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Children and Young People's Plan for Blaenau Gwent 2011 - 2014



Children & Young
People's Partnership
Partneriaeth Plant a
Phobl Ifanc

Working to Address Issues of Child Poverty



Welcome

Welcome to the second Children and Young People's Plan and the first Child Poverty Plan for Blaenau Gwent.

The causes and effects of child poverty are complex and wide ranging. Our plan describes how all partner agencies in the borough will work together to mitigate the effects of child poverty on the life chances of children and young people. We aim to improve outcomes for all children and young people and their families, with a particular focus however on those who are disadvantaged.

We are not starting from a blank canvas, we are building on the success of the first Children and Young Peoples Plan. Some examples of where the first plan has made most impact are, improved educational attainment at GCSE, the implementation of the Team Around the Child, enhanced services for young people and coordinated multiagency working to address child poverty.

The Children and Young People's Partnership recognises the challenges ahead, particularly in the current economic climate, the impact of which may be disproportionate in an area such as Blaenau Gwent. We recognise the importance of ensuring that our services are delivered effectively, efficiently and economically.

All partners are committed to delivering the child poverty pledge made in 2008 which is *'Working together we are committed to delivering high quality integrated services to support and empower children, young people and families to meet their potential, and to address the effects of child poverty'*

Child poverty is Everyone's Business, by working together we are confident we can make a difference.




Liz Majer

Lead Director for Children and Young People
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

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Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council





Supporting Children & Young People to achieve their full potential

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Supporting Children & Young People to achieve their full potential

Introduction

The Community Strategy for Blaenau Gwent sets out a vision for the area which is:-

“Making Blaenau Gwent a better place to live, work and visit”

The Strategy identifies a number of key work areas, known as “themes” for delivery over the next 20 years. It outlines the actions for each theme all of which have been identified by residents and organisations in Blaenau Gwent.

The Blaenau Gwent Local Service Board (LSB) has the responsibility for developing and overseeing the implementation of the Community Strategy. The LSB has demonstrated a particular interest in the poverty agenda and as part of the Local Delivery Agreement, will be taking forward this issue as a priority.

The Children and Young People’s Plan (CYP Plan) articulates the delivery of priority actions, relating to children, young people and their families, which will contribute to the delivery of 5 of the 7 key themes in the Community Strategy for the next 3 years.

These are:-



Lively & Accessible Communities

Creating communities that people enjoy and want to live in



Thriving Communities

Offering the opportunities, support and resources in our communities for people to thrive



Fair and Safe Communities

Making people feel safer in our communities



Learning Communities

Giving people the skills to succeed



Healthy Communities

Helping people to be healthy and get the right care and support when they need it

Each chapter of this plan contains detail of how addressing priority actions will contribute to the delivery of the above themes.

For further information on the Community Strategy follow the link below:
<http://www.blaenau-gwent.gov.uk/council/8399.asp>



Relationship to Other Plans and Partnerships

The Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) will work closely with other partnerships and their plans to ensure a consistent approach to the delivery of improved outcomes for children, young people and their families (Appendix 1 to this plan gives further details of the planning principles underpinning this work).

The Children and Young People's Plan is a statutory plan and the relationship between this and other statutory plans is shown below:-



How the Plan has been Developed

The first stage in developing this plan was the undertaking of a comprehensive needs assessment and service mapping. The second stage was to agree a set of priorities for inclusion in the plan and implementation over the next 3 years. The priorities were influenced by a combination of the following factors:-

- » Views and opinions of children, young people and their families
- » Analysis of local and national data
- » National priorities and strategies
- » Views and opinions of service providers for children and young people
- » Legislative obligations
- » Reviewing progress made in the delivery of the actions in the first CYP Plan

Each chapter of the plan details the needs and identified priorities for delivery on a multi agency basis. In some cases there will be a clearly identified lead partner for delivery of the priorities, in other cases



delivery will be very much on a partnership basis. This will be reflected in the action plans developed to underpin the chapters. It is anticipated that by completion of these actions the CYPP will collectively play its part in working to address child poverty within the borough.

What Children, Young People and Parents have told us

When it comes to services for children and young people no-one knows more about what works (and what doesn't!) than children and young people themselves and also their families.

The comments below reflect some of the concerns articulated by children, young people and parents in the borough and these have influenced the priorities of the plan.



Tackling Child Poverty – “Everybody’s Business”

Tackling child poverty is the single biggest issue that organisations working with children and young people will face in Blaenau Gwent, because of its extent and the negative impact it has on children and young people and on society. There is clear evidence that poverty can adversely affect children and young people’s outcomes later in life, in relation to health, education, employment and wellbeing. For this reason, the overarching aim of this plan is to make a significant contribution to reducing child poverty and address its effects, supporting the Welsh Assembly Government’s Strategy and Action Plan for reducing child poverty in Wales.

The Welsh Assembly Government has identified 3 strategic objectives for tackling child poverty, these are:-

- » Reducing the number of families living in workless households
- » Improving the skill levels of parents and young people in low income families so that they can secure well paid employment
- » Reducing inequalities in health, education and economic outcomes for children living in poverty

These objectives are supported by 13 broad aims related to child poverty, which are clearly linked to the 7 core aims for children and young people which are based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This is illustrated below:-

WAG’s 13 Broad Aims linked to the 7 Core Aims

WAG’s Core Aims for Children and Young People

To have a flying start in life

To have a comprehensive range of education and learning opportunities

To enjoy the best possible health and be free from abuse, victimisation and exploitation

Broad Aims Linked to Tackling Child Poverty

» To support parenting of children

» To reduce inequalities in educational attainment between children

» To help young persons participating effectively in education and training

» To reduce inequalities in health between children and between parents of children (so far as necessary to ensure the wellbeing of their children)



To have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities

Are listened to, treated with respect and have their race and cultural identity recognised

To have a safe home and community which support physical and emotional wellbeing

Are not disadvantaged by poverty

» To reduce inequalities in participation in cultural, sporting and leisure activities between children and between parents of children (so far as necessary to ensure the wellbeing of their children)

» To help young persons participating effectively and responsibly in the life of their communities

» To ensure that all children grow up in decent housing

» To ensure that all children grow in safe and cohesive communities

» To increase income for households including one or more children with a view to ensuring that, so far as reasonably practicable, there are no households in the relevant income group

» Ensuring that, so far as reasonably practicable, children living in households in the relevant income group are not materially deprived

» To promote and facilitate paid employment for parents of children

» To provide parents of children with the skills necessary for paid employment

» To help young persons take advantage of opportunities for employment

Each chapter of this plan demonstrates our approach to contributing to WAG's Child Poverty agenda, with a focus on local need and actions.

Tackling child poverty is the “golden thread” which weaves through all of the other chapters and priorities of the plan.

On the following pages of this section of the plan we outline the local child poverty story but more importantly, we outline our local action plan.





All Children and Young People should not be disadvantaged by Poverty

Our Local Pledge:

'Working together we are committed to delivering high quality integrated services to support and empower children, young people and families to meet their potential, and to address the effects of child poverty'

What will success look like? (Our Indicators)

1. Number of children living in workless households;
2. Percentage of working age adults with no qualifications;
3. Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals who achieve the Level 2 threshold including English/Welsh and Maths at KS4;
4. Looked after Children per 10,000 population aged under 18;
5. Percentage of live births weighing less than 2,500 grams; and
6. Number of children living in workless/low income families reaching health, social and cognitive development milestones when entering formal education.

What we have already achieved?

Delivery of the priorities of the last Children and Young People's Plan achieved the following:

- » A Child Poverty conference held to raise awareness of the child poverty agenda in Blaenau Gwent, at which all agencies signed a child poverty pledge.
- » Improved partnership working with Communities First Partnerships resulting in shared priorities and combined resources.
- » A number of Child Poverty events supported by 41 partner agencies and where over 500 families accessed information, advice and guidance in town centres.
- » Delivery of a number of Employment Support Initiatives, with high levels of engagement. Some examples, Job Match, School Gates, Genesis and Bridges into Work
- » Introduction of Citizens Advice Bureau Debt Advisor Service - New service for people who are in financial crisis i.e. families due for eviction from a council property or have multiple debts and may have committal proceedings being taken against them for non payment of council tax.



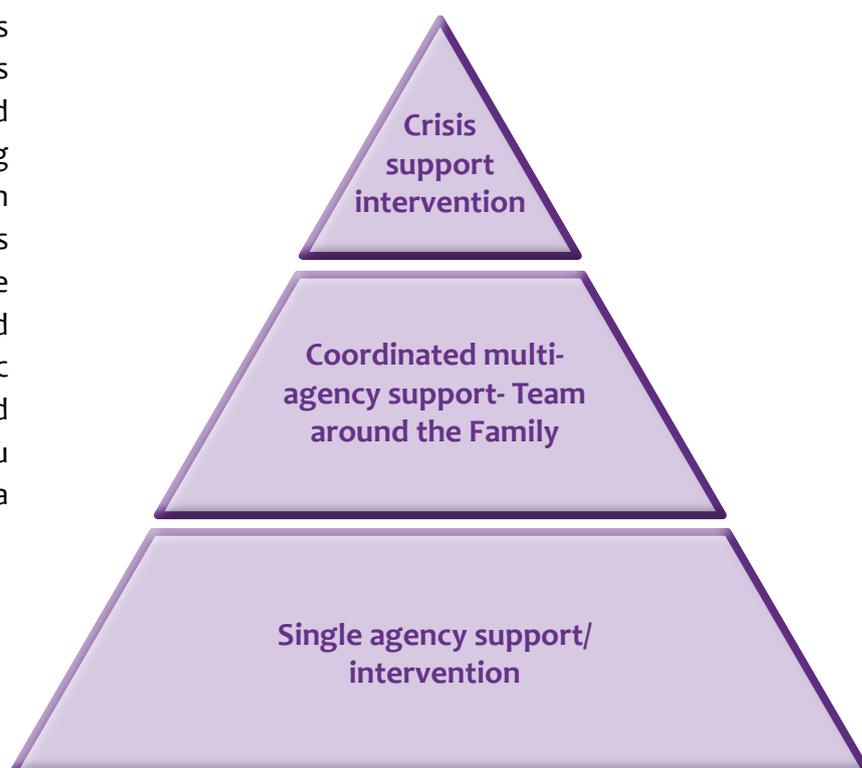
Are Children in Blaenau Gwent disadvantaged by Poverty - The Local Story:

- » Average incomes in Blaenau Gwent are considerably lower than the all Wales average
- » 52,000 people living in Communities First areas, demonstrating high deprivation levels within the borough
- » Blaenau Gwent has the second highest percentage of children 0-15 living in families claiming out of work benefits in Wales
- » Blaenau Gwent has more council tax arrears per household than any other boroughs in Wales
- » Blaenau Gwent has the highest proportion in Wales in relation to low birth weight babies
- » The health needs in Blaenau Gwent are some of the highest in Wales
- » Earnings figures for 2007 show Blaenau Gwent's median gross weekly pay to be £342.4 for people working in the area, compared to £415.50 for Wales as a whole
- » Low educational attainment of parents
- » Blaenau Gwent is the UK's least competitive locality (development and sustainability of businesses and the economic welfare of individuals)
- » Save the Children (Severe Child Poverty in Wales) reported that Blaenau Gwent has the highest rate of severe child poverty in Wales

Child Poverty: The Local Action Plan

The partnership recognises that there will be large variation in the needs of families living in poverty, and that not all families will require the same level of intervention and provision of services. There will be some families where critical interventions will be required but there will be other families at the opposite end of the spectrum where a single agency response is sufficient to support them to improve their family or individual circumstances. Our local priorities and actions will reflect the differing levels of support or intervention that families need. This is illustrated in the diagram below:

The new Families First programme is part of Welsh Assembly Government's commitment to supporting families and tackling child poverty. There is growing evidence from research and evaluation that the best way to support families out of poverty is through a whole family approach, which is built around integrated services, providing holistic support of children, young people and families. Reshaping services in Blaenau Gwent to deliver Families First will be a key challenge in implementing this plan.



To achieve this, the approach taken by the Partnership will be:

Family Focused	working with families to increase ability and confidence to meet challenges and improve chances of escaping poverty
Bespoke	tailored to meet individual circumstances
Integrated	coordinating the work of agencies to ensure a joined up and seamless experience for children, young people and families
Proactive	seeking families who would benefit from early support and intervention
Intensive	a vigorous approach adapting to changing need to ensure successful outcomes
Local	reflecting circumstances of local communities
Empowering	a focus on up skilling families with tools needed to manage their own issues effectively

We anticipate that all of the priorities for action detailed in this plan will have a significant impact on tackling child poverty. Each chapter identifies a number of indicators that we will use to monitor and evaluate our progress and to assess impact.

The following priorities will address specific concerns related to child poverty in Blaenau Gwent, as identified within the local needs assessment.

Our Local Action Plan



Creating employment opportunities for families within the borough

By working to

- » Regenerate Blaenau Gwent as a thriving and prosperous community
- » Ensure that young people and parents have necessary skills to access employment opportunities
- » Increase the number of work experience placements for young people within the borough to support training
- » Encourage employers to promote employment opportunities in the borough through alternative and innovative methods

Reducing practical barriers to employment and training

By working to

- » Raise awareness of schemes that address barriers to employment e.g. Genesis, childcare vouchers and family tax credits
- » Continue and develop appropriate support for parents and young people with childcare/ caring responsibilities
- » To address transport needs related to employment
- » Ensure that young people in training are supported emotionally and practically

Support the families most affected by poverty to improve outcomes (Team around the Family) – critical support

By working to

- » Enhance TAC model to incorporate economic employment support
- » Implement Families First Child Poverty Pioneer
- » Develop and deliver volunteer befriending scheme

Which organisation(s) will take the Lead: Local Authority

Who are the key delivery partners?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| » Careers Wales | » Consumer Financial Education Body |
| » Aneurin Bevan Health Board | » Communities First Partnerships |
| » Gwent Police | » Local Service Board |
| » GAVO | » Regeneration Partnership |
| » Job Centre Plus | » Healthier Future Partnership |

**Action plans will demonstrate the contribution of partners*



We will utilise existing budgets to deliver the priorities, exploring opportunities for joint funding, streamlining of services and co-location of staff

- » Families First Fund
- » Core Health Board budget
- » Communities First Outcomes fund
- » Flying Start funding
- » Core regeneration funding
- » Core Job Centre Plus funding
- » Core Careers Wales Funding
- » European Social Fund
- » Core Funding for childcare strategy

**We will also explore other sources of funding through the lifetime of this plan such as Big Lottery Funding*

NB Funding subject to change following comprehensive spending review

By working towards these priorities we will also contribute to national/local policies and strategies such as:

Local

- » Blaenau Gwent NEET's Strategy
- » Two year Childcare Action Plan
- » Blaenau Gwent Regeneration Strategy
- » Healthier Future III Strategy
- » Blaenau Gwent Community Strategy (Theme - Thriving Communities)
- » Blaenau Gwent Participation Strategy

National

- » The Child Poverty Strategy for Wales and Delivery Plan
- » National Childcare Strategy 2006
- » Children and Families Measure 2009



By working towards these priorities, we will help reduce the impact of child poverty by:

- Ensuring that, so far as reasonably practicable, children living in households in the relevant income group are not materially deprived
- Promoting and facilitate paid employment for parents of children
- Providing parents of children with the skills necessary for paid employment
- Helping young persons take advantage of opportunities for employment



All Children have a Flying Start in Life

Our Vision:

The first eight years of a child's life (including the anti-natal phase) can have a huge impact on later outcomes. High quality health, early education and social opportunities, coupled with parenting support, where needed, can ensure that children get the best start in life that they deserve. It is also important to ensure that the most vulnerable children in Blaenau Gwent have access to the services that they need.

What will success look like? (Our Indicators)

- » Reduce incidence of low birth weight babies
- » Improved baselines of children starting school
- » Improved educational attainment at 7

What we have already achieved?

During the life of the last Children and Young People's Plan, the Children and Young People's Partnership has achieved the following successes:-

- » significantly increased the number of registered childcare places - research suggests that this can improve the life chances of children
- » Developed and launched a Breastfeeding Strategy for the Borough- research shows that breastfeeding can have a number of important health benefits for mother and child.
- » Implemented a number of early years projects such as the Foundation phase and Flying Start - research suggests that these will help a child's later educational and health outcomes
- » Implemented Designed to Smile Scheme – preventative dental programme for early years

Are Children in Blaenau Gwent having a Flying Start in Life?

In Blaenau Gwent, there are a number of high quality services to help families give children a flying Start in life. There have been a number of demonstrable and positive outcomes from these interventions and services. However, the statistics show that Blaenau Gwent has:-

- » the highest level of low birth weight babies in Wales



- » Breastfeeding rates are the lowest in Wales
- » Education attainment at the age of 7 is below the Welsh average
- » high levels of dental caries in under 5s
- » high levels of poor maternal mental health

What are our priorities and how will we achieve them?



Which organisation(s) will take the Lead: Aneurin Bevan Health Board / Local Authority

Who are the key delivery partners?

- » Midwifery
- » Public Health Team
- » Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP)
- » Schools and childcare settings
- » Health Visiting Service
- » Flying Start and Sure Start
- » Family information Service
- » Speech and Language service
- » Parenting Support service
- » School Improvement Service
- » Parents
- » Voluntary Organisations
- » SNAP Cymru

**Action plans will demonstrate the contribution of partners*

We will utilise existing budgets to deliver the priorities, exploring opportunities for joint funding, streamlining of services and co-location of staff

- » Core Midwifery and Health Visiting Budgets
- » Flying Start grant
- » Foundation Phase Grant
- » Core Education budget
- » EYDCP budget
- » Families First Fund
- » Basic Skills Funding

**We will also explore other sources of funding through the lifetime of this plan such as Big Lottery Funding*

NB Funding subject to change following comprehensive spending review



By working towards these priorities we will also contribute to national/local policies and strategies such as:

- Local**
- » Gwent-wide Breastfeeding protocols
 - » Healthier Future III Strategy
 - » Blaenau Gwent Community Strategy (Themes - Learning Communities and Healthy Communities)

- National**
- » UNICEF Baby Friendly initiative
 - » Childcare Act 2006
 - » Children and Families Wales Measure
 - » Child Poverty Strategy and Delivery Plan
 - » NSF Children, Young People and Maternity Services
 - » Flying Start
 - » Foundation Phase

By working towards these priorities, we will help reduce the impact of child poverty by:



All Children have a Comprehensive range of Education, Training and Learning Opportunities

Our Vision

The Partnership will strive to improve the educational opportunities available and the outcomes achieved by every child and young person in Blaenau Gwent, as the foundation for a successful personal, social and economic adult life.

What will success look like? (Our Indicators)

- » Raised attainment at all key stages
 - % of pupils achieving Key Stage 1 CSI
 - 78% of pupils achieving Key Stage 2 CSI
 - 51% pupils achieving Key Stage 3 CSI
 - 53% pupils who achieve 5 GCSEs at grade A*-C
 - 75% of pupils achieving 2 or more A Level passes at grade A*-C
- » Reduced numbers of young people who are NEET
- » Reduction in overall %age of surplus places in schools
- » Reduction of pupils with a statement of educational need to 2%
- » Improved pupil attendance
 - Primary 92.3%
 - Secondary 90.5%
- » Reduced number of permanent and fixed term exclusions

What we have already achieved?

During the life of the last Children and Young People's Plan, we achieved the following successes:

- » Introduced the Social and Emotional Aspects Of Learning (SEAL) programme in order to enhance pupils' emotional intelligence
- » Developed a range of local strategies to address key priority areas, including the following:-
 - > Anti-Bullying Strategy which will help schools reduce incidence of bullying
 - > Literacy strategy to help improve standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing for all pupils.
 - > Inclusion Strategy to ensure that pupils of all abilities, from all backgrounds are appropriately supported.
 - > NEET (Not in Education Employment and Training) strategy which will allow agencies to work together to prevent young people becoming NEET.
- » Developed and implemented a range of high quality vocational programmes for 14-19 learning pathways in order to improve opportunities for employment and prevent young people becoming disaffected (as part of the NEETs Strategy)
- » Developed and consulted on proposals for School Transformation to ensure that all school buildings are fit for purpose and able to offer a wide range of opportunities for pupils.
- » Raised percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSE (A*-C) passes to 50% in 2010, following year on year improvement.

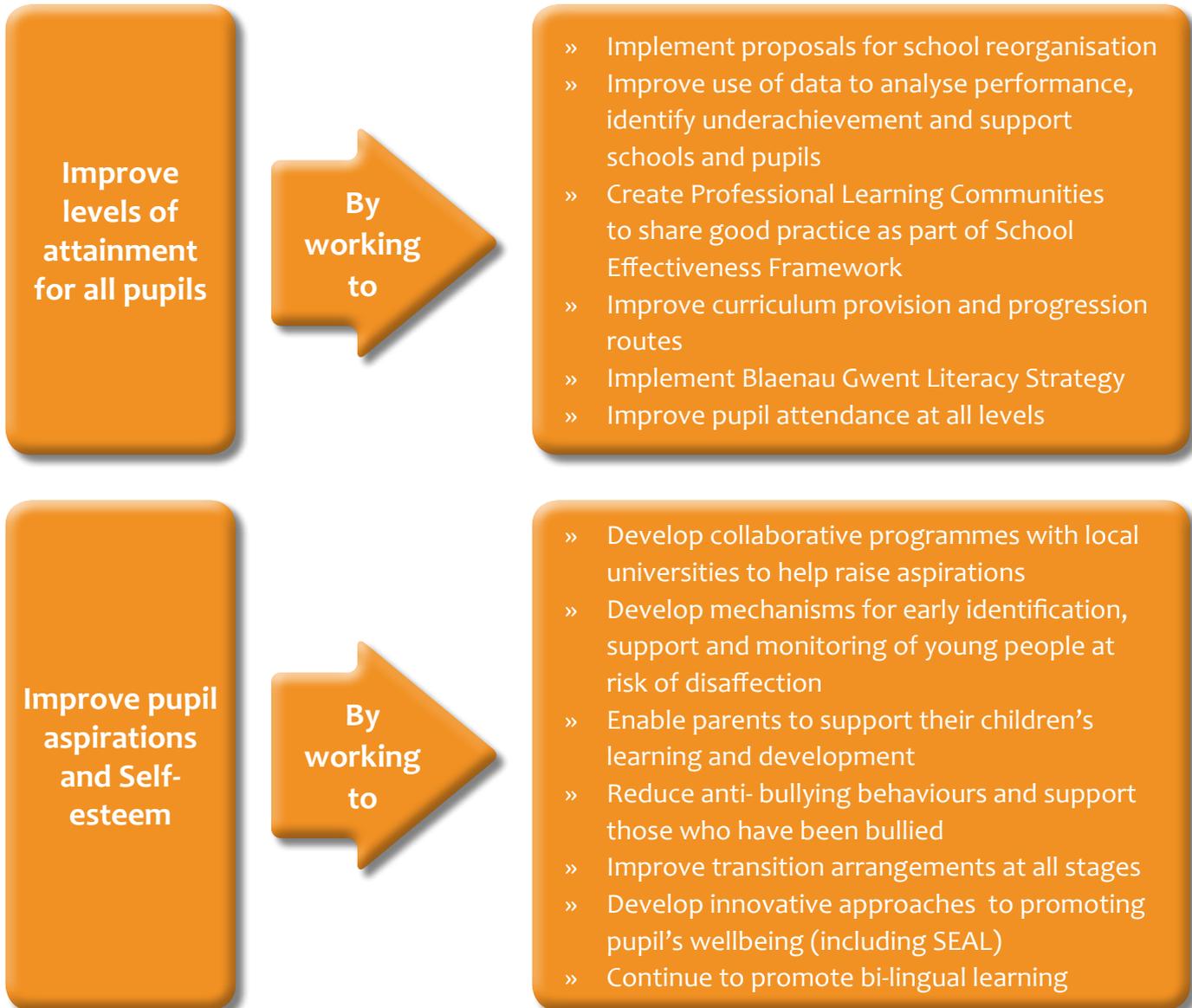


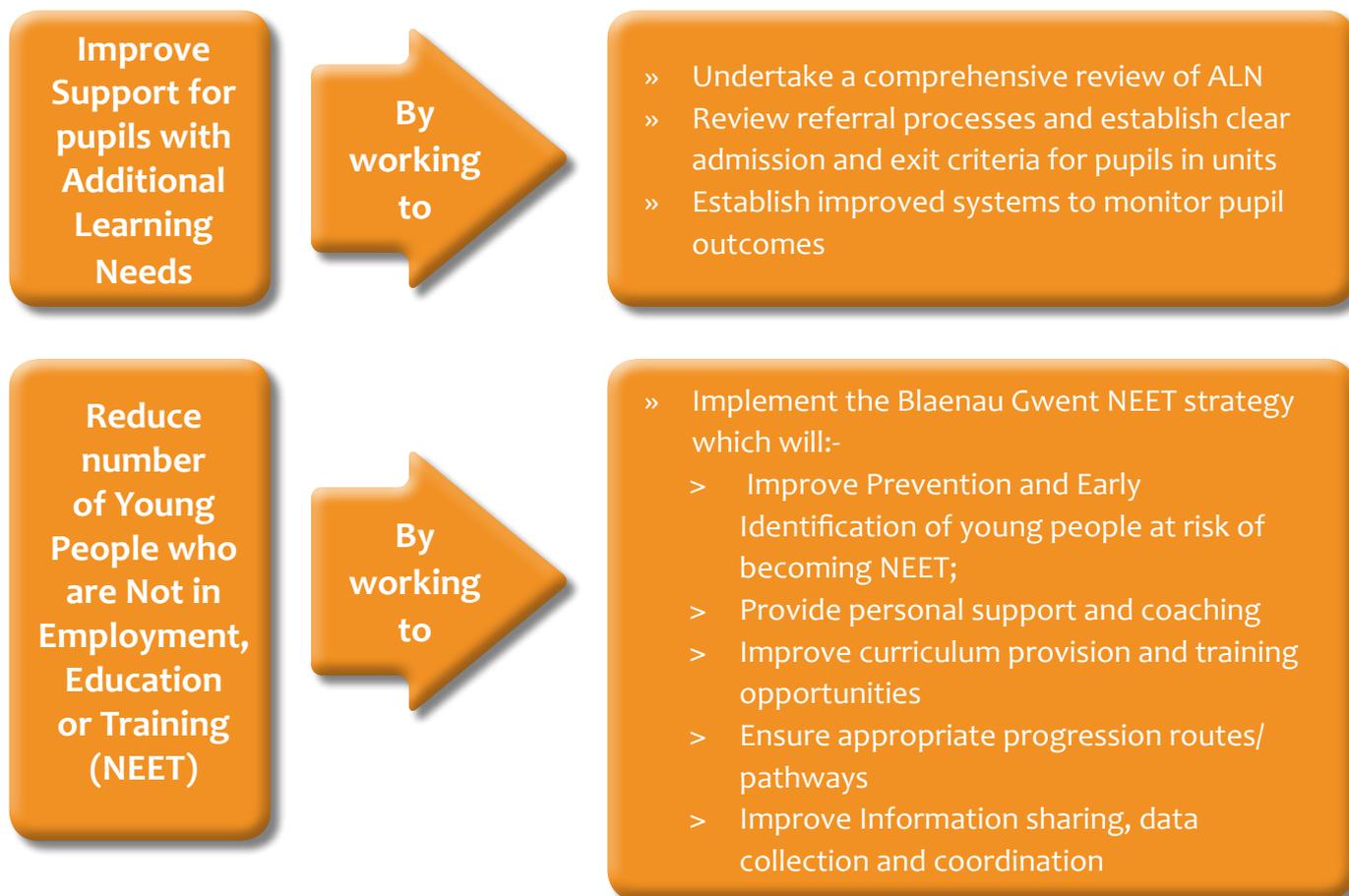
Are children in Blaenau Gwent having a comprehensive range of education, training and learning opportunities?

In Blaenau Gwent, there are a number of high quality services to give children and young people a comprehensive range of education, training and learning opportunities. However, the statistics show that:

- » Many parents and children have low self-esteem and aspirations and are not fully equipped for entry into the labour market
- » Although significant improvements have been made, education attainment at all levels remains below the Wales Average, especially in relation to literacy
- » Blaenau Gwent has levels above the national average of young people who are Not in Education, Employment and Training (NEET)

What are our priorities and how will we achieve them?





Which organisation(s) will take the Lead: Local Authority

Who are the key delivery partners?

- » Schools
- » Proteus (Pupil Referral Unit)
- » Coleg Gwent
- » Education and Leisure Directorate
- » Youth support services
- » Oasis
- » Parenting Project
- » Local Universities
- » Careers Wales
- » 14-19 Local Area Network
- » Voluntary and community organisations
- » Integrated children's centres
- » Family learning Project
- » Libraries
- » SNAP Cymru
- » Local Training providers

* Action plans will demonstrate the contribution of partners



We will utilise existing budgets to deliver the priorities, exploring opportunities for joint funding, streamlining of services and co-location of staff

- » Core School budgets
- » Core Education budget
- » Families First Fund
- » Better Schools Fund
- » Core funding Coleg Gwent

**We will also explore other sources of funding through the lifetime of this plan such as Big Lottery Funding*

NB Funding subject to change following comprehensive spending review

By working towards these priorities we will also contribute to national/ local policies and strategies such as:

Local

- » School Effectiveness Framework
- » Behaviour and Attendance Action Plan
- » Blaenau Gwent NEET Strategy
- » Blaenau Gwent Literacy Strategy
- » Blaenau Gwent Transformation Strategy
- » Blaenau Gwent Community Strategy (Theme - Learning Communities)

National

- » Strategaeth Addysg Cyfrwng Cymraeg
- » SEN Code of Practice for Wales
- » Education Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship
- » Reducing the proportion of young people not in education, employment and Training in Wales

By working towards these priorities, we will help reduce the impact of child poverty by:

Helping young people participate effectively in education and training

Helping young people take advantage of opportunities for employment

Reducing inequalities in educational attainment between children



All Children and Young People should enjoy the best possible physical and mental, social and emotional health, including freedom from abuse, victimisation and exploitation

Our Vision:

The Partnership's priority is to strive to ensure children and young people are safe, healthy and equipped for adulthood

What will success look like? (Our Indicators)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Reduce the incidence of dental caries (Data Development agenda) | and age (Data Development agenda) |
| 2. Reduced number of teenage conceptions | 4. Plus other indicators that will be identified through a data development agenda |
| 3. Increased levels of young people with appropriate weight for height | |

What we have already achieved?

Delivery of the priorities of the last Children and Young People's Plan achieved the following successes:-

- » Developed a school based counselling service with nearly 600 young people signed up to the service.
- » Delivered requirements of WAG's Food and Fitness 5 year Implementation Plan and Appetite for Life Action plan

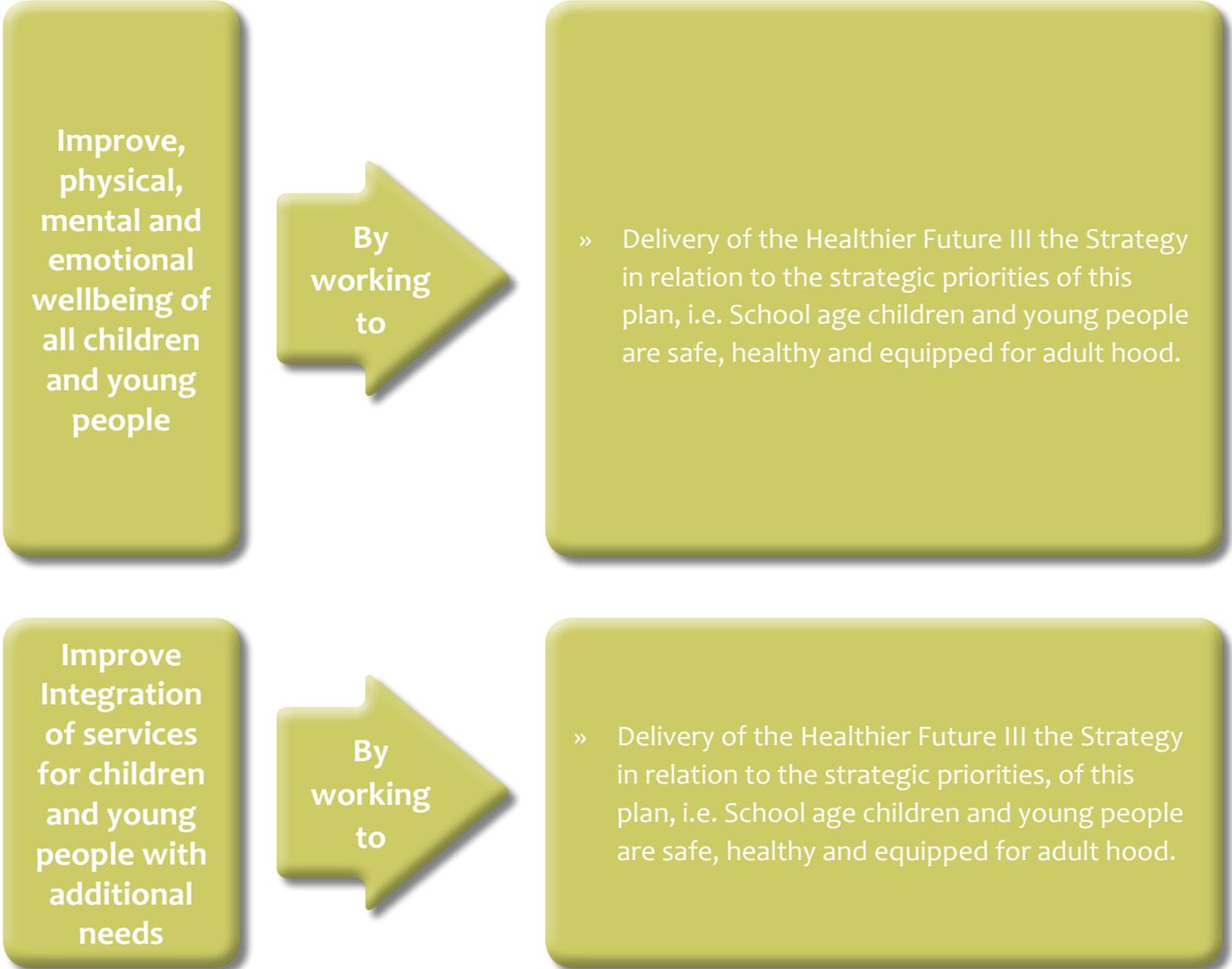
Are children in Blaenau Gwent experiencing the best possible health?

In Blaenau Gwent, there are a number of initiatives, programmes and high quality services working to help children and young people achieve the best possible health and wellbeing. There have been a number of demonstrable and positive outcomes from these interventions and services, however the statistics show that in Blaenau Gwent:-

- » There are high levels of childhood obesity rates above the Wales average
- » Alcohol consumption amongst young people compared to rest of the UK, is 3% higher (Communities that Care Survey 2005/06)
- » There is the highest level of dental caries in under 5's across Wales



What are our priorities and how will we achieve them?



Which organisation(s) will take the Lead: Aneurin Bevan Health Board

Who are the key delivery partners?

- » Aneurin Bevan Health Board
- » Gwent Police
- » GAVO
- » Communities First Partnership
- » Local Authority
- » LSCB
- » Healthier Future Partnership
- » Wellbeing Alliance

** Action plans will demonstrate the contribution of partners*



We will utilise existing budgets to deliver the priorities, exploring opportunities for joint funding, streamlining of services and co-location of staff

- » Families First Fund
- » Core Health Board budget
- » Communities First Outcomes Fund
- » HARPS
- » Big Lottery Funding
- » Local Education Core budget
- » Social Services Core Budget

**We will also explore other sources of funding through the lifetime of this plan such as Big Lottery Funding*

NB Funding subject to change following comprehensive spending review

By working towards these priorities we will also contribute to national/ local policies and strategies such as:

Local

- » Healthier Future III Strategy
- » Food and Fitness 5-year Implementation Plan and Appetite for Life Action Plan
- » WAG National CAMHS strategy – Breaking Barriers, Meeting the Challenges
- » Blaenau Gwent Community Safety Partnership Plan
- » LSCB Business plan
- » Blaenau Gwent Community Strategy (Theme - Healthy Communities)

National

- » National Service Framework
- » Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes UNCRC
- » Childcare Act 2004
- » WAG Child Poverty Strategy
- » Working Together to Reduce Harm Implementation Plan
- » WAG Our Healthier Future

By working towards these priorities, we will help reduce the impact of child poverty by:

Reducing inequalities in health between children and between parents of children (so far as in necessary to ensure the well-being of their children)





All Children have Access to Play, Leisure, Sporting and Cultural Activities to improve physical and emotional wellbeing

Our Vision

The Partnership wants to improve accessibility to a range of high quality play, leisure and cultural activities for all children and young people, particularly those who are hard to reach. This will, in turn have benefits for children and young people's physical and emotional wellbeing.

What will success look like? (Our Indicators)

- | | |
|---|---|
| » Increased % of children and young people participating in sport, physical activity and the Arts | » reporting positively on their health status at year 9 |
| » Increased % of young people participating in outdoor activities | » Increased levels of physical literacy at age 5-7 (Data Development) |
| » Increased % of young people | » Increased play provision within the Borough (Data Development) |

What we have already achieved?

During the life of the last Children and Young People's Plan, we achieved the following successes:

- » Changed the way Youth Services operate to ensure that they effectively engage with young people and meet their needs
- » Good progress has been made against Blaenau Gwent Play Strategy including:
 - > Securing further funding to develop play provision, developing play infrastructure, extending open access play provision and improving inclusion
- » Developed a Youth Arts strategy to ensure that young people have access to a range of high quality arts and cultural opportunities which will enhance emotional wellbeing, this is one of only two such strategies in Wales
- » Developed and delivered a wide range of innovative projects to help promote physical activity in line with Local Area Partnership Agreement (LAPA) currently in place with Sports Wales. This has made a significant contribution to preventative health care. Statistics show that free swim is more successful in Blaenau Gwent than any other Borough
- » Delivered a number of Welsh medium engagement events for children, young people and families as a move towards further bi-lingual provision, including hosting a hugely successful National Eisteddfod
- » Delivered a number of innovation projects for children and young people designed to improve community safety



Are children and young people in Blaenau Gwent having appropriate access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities?

Participation rates for children and young people are generally high and there are positive indications about enjoyment, use of leisure centres, participation by other family members and encouragement of children and young people to take part in after school clubs. In terms of meeting national guidelines, 51% of Year 6 and 33% of Year 9 are currently active 5x60 minutes per week. Swimming abilities are very positive with 95% of Year 9 able to swim more than 25m. There is also positive evidence to show that children and young people are engaging in both play and cultural activities.

However some key challenges remain in relation to ensuring that all children and young people have access to play, leisure, sporting and cultural activities. These include:

- » Reducing the gender gap in terms of participation in sport, physical activity and the Arts, by focusing on extra curricular activity and club membership
- » Reducing the downturn in participation in sport, physical activity and the Arts between KS2 and KS3 by increasing links between lessons and extra curricular activity and the community and
- » Change attitudes to sport, physical activity and the Arts to increase enjoyment by focusing on fun and family activity

What are our priorities and how will we achieve them?



Young people will be confident, have high aspirations and are equipped for adulthood



- » Improve quality and range of out of hours provision for children and young people
- » Enhance and develop bi-lingual leisure opportunities for children and young people
- » Implement the PreVent 14-19 project
- » Introduce Phase II of the Fundamental Review of the statutory Youth Service

Which organisation(s) will take the Lead: Local Authority/Voluntary Sector (Tri County)

Who are the key delivery partners?

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| » Leisure services | » Local Area Partnership Agreement |
| » Tri- County Play Association | » Integrated Childrens Centre |
| » Gwent Association Voluntary Organisations | » Schools and early years providers |
| » Local development Trusts and Communities First Partnerships | » Aneurin Bevan Health Board |
| » Youth Support services | » National Public Health Service |
| | » Menter Iaith Blaenau Gwent |
| | » Social Services |

** Action plans will demonstrate the contribution of partners*



We will utilise existing budgets to deliver the priorities, exploring opportunities for joint funding, streamlining of services and co-location of staff

- » Core Leisure Services Budget
- » Big Lottery
- » Core Youth service Budget
- » Families First Fund
- » Core Education and Early Years budgets
- » Heads of the Valley/HARPS funding
- » Sport Wales

**We will also explore other sources of funding through the lifetime of this plan*

NB Funding subject to change following comprehensive spending review

By working towards these priorities we will also contribute to national/ local policies and strategies such as:

Local

- » Health Challenge Wales, Valleys and Blaenau Gwent
- » Blaenau Gwent Healthier Future III Strategy
- » Blaenau Gwent Youth Arts Strategy
- » Blaenau Gwent Play Strategy
- » Our Healthy Future
- » Safer Blaenau Gwent
- » Blaenau Gwent Community Strategy (Theme - Lively & Accessible Communities)

National

- » Creating an Active Wales – LAPA
- » NSF Children, young people maternity services
- » Youth Work Wales
- » Equality Act 2010

By working towards these priorities, we will help reduce the impact of child poverty by:

Reducing inequalities in participation in cultural, sporting and leisure activities between children and between parents of children (so far as necessary to ensure the well-being of their children)



All Children and Young People should be listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised

Our Vision:

The Partnership's priority is to raise awareness and understanding of children and young people's rights and to improve participation in shaping the service they receive.

What will success look like? (Our Indicators)

1. Number of children and young people aware of UNCRC and their rights (Data Development Agenda)
2. % of CYPP partners awarded Blaenau Gwent Participation Kite Mark

What we have already achieved?

Delivery of the priorities of the last Children and Young People's Plan achieved the following successes:

- » Development of the participation kite mark, where young people assessed how organisations engage with young people;
- » Provision of a universal advocacy service for all young people requiring support.
- » Considerable participation of young people in shaping the services they receive such as interviewing, planning and reviewing of services.

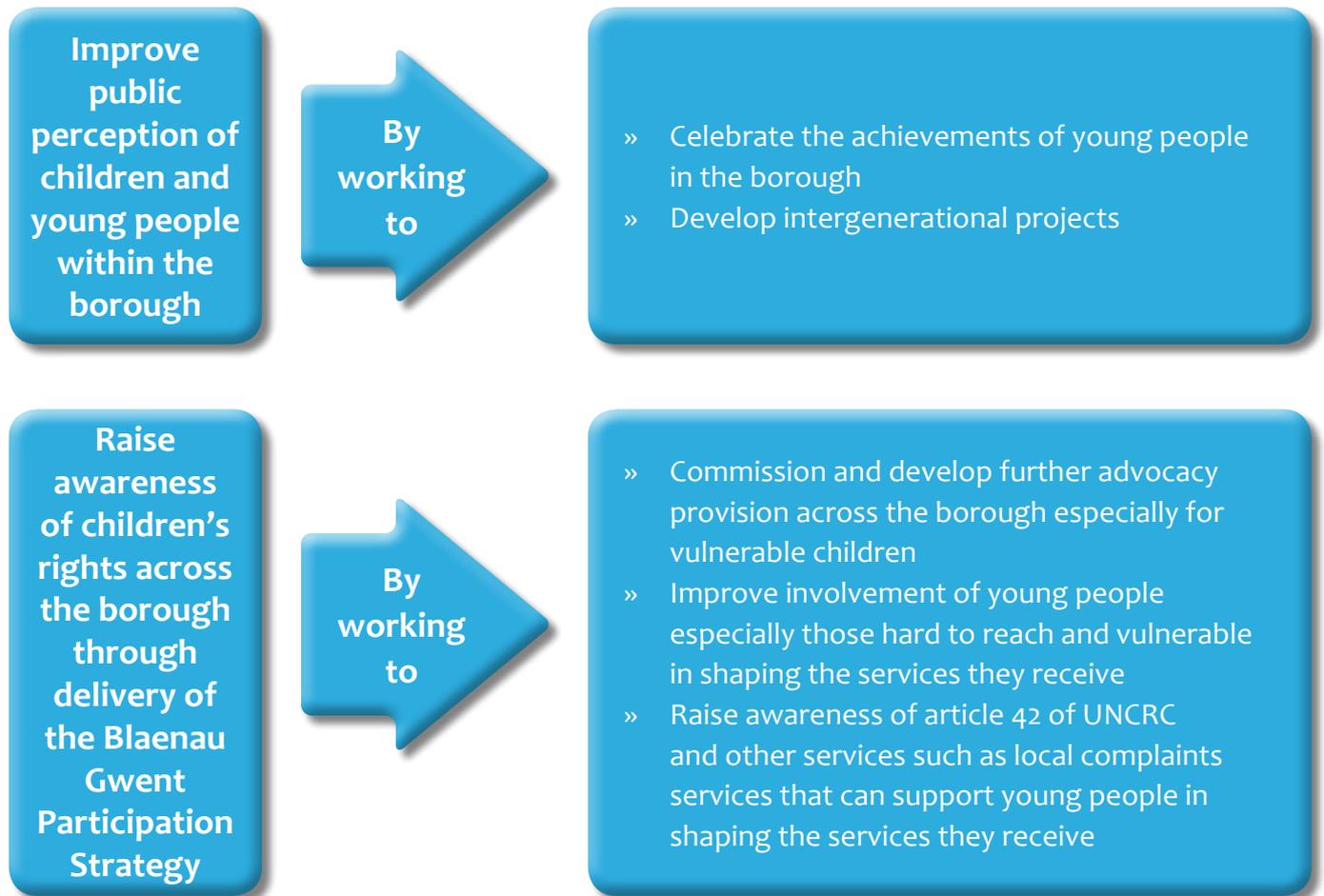
Are children in Blaenau Gwent being listened to, and treated with respect?

In Blaenau Gwent, there are a number of positive contributions from both statutory and voluntary organisations to ensuring that children and young people are listened to and treated with respect. There have been a number of demonstrable and positive outcomes from the participation of children and young people. However the statistics show that in Blaenau Gwent

- » There are still low levels of awareness of UNCRC amongst young people living in Blaenau Gwent
- » The number of young people accessing universal advocacy services is increasing with a 72% increase in the number of referrals between 2008/09 and 2009/10
- » The perception of young people amongst adults are often negative and reciprocally there are negative perceptions of adults amongst young people.



What are our priorities and how will we achieve them?



Which organisation(s) will take the Lead: Local Authority/Voluntary Sector

Who are the key delivery partners?

- » NYAS
- » SNAP Cymru
- » Gwent Police
- » GAVO
- » Communities First Partnerships
- » Local Authority
- » LSCB
- » URDD
- » Menter Iaith
- » Healthier Future Partnership
- » YOS
- » Aneurin Bevan Health Board

* Action plans will demonstrate the contribution of partners



We will utilise existing budgets to deliver the priorities, exploring opportunities for joint funding, streamlining of services and co-location of staff

- » Social Services Core Budget
- » Families First Fund
- » HARPS
- » Core Health Board budget
- » Communities First Outcomes Fund
- » Core Education Budget

**We will also explore other sources of funding through the lifetime of this plan such as Big Lottery Funding*

NB Funding subject to change following comprehensive spending review

By working towards these priorities we will also contribute to national/ local policies and strategies such as:



Local

- » Blaenau Gwent Participation Strategy
- » Blaenau Gwent Community Safety Plan
- » LSCB Business Plan
- » Communities First Action Plans
- » Community Cohesion Strategy
- » Blaenau Gwent Community Strategy (Theme - Thriving Communities)

National

- » National Service Framework
- » Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes
- » UNCRC
- » WAG National Participation Standards
- » WAG Child Poverty Strategy
- » Youth Justice Plan

By working towards these priorities, we will help reduce the impact of child poverty by:

Helping young people participate effectively and responsibly in the life of their communities.





All Children and Young People should have a safe home and a community which supports physical and emotional well-being;

Our Vision:

The Partnership's priority is to promote safer homes and communities for all children and young people and safe home environments for vulnerable children and young people

What will success look like? (Our Indicators)

1. Number of young people presenting to Accident & Emergency (Data Development agenda)
2. Number of households for which homelessness decisions were taken by age and gender.
3. Anti Social Behaviour: % of clients progressing from warning letter through to stage 3 punitive intervention

What we have already achieved?

Delivery of the priorities of the last Children and Young People's Plan achieved the following:

- » Developed and implemented the Team Around the Child (TAC) project
- » Consolidated and further developed the relationship and interface between the CYPP and LSCB (examples of joint learning, safeguarding training events and action planning)
- » Development and ongoing implementation of a Blaenau Gwent Young People's Accommodation Strategy
- » Funding secured for the development of a new specialist residential provision for women and their families who have experienced domestic abuse.
- » Successful transfer of housing stock to Tai Calon

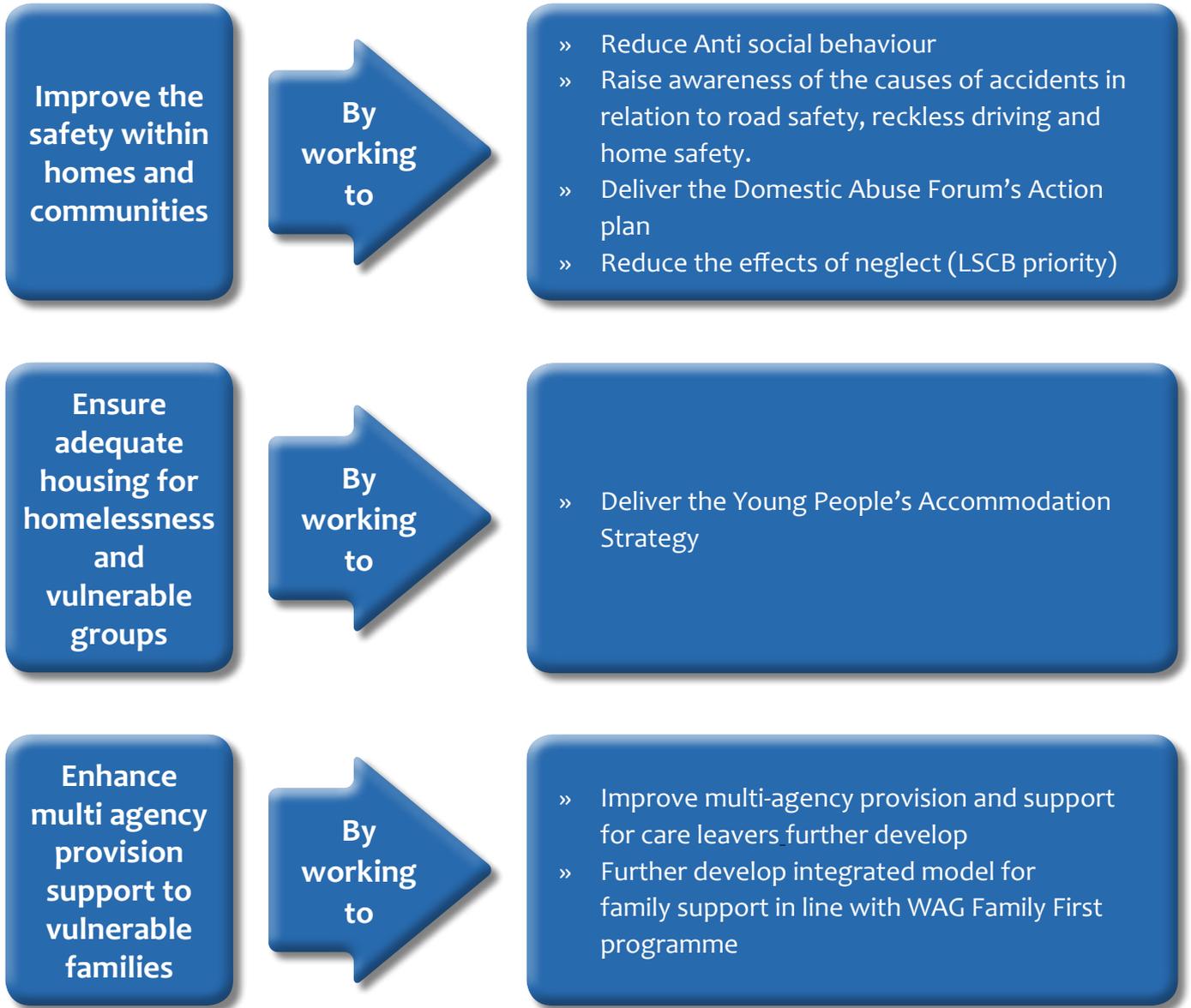
Are children and young people in Blaenau Gwent living in a safe home and community?

There has been significant work undertaken in Blaenau Gwent to engage all agencies and professionals in delivering a range of universal and targeted services, aimed at supporting children and young people to live in a safe home and community, which is supportive of their physical and emotional well-being. There have been a number of demonstrable and positive outcomes from these interventions and services including the implementation of the Team Around the Child (TAC) which seeks to co-ordinate services to support children and their families, and reduce the likelihood that they will need to access specialist services. However, we are aware that:



- » The number of children on the Child Protection Register has increased over the past two years and domestic abuse is identified as a significant factor that leads to registration.
- » There is continued high demand for parenting support from families who access universal and specialist services.
- » There are a greater proportion of children in Blaenau Gwent involved in road accidents than in the rest of Wales.
- » Accommodation needs of vulnerable young people are not adequately met.

What are our priorities and how will we achieve them?



Which organisation(s) will take the Lead: Local Authority

Who are the key delivery partners?

- » LSCB
- » Community Safety Partnership
- » Gwent Police
- » GAVO
- » YOS
- » Aneurin Bevan Health Board
- » Communities First Partnerships
- » Local Authority
- » Youth Offending Service
- » Domestic Abuse Forum
- » South Wales Fire and Rescue Service
- » Tai Calon Community Housing

** Action plans will demonstrate the contribution of partners*

We will utilise existing budgets to deliver the priorities, exploring opportunities for joint funding, streamlining of services and co-location of staff

- » Families First Fund
- » Core Health Board budget
- » Communities First Outcomes Fund
- » Community Cohesion
- » Local Authority core budget
- » Gwent Police budget

**We will also explore other sources of funding through the lifetime of this plan such as Big Lottery Funding*

NB Funding subject to change following comprehensive spending review

By working towards these priorities we will also contribute to national/ local policies and strategies such as:

Local

- » Community Safety Partnership Plan
- » Youth Justice Plan
- » Domestic Abuse Forum Action Plan
- » Blaenau Gwent Community Strategy (Theme - Fair & Safe Communities)

National

- » National Service Framework
- » Stronger Partnerships for Better Outcomes
- » UNCRC
- » WAG Child Poverty Strategy
- » WAG's Ten Year Homelessness Plan
- » WAG's National Housing Strategy



By working towards these priorities, we will help reduce the impact of child poverty by:

Ensuring that all children grow up in decent housing
To ensure that all children grow up in safe and cohesive communities



Appendix 1: Planning Principles

The overarching principles of this CYP Plan is a commitment to applying the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the delivery of Welsh Assembly Government (WAG) Child Poverty Strategy for Wales. The CYPP have also adopted additional planning principles in the development of the CYP Plan and are set out below

Meeting the needs of vulnerable children and young people.

There are a number of children and young people with complex issues where there is a need to provide more timely, integrated and responsive services. For the purpose of this CYP Plan we have described this group of young people as ‘vulnerable’. The CYPP will ensure where possible, services will be accessible locally. The list below sets out the group of children and young people classed as vulnerable:

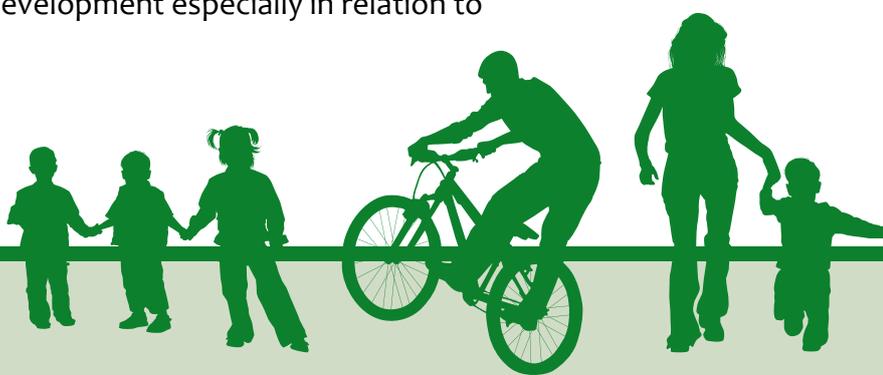
- » Disabled Children
- » Children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)
- » Black, Minority, Ethnic (BME), Migrants and Gypsy Traveller Children
- » Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) young people
- » Looked After Children (LAC)
- » Children at risk of exclusion/offending
- » Young Carers
- » Deaf Children

The CYPP will ensure that the priorities of the CYP Plan, where appropriate, also meet the needs of vulnerable children. The specific actions required will be highlighted in the underpinning delivery actions plans.

Sustainability and Well-Being

The CYPP will further develop the sustainability and wellbeing agenda by building on the success of the delivery of the previous CYP Plan, especially in relation to core aim 5: to ensure children and young people are listened to, treated with respect, and have their race and cultural identity recognised. The delivery of the Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship (ESDGC) curriculum in schools has also been incorporated into the Blaenau Gwent Participation Strategy.

A key strategy that will be incorporated into this CYP Plan and corresponding action plans will be WAG’s Sustainable Development scheme, *One Wales: One Planet*, which will place sustainable development as one of the central organising principles with a focus on serving the citizen, directly supporting the aims set out in the Wales Spatial Plan and the Local Service Board (LSB). This strategy will be used throughout the remaining planning principles to ensure services in Blaenau Gwent are joined up in a way to deliver sustainable development especially in relation to



- » enhancing the long-term economic, social and environmental wellbeing of people and communities in a joined-up way;
- » making services as safe, effective and resource-efficient as possible; and
- » enhancing the natural and cultural environment and respecting its limits.

Outcomes Focus

The fundamental principle that this plan is built upon is the need to achieve outcomes for children and young people living in Blaenau Gwent.

The CYPP has adopted a Results Based Accountability (RBA) approach to the development of this plan and to achieving outcomes in relation to the WAG's seven core aims for children and young people. The CYPP has been using the RBA process for some time to assist with joint planning, development and integration of services, and identifying new ways of working to avoid duplication of efforts. All Cymorth funded projects now use a RBA reporting template to assist with the monitoring of performance.

The structure of this plan and subsequent core aim chapters adopts a RBA approach. We consider WAG's core aims to be the primary population outcomes that the CYPP will strive to achieve, underpinned by identified priorities. Each core aim chapter also sets out a list of indicators that will be used to gauge what success will look like. Individual targets for service delivery and indicators will be set during the delivery of this Plan. The work of individual agencies and partners – especially projects supported by Cymorth grant fund – will support the delivery of the core aims by ensuring service level performance accountabilities are linked to the priorities in this plan. This will be demonstrated through the development of multi agency action plans, which will be fluid, to reflect new policies/developments and the need to refocus, based on evaluation (should this be necessary).

In some cases these will be clearly identified lead partners for delivery of the priorities, in other cases delivery will be very much on a partnership basis. This will be reflected in the action plans developed to underpin core aim chapters.

Relationships with other Partnerships and Plans

Through the delivery of the previous CYP Plan and the development of this Plan the CYPP have worked in partnership with the Local Service Board to ensure the delivery of the WAG's 7 core aims are aligned and integrated, where appropriate, to the work of other partnerships in the delivery of their plans.

There have been clear examples of where the CYP Plan has enhanced the other 4 statutory plans in Blaenau Gwent (i) the Community Strategy (ii) the Health Social Care and Well-being Strategy (iii) the Local Development Plan and (iv) the Community Safety Plan, plus other plans such as Communities First Action Plans, WAG's 'Our Healthy Future', LSCB Business plans and the Youth Justice Plan. The core aim chapters of this plan clearly set out where the work of the CYPP will impact on the delivery of other plans. Through the interrelation of the CYP plan with other plans and strategies the CYPP have already begun to streamline and align the structure of partnerships and sub groups across the borough - this work will continue through the delivery of this plan, and aim to avoid duplication of efforts and create a synergy between partner agencies to help achieve improved outcomes for children and young people.



The CYPP has adopted the RBA process in developing this plan and fundamental to this process is adoption of a ‘common language’. The CYPP has developed a common language for use amongst all the statutory partnerships and this has been adopted by the LSB. With a common language in use between local partners, we envisage that even greater alignment of plans, increased partnership working and avoiding duplication of efforts can be achieved.

Accountability and Responsibility

The work of the CYPP in developing the previous CYP Plan and extending all of its functions has been set out over four levels of accountability:

- » accountability of partners to their own governing authority – *this is encompassed within individual agencies terms of reference and job descriptions*
- » accountability of partners to one another - *this was articulated previously by the signing of a partnership accord to work to the delivery of the CYP Plan, and set out in the CYPP’s terms of reference.*
- » accountability of the partnership to local citizens – *this is the core accountability of any public or voluntary sector organisation and has been reinforced by the CYPP in delivery of this CYP Plan by placing children and young people at the centre of everything we do.*
- » accountability of the partnership to other partnerships – *this is again set out in the CYPP’s terms of reference and in part by the sign up of partnership agencies to deliver Blaenau Gwent’s Community Strategy under the direction of the Local Service Board.*

The CYPP has governance arrangements in place and terms of reference, to ensure that relationship, accountability, roles and responsibilities are clearly understood by all partners. As a result, we are confident that all partners own and are committed to this agenda.

The CYPP also undertakes a self assessment to gauge the effectiveness of partnership working and improve on the delivery of outcomes for children and young people. The self assessment exercise aims to identify how improvements in accountability and responsibility arrangements can be made and improve partnership working.

Additional accountabilities are highlighted through: the naming of partners in core aim action plans, individual partner agency action plans and joined up targets. The inspection process will also create an element of accountability for all partners of the CYPP.

Tiered approach to Service Provision

This CYP Plan has been developed on the basis of a 4 tiered model of service provision for children and young people, and is as follows

- » Tier 1: Universal services - Services which are available to meet a range and level of needs that



most children and young people require.

- » Tier 2: Targeted services - Services which provide extra help for those with additional needs which usually supplement continued access to universal services.
- » Tier 3: Referred services - Services which require an assessed programme of support provided by providers with particular skills in meeting higher levels of additional needs.
- » Tier 4: Specialist services - Services which require an assessed programme of specialist support services for children and young people with complex needs.

This tiered model recognises that children and young people:

- » may present at one or more of the different levels of need at different points in time;
- » may have additional needs that arise both from their own difficulