who is doing well and who would benefit from targeted support. Using all of the insight we collected the Partnership came together to identify the strategic actions which need to happen so that local children and families are supported to live the best lives possible.

This Strategy is the conclusion of all of those conversations, and marks the start of delivering a fresh direction for children, young people and families.

We are proud to share this vision with you.

**EVERY
CHANCE
for EVERY
CHILD**

SUMMARY DEMOGRAPHICS

There are **75,455** **0-19 year olds** in Tower Hamlets¹.



Around 8% of the school population was **born outside the UK**, and around a third of these pupils were



born in Bangladesh, with a growing proportion from EU member states. **75%** of Tower Hamlets primary school pupils speak a **first language which is not English**, compared to 54% in Inner London and 21% nationally.²

There were **113** young people in **drug and alcohol treatment** and **259** clients starting treatment living with children under the age of 18 in 2017/18.³



Of the estimated **125,900 households in Tower Hamlets**, one in five households is made up of more than one family and 7 per cent of households have more than six people (compared with 4 per cent in London).⁴



There are **1,039 Children in Need**, **314** Children subject to a **Child Protection Plan** (46 per



10,000 population compared to 45 nationally) and 331 children who are Looked After in Tower Hamlets (48 per 10,000 population compared to 65 nationally).⁵

There is a higher rate (**17%**) of under-25s in the borough with **special educational needs** compared to the England average of 14%.⁶



There are **47,218 pupils in 120 maintained nurseries, maintained and independent schools** in Tower Hamlets.⁷



93% of children accessing early years places are **receiving support from Good or Outstanding early education providers**.⁸



There are higher rates of children aged 10-16 who are in the **youth justice system** in Tower Hamlets. **9 per 1,000** 10-16 year olds were in the youth justice system (2016/17) compared to in London (6 per 1000) and England (5 per 1000).⁹



Our **Specialist Domestic Abuse Courts** have seen an **11% increase** in conviction rates, and have a victim satisfaction rate of 90%.¹⁰

Tower Hamlets has the **3rd highest economic output**



of any local authority area in the UK, next to Westminster and the City of London. Jobs growth is likely to be in the professional sectors, indicating an increased demand for highly qualified workers.

(1) ONS Mid-year population estimates 2017 (2) DfE June 2018 – Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics January 2018 (3) PHE NDTMS (4) Reference is Census 2011 (5) MI Report: April 2019 (6) PHE Fingertips tool. <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/> (7) Reference is DfE June 2018 – Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics: January 2018 (8) Reference is DfE - Provision for children under the age of 5 years: January 2018 (9) PHE Fingertips tool. <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/> (10) VAWG Strategy

WHAT DO LOCAL CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THINK?



We began to develop our understanding of what our community needs by using the messages they shared to develop the Tower Hamlets Plan, beginning in Summer 2017.

- As part of their community engagement over summer 2017, Collaborate and the council undertook 25 community leader interviews, 33 community events, 104 public interviews and 5 focus groups
- The Tower Hamlets Partnership Summit in January 2018 was attended by nearly 300 people from across 160 organisations
- Between February and March 2018 the Tower Hamlets Partnership undertook an online survey which had 96 respondents

There are two regular surveys of local students and parents, whose results were shared in Summer 2018 which validated the messages from the Tower Hamlets Plan:

- 1,824 pupils took part in the 2017 Pupil Attitude Survey, with 1,433 primary pupil responses and 391 secondary pupil responses
- 209 parents and carers responded to the 2018 Parent Carer Survey

To develop a clear set of priorities for this Strategy, we took the earlier engagement and used it to shape specific engagement with children, young people, parents, carers and local professionals

- The Children's Services Summer Survey 2018 garnered responses from 126 teenagers and pre-teens, and 22 parents and carers
- The November 2018 Children and Young People's Summit was attended by 100 delegates including statutory and voluntary partners, and young people
- Between December 2018 and February 2019 we visited 5 nursery and primary schools for face to face engagement
- Young People's Question Time – March 2019

The draft strategy was also shared with children, young people, parents, carers and professionals for a three week consultation period in May 2019; the results of which have informed the final strategy.

A summary of the messages we received are on pages 7 and 8, but more detail can be found in the appendices.

WHAT DO LOCAL CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THINK?

34% of parents and carers have not had enough information to help them plan their child's future¹¹

47% of all pupils aspire to be in '**top professional job**', this is especially the case for Bangladeshi primary pupils but least likely for White primary pupils



Exams and school work are a common worry among 53% primary pupils and 42% secondary pupils¹²



Young people worry over **employment** and **money**, and would like more support around these issues



Young people are not achieving their aspirations because of a focus on **academic outcomes**; a 'one-size-fits-all' approach and a lack of parental support



We are missing opportunities to connect local people to **economic opportunity** because local growth is not 'inclusive', especially for young people



The **aspirations** of and offer to young people needs **improving**. There needs to be more opportunities taken up post-GCSE



Young people need more opportunities for **work experience** and careers advice (tailored to individuals)



There needs to be more **emphasis on developing young leadership** and enabling more young people to have this opportunity to grow and develop through learning alongside and with people who are different from them

64% of parents worry about their child's health and wellbeing often¹³

We need an increase in children's levels of **self-confidence** that allows them to build healthy relationships and achieve emotional and economic wellbeing

Only 24% primary pupils and 11% secondary pupils report eating recommended five portions of **fruit** and **vegetables**¹⁴



Young people identified their health – including **mental health**, as the most important thing they feel local leaders in Tower Hamlets should focus on

PSHE support and lessons should be given by specialists covering **cyber bullying, self-harm, eating disorders, self-esteem** and **managing stress**

Some parents and carers specifically cited support for **special educational need and disability** as the most important thing to focus on



Free, **unstructured play** has an **essential role to play** in healthy children and families'.

(11) 2018 Parent Carer Survey (12) Pupil Attitude Survey 2017 (13) 2018 Parent Carer Survey (14) Pupil Attitude Survey 2017

WHAT DO LOCAL CHILDREN AND FAMILIES THINK?

Ensuring children and young people are safe in their community

73% secondary pupils know how to report **online bullying**. But only **40%** would report it¹⁵



We need increased engagement around **violence** against **women and girls**



17% of parents do not feel confident monitoring social media/internet use¹⁶



Young people can find it hard to **trust adults** enough to confide in them



New technologies mean young people can no longer **'close the door'** to violence in their neighbourhoods



"Should focus on **ASB, drugs, knife sweeps**. People don't like being nervous when they are out"



6% of secondary school pupils have tried **drugs**, mostly solvents and cannabis¹⁷



57 young people responded to the question 'do knife arches in schools have a role to play in making young people feel safer?' **41** young people said it did not¹⁸



Provision and facilities

More provision is needed to support parents with **disabled children** and thresholds for access should be reviewed



More spaces and **affordable activities** are needed



50% say more **information** about where they can go with their family would improve family life¹⁹



Many young people identified **youth services, sports facilities** and a **diverse community** as the best things on offer in the borough



(15) Pupil Attitude Survey 2017 (16) 2018 Parent Carer Survey (17) Pupil Attitude Survey 2017 (18) Young People's Question Time, March 2019 (19) 2018 Parent Carer Survey

OUR CHARTER

We want to ensure that there is every chance for every child to be happy, healthy, safe and successful.

In order to do that, we commit to a number of fundamental principles:

- **Working restoratively with children, young people and families** so that together we build relationships between professionals and families, prevent harm and resolve conflict where it arises.
- **Developing and championing engagement with children and young people** so we can empower children and young people in our borough to shape services and the future of our borough.
- **Committing to consistent and sustained focus on achieving better outcomes** for children, young people and families, which is respectful of and responsive to different needs.
- **Ensuring that all children, young people and families are supported to access the right help at the right time** so problems do not escalate.
- **Ensuring a strong offer of services for all families in the borough**, supplemented by access to an enhanced range of services, intervention and support for those that need it.
- **Sharing data in a safe but timely way** to enable better service planning and interventions to take place.
- **Sharing positive stories of children and young people in Tower Hamlets** and their achievements to challenge negative perceptions and so they feel they are a valued part of our community.

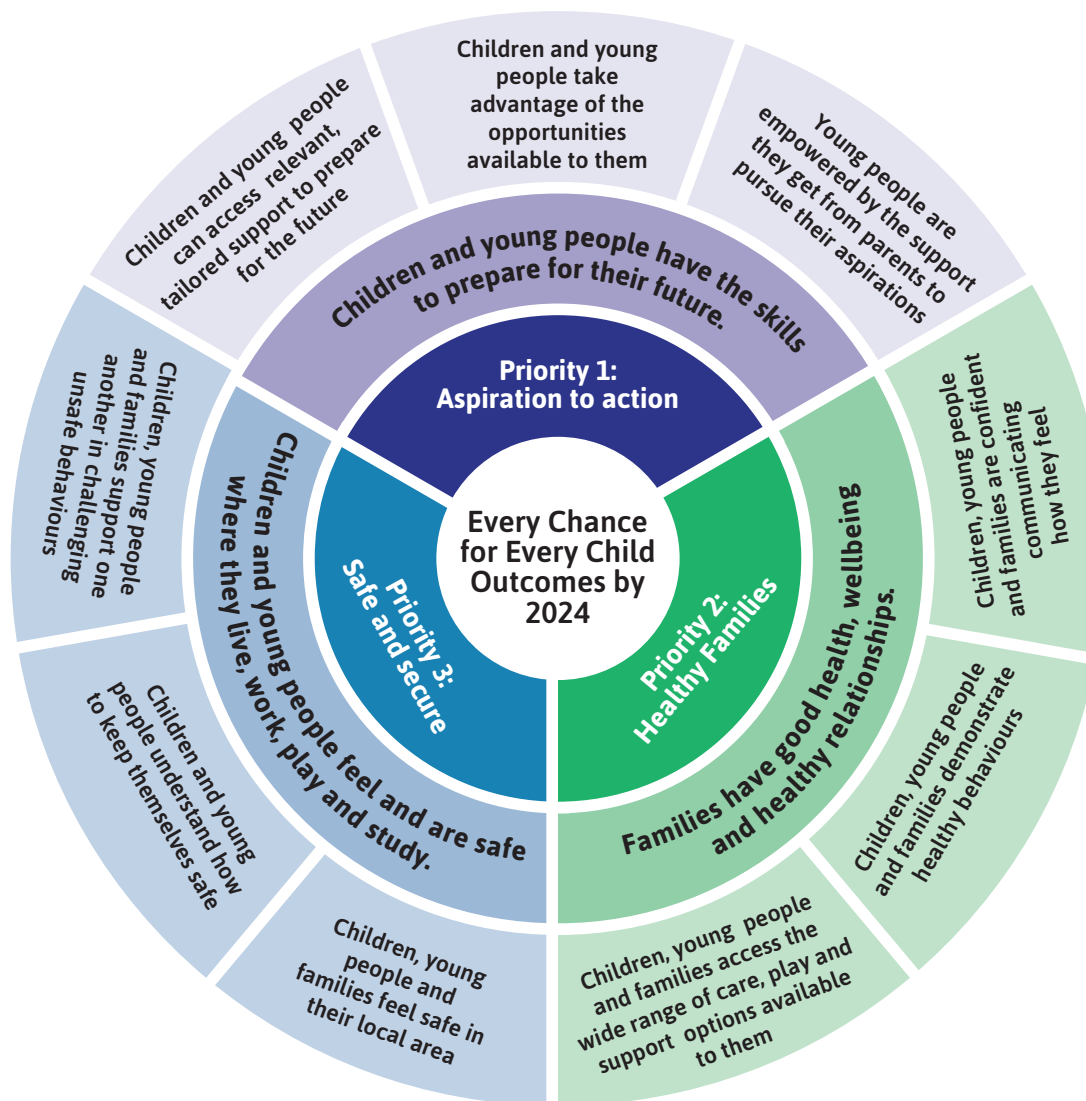


- **Ensuring every child and young person will have a trustworthy and trusted adult to confide in** – be it parent, teacher, teaching assistant, youth worker or social worker – who can support them with their needs, especially if they are concerned about their safety or wellbeing.
- **Ensuring every child should have access to a safe space** – either at home, in a school, youth hub, leisure centre or Idea Store.

Our principles and the actions related to our priorities will form the basis of a local multi-agency campaign over the life of the Strategy which will see us put children and young people at the heart of everything we do in Tower Hamlets.

OUR PRIORITIES FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

Our Strategy has developed its priorities in a way that local children, young people and families recognise so that there is every chance for every child in Tower Hamlets to thrive. The Strategy has three main priorities which will drive our work and focus for children, young people and families in Tower Hamlets:



PRIORITY 1: ASPIRATION TO ACTION

WHAT OUTCOME DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
THROUGH THIS PRIORITY?

**Children and young people have the skills to
prepare for their future.**



PRIORITY 1: ASPIRATION TO ACTION

WHY IS THIS PRIORITY IMPORTANT?

We are committed to ensuring that every child and young person has the chance to access information and develop the skills they will need to prepare for their future. It is essential that they have good quality education as a foundation with high quality guidance and support available when it is needed. They need opportunities to explore different options, expand horizons and learn new skills as they progress through their lives. This includes ensuring that children and young people have secure foundations to take advantage of these opportunities.

Despite Tower Hamlets historically exceeding the national average in terms of educational attainment at the secondary level, this is not translating into excellent progress or sustained employment outcomes for our young people.

In order for aspirations to be realised and translated into good employment outcomes the support that is offered needs to be tailored to the individual. By taking account of their interests and being informed by what we know about the future job market, we can help young people develop the skills and abilities that employers are looking for.

Children and young people have told us that they highly value all opportunities to plan for their future and find out more about the options open to them but quality and accessibility can be variable. The views and expectations of parents and carers are also important to young people and whilst this is usually a positive motivation it can sometimes create additional pressures.

The average attainment 8 score at GCSE for all pupils in Tower Hamlets is 47 (compared to 45 nationally). However, this falls to just 36 for Black Caribbean boys and lower still to 28 for White British boys on Free School Meals.²⁰

WHAT WILL OUR FOCUS BE?

Our focus will be on ensuring opportunities to enhance the employability of local children and young people are well known and shared across the borough, this includes looking at opportunities for soft skills and non-traditional pathways into the world of work.

The Children and Families Partnership will show leadership through its own organisations with commitments to take on apprentices and ensuring there are work experience opportunities available. We will also use our influence to encourage other organisations across the borough – and the city where possible – to do the same.

**“It’s hard to get public sector work experience, especially in the NHS.
Young person”**

(20) Revised 2018 GCSE results – January 2019

PRIORITY 1: ASPIRATION TO ACTION

WHAT ACTIONS WILL WE TAKE?

- We will develop a cultural and enrichment offer which supports children and young people to experience diverse opportunities so that they feel less intimidated in unfamiliar spaces and therefore empowered to take up the career path which suit them best.
- We will deliver an education and awareness programme to promote science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM) through play and early education providers.
- We will work with partners to understand the main professional and vocational career progression routes which our GCSE offer supports, including information on the value and benefits of various options.
- We will offer work experience placements to local children and young people, including for care leavers and those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) from within our own organisations.
- We will develop ways to work with parents, carers and trusted adults (including for those who are less engaged) to encourage them to support children and young people to access opportunities.
- We will develop an agreed approach and set of messages for children, young people and families about preparing for the future informed by messages from local employers, including businesses, faith and community organisations.
- We will develop a web-based single point of access to inform young people and families about careers, skills and enrichment opportunities in the borough.
- We will empower parents, carers and trusted adults with information around a range of education and career pathways, engaging them positively on options for young people in open settings such as career fairs.

- We will ensure young people are supported to explore enterprise as a career option, alongside apprenticeships and traditional career routes.

A pilot is being developed by the council with Swanlea School which aims to improve careers education for Years 7-9. It will ensure young people feel confident and motivated to try their best in school - in the knowledge that they have many career paths open to them. If successful the approach could be rolled out across the borough.

WHAT OTHER WORK IS CONTRIBUTING TO OUR PRIORITY?

The focus of the Partnership will need to compliment and align with the good work going on in individual schools and other agencies, but also ensure that it sensibly links in with the local strategic direction for economic development.

We will work closely with the Growth and Economic Development Partnership to help deliver employability opportunities for local young people, this is reflected in the Growth and Economic Development Plan 2018 – 2023, particularly within priority one ‘preparing our young people for success’. Our focus will also be reflected through the work of our 14-25 Partnership and the new Learning and Achievement Strategy for 14-25 year olds the specific employability needs of children looked-after and care leavers will remain a focus for the Corporate Parenting Board.

PRIORITY 1: ASPIRATION TO ACTION

WHAT OUTCOMES WILL BE ACHIEVED BY 2024?

- Children and young people can access relevant, tailored support to prepare for the future
- Children and young people take advantage of the opportunities available to them
- Young people are empowered by the support they get from parents to pursue their aspirations



HOW WILL WE KNOW IF THIS IS WORKING?

INCREASE THE PERCENTAGE OF SECONDARY PUPILS WHO HAVE ENOUGH INFORMATION AND SUPPORT TO HELP PLAN THEIR FUTURE



INCREASE THE PROPORTION OF YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGED WITH YOUNG WORKPATH FROM GROUPS AT HIGH RISK OF NOT BEING IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING



INCREASE THE PROPORTION OF PARENTS WHO ARE OPEN TO NON-ACADEMIC CAREER ROUTES FOR THEIR CHILDREN



INCREASE IN THE PERCENTAGE OF 16/17 YEAR OLDS IN EDUCATION, EMPLOYMENT OR TRAINING



PRIORITY 2: HEALTHY FAMILIES

WHAT OUTCOME DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
THROUGH THIS PRIORITY?

**Families have good health, wellbeing and
healthy relationships.**



PRIORITY 2: HEALTHY FAMILIES

WHY IS THIS PRIORITY IMPORTANT?

We want to ensure our children have every chance to lead healthy lives, have a sense of wellbeing and form healthy, fulfilling relationships. With the 12th highest proportion of childhood obesity in London for Reception aged children (11%) and 4th highest proportion in Year 6 (27%), physical health must feature as a local priority for children, young people and families. Therefore an integral part of this priority has to be about looking at play, physical activity and sport for children and young people.

However, being healthy is not limited to physical health—mental health and resilience can influence our physical health, as well as our capability to lead a healthy lifestyle. Around 30% of people with any long-term physical health condition, including obesity and asthma, also have a mental health problem, which can exacerbate some long term conditions. Mental health is also closely associated with domestic abuse and substance misuse, with each one a risk factor for the other two.

Many children and young people are building resilience after experiencing loss, or dealing with poverty. Secondary school pupils report feeling stressed and pressured with exams and thinking about the future. What is clear is that having someone to talk to, and feeling heard is fundamental to young people in helping them cope with the demands of the modern world.

Healthy, strong relationships with family, friends and professionals can help our children and young people to feel happier and more secure, as well as build a sense of belonging and self-worth. We want to help our communities to encourage their children and young people to share their feelings and know they are understood.

(21) Public Health England (2019). (PHE Fingertips tool)

11% of people aged 5-16 years old in Tower Hamlets were estimated to have mental health disorders in 2015. This is higher than in London as a whole.²¹

Children who have been neglected or exposed to adverse childhood experiences are more likely to experience mental health problems including depression, post-traumatic stress, and attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder. These factors also increase the risk of poor overall health. Therefore, we are committed to ensuring that children, young people and families have access to high quality services and support during the 1,001 critical days between conception, a child's second birthday, and beyond.

“ PSHE at school is patchy and drops off completely in 6th form. Young person ”

PRIORITY 2: HEALTHY FAMILIES

WHAT WILL OUR FOCUS BE?

The first 1,001 days of a child's life are crucial for healthy mental and physical development, so we will support a system wide approach to improving outcomes for children in the early years with a focus on speech, language and communication skills. From the earliest years through to adolescence, children need access to safe spaces to play and engage in physical activity; we want to make that possible. We will support our children, young people and families to make informed choices about what good health entails early on, directing them towards the right support at the right time. We will work to remove the stigma around mental health, encouraging children, young people and their families to talk to each other and share their needs.

This priority sits within both the health and children's arenas. With the Partnership setting the strategic direction for children and families overall, we will work with the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Tower Hamlets Together sub-group, Born Well Growing Well to make this priority a success. Additionally, we will add value where a wider partnership response—which involves services like housing, schools or probation—is needed, reflecting the broader health and wellbeing concerns which children and families have told us are important to them. To effectively deliver on this, we will ensure that we make best use of our award winning parks, idea stores, and children's centres to promote and deliver health and wellbeing programmes and opportunities for families.

WHAT ACTIONS WILL WE TAKE?

- We will engage with children, young people and partners about the local personal, social and health education curriculum to support schools to develop a rich co-produced offer.
- We will campaign with community leaders and schools to encourage parents and other trusted adults to discuss wellbeing, emotional health and resilience with children and young people.
- We will promote a Play Charter which encourages individuals and organisations to advocate for quality play space, physical activity and play in the borough.
- We will improve the accessibility and quality of information for children, young people and families, in particular those with SEND, to ensure it accurately reflects the services each member organisation of this partnership offers.
- We will provide basic training on the early help offer to all local authority officers, NHS staff and other partners who may not be the 'usual suspects', such as local shops and businesses so we can help families access the right support at the right time.
- We will ensure there are effective, integrated pathways between mental health, domestic abuse and substance misuse services, and ensure professionals receive training across all adverse childhood experiences.

PRIORITY 2: HEALTHY FAMILIES

WHAT OTHER WORK IS CONTRIBUTING TO OUR PRIORITY?

There is so much valuable and exciting work happening across the borough which supports the health and wellbeing of local families. Born Well Growing Well are working through programmes and improvements including:

- Increased mental health access and extending the offer for mild, moderate and severe needs.
- Improving levels of healthy weight and dental health in children and young people.
- A Child Obesity Plan is also in development

Air quality and its impact on children and families is of concern given the built up nature of the local environment. The local air quality action plan will be exploring the installation of Green Infrastructure, such as green walls or living roofs at schools and residential developments in polluted areas. Whilst the works within our local parks and open spaces, such as our new outdoor gyms, provide an environment which is supportive of healthier lifestyles.

Tower Hamlets is a trailblazing site for a national project to improve the mental health of children and young people. The pilot will fund dedicated school Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs), training to establish senior mental health leads and reduced waiting times for accessing Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) treatment.



PRIORITY 2: HEALTHY FAMILIES

WHAT OUTCOMES WILL BE ACHIEVED BY 2024?

- Children, young people and families are confident communicating how they feel
- Children, young people and families demonstrate healthy behaviours
- Children, young people and families access the wide range of care, play and support options available to them



HOW WILL WE KNOW IF THIS IS WORKING?

**INCREASE
IN THE
PERCENTAGE OF
CHILDREN ACHIEVING AT
LEAST THE EXPECTED
LEVEL IN ALL EARLY
LEARNING GOALS IN THE
EARLY YEARS: AND THE
COMMUNICATION AND
LANGUAGE GOALS IN
PARTICULAR**



**INCREASE
IN THE
PROPORTION OF
SCHOOL PUPILS
WHO HAVE SOMEONE TO
TALK TO WHEN THEY
ARE WORRIED**



**INCREASE
IN THE
PROPORTION
OF CHILDREN
AND YOUNG PEOPLE
ACCESSING TIMELY
CAMHS SUPPORT**



**DECREASE
IN THE
PROPORTION
OF CHILDREN
IN RECEPTION CLASS
WHO ARE OBESE OR
OVERWEIGHT**



**CHILDREN AND
FAMILIES ARE
CONTINUING TO
ACCESS PLAY
SESSIONS AT CHILDREN'S
CENTRES AND STAY
& PLAY SESSIONS
IN PARKS AND OPEN
SPACES**



PRIORITY 3: SAFE AND SECURE

WHAT OUTCOME DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
THROUGH THIS PRIORITY?

**Children and young people feel and are safe
where they live, work, play and study.**



PRIORITY 3: SAFE AND SECURE

WHY IS THIS PRIORITY IMPORTANT?

All children and young people have a right to feel safe and secure. Through our focus groups, we learnt that younger children have concerns about fire and strangers. However, not one child mentioned online danger, which head teachers told us was of utmost concern to them and parents.

We know from the most recent Pupil Attitude Survey that 30% of primary school children and 25% of secondary school children had experienced bullying. Schools work hard to make a difference on this issue and have strategies to address bullying. But we must continue to be attentive because we know that children who are bullied will on average have poorer school attendance which in turn impacts on their attainment and wellbeing.

Although many local children and young people have reported that they do feel safe in the community, a significant number feel unsafe or uncomfortable walking to and from school. This perceived risk is supported by local statistics which indicate children and young people are more likely to be involved in violent incidents during this time. Secondary school pupils report feeling safe in the area where they live, however this drops significantly when asked about going outside of that area.

92% primary pupils felt safe in school and 84% of secondary pupils also felt safe.²²

For our most vulnerable children and young people, safety is not always a given and this Partnership will work together to safeguard those at risk of exploitation and harm. All children said they felt safest when with their parents or teachers, meaning we can support those who keep children safe by ensuring they are informed and equipped to deal with the most sensitive subjects, which include:

- Exploitation
- Serious youth violence
- Domestic abuse
- Substance misuse
- Neglect
- Violence against women and girls (VAWG)
- Missing from home and education

“It is often boys, rather than girls who fear for their safety.”
Teenage girl, CYP Summit

(22) Pupil Attitude Survey 2017

PRIORITY 3: SAFE AND SECURE



WHAT WILL OUR FOCUS BE?

As well as being safe, young people should feel safe in their community. We will ensure that there is a much stronger voice for young people in relation to making their environment feel safe, the development of youth services and in response to community safety issues.

Our focus going forward will be on building resilience within families and between different communities to ensure that children are safe and secure. As a Partnership we will focus on reducing the exposure to and perpetuation of violence by children and young people, very much in conjunction with the Community Safety Partnership.

WHAT ACTIONS WILL WE TAKE?

- We will redesign our youth offer so there is more integration between the youth offer in hubs, detached and outreach youth work so services meet the needs of young people, including those needing targeted provision.
- We will ensure that families can get advice and support with safety concerns face-to-face across the borough, particularly where English is an additional language.
- We will improve opportunities for children, young people and families to participate in community initiatives so they can reclaim their local communities and feel invested in their neighbourhoods.
- We will develop, promote and deliver a comprehensive training offer for parents and professionals that includes priorities around stranger danger, fire and road safety, e-safety, safeguarding, adverse childhood experiences and a public health approach to violence.
- We will ensure personal, social health education is consistently good quality across the borough, including discussions around bullying, hate crimes, gangs and serious youth violence, VAWG, the impact of exploitation and the use of substances to facilitate it.
- We will work with the council and education providers to develop an approach to managing behaviour and the use of exclusions which takes into account the context and experiences of young people.
- We will work with the Community Safety Partnership to provide a platform for young people to share their views and question senior leaders on areas of concern.

PRIORITY 3: SAFE AND SECURE

WHAT OTHER WORK IS CONTRIBUTING TO OUR PRIORITY?

The safety and security of local children and young people is a priority for all of our partners. It can be seen in the work of the Metropolitan Police when responding to incidents of domestic abuse in the home and violence on our streets, in social care when responding to neglect and exploitation, for our local schools in tackling bullying and cyber-safety.

Many other areas of this work which require a strategic focus for the whole population will be led by the Community Safety Partnership, such as our overall approach to serious violence, substance misuse and domestic abuse. It would be wrong for this Strategy to undermine or disrupt such work; instead we will compliment good practice at a partnership level where there is a specific focus on children and young people. The Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership is currently developing a strategy for tackling Violence, Vulnerability and Exploitation among young people which this Partnership will help to deliver.

The Early Help Service was recently successful in applying for a grant Practitioner Training programme. The Practitioner Training programme aims to train 400 practitioners at varying levels. It will support Tower Hamlets to ensure practitioners across the partnership are aware of parental conflict and its impact on children; provide local training for frontline practitioners so they have the confidence and knowledge required to identify parental conflict, offer initial support and signpost to appropriate services where relevant; and build sustainability to deliver future training themselves via a 'train the trainer' approach.

PRIORITY 3: SAFE AND SECURE

WHAT OUTCOMES WILL BE ACHIEVED BY 2024?

- Children, young people and families support one another in challenging unsafe behaviours
- Children and young people understand how to keep themselves safe
- Children, young people and families feel safe in their local area



HOW WILL WE KNOW IF THIS IS WORKING?

INCREASE
IN THE
PROPORTION
OF SECONDARY SCHOOL
PUPILS WHO WOULD
FEEL COMFORTABLE
REPORTING ONLINE
BULLYING AND HATE
CRIME



DECREASE IN
THE RATE
OF CHILDREN
SUBJECT TO
CHILD PROTECTION
PLANS



DECREASE IN
THE NUMBER OF
SERIOUS YOUTH
VIOLENCE
OFFENCES



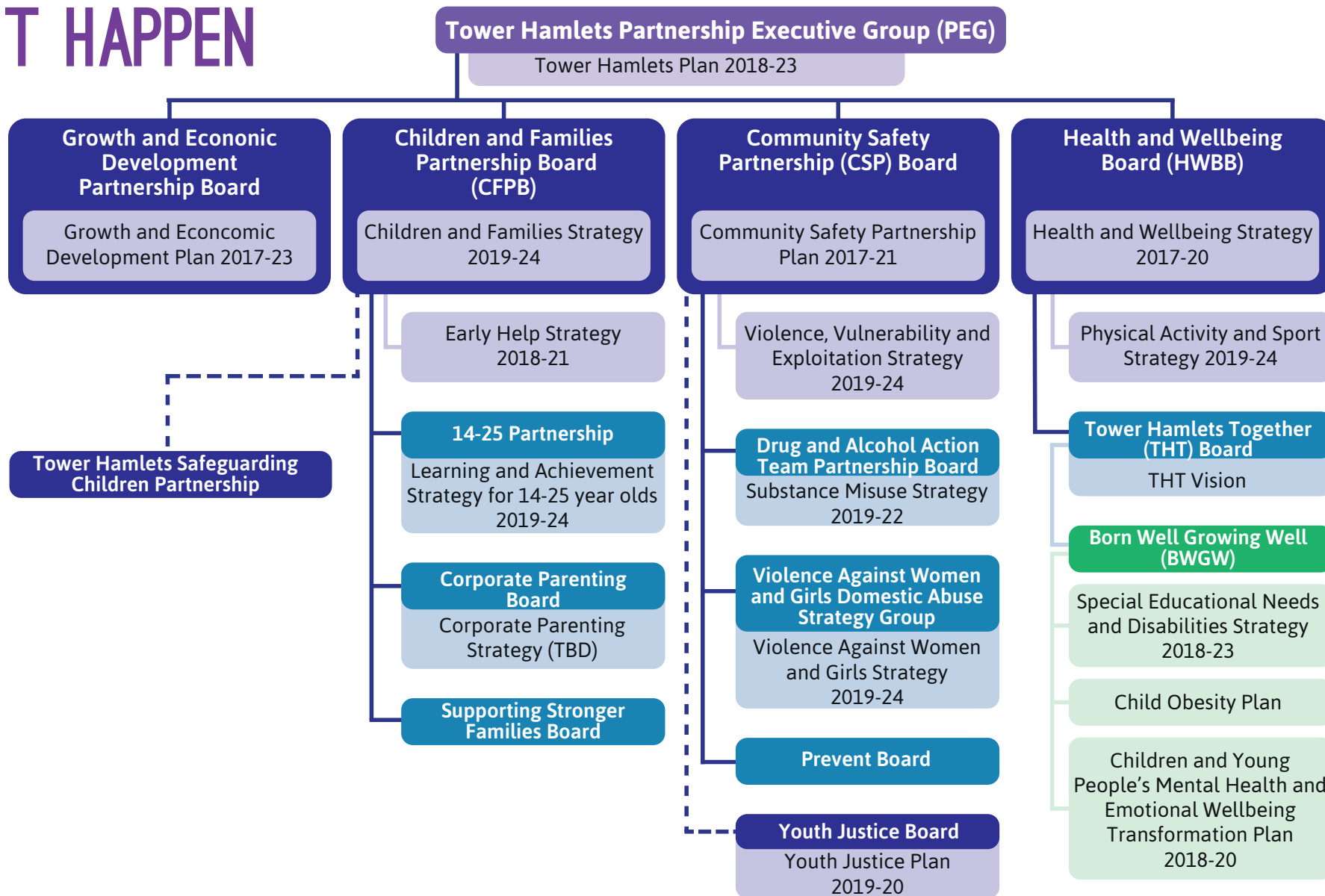
INCREASE
IN THE
PROPORTION OF
PRIMARY AND
SECONDARY PUPILS WHO
FELT SAFE IN THE AREA
WHERE THEY LIVE



INCREASE
IN THE
PROPORTION OF
PARENTS AND
CARERS WHO FEEL SAFE
IN THEIR LOCAL AREA



MAKING IT HAPPEN



In the same way that the Tower Hamlets' Partnership priority on children is monitored by that group, but delivered by the Children and Families Partnership; only by linking in with strategic decision making across partnerships and agencies, we will be able to provide the added value needed to deliver on this ambitious strategy. Alongside recognising the links to the partnerships listed below, important links are maintained on the Children and Families Partnership through its membership, many of whom sit on other partnership groups. This is the strategic system that will deliver on our priority outcomes.

OUR PARTNERS



With special thanks to the following organisations for allowing us to hear directly from children and young people about what they wanted to see in this Strategy:
Columbia Market Nursery School; Elizabeth Selby Infant School; Arnhem Wharf Primary School; Hermitage Primary School; George Green's School; Children's House Nursery School; Swanlea School; Our Time All Ability Group; Limehouse Youth Hub; Central Foundation Girls' School

CONTACT:

Children and Culture Strategy
Policy and Performance team

Email: Children.andCultureSPP@towerhamlets.gov.uk

**EVERY
CHANCE**
for **EVERY
CHILD**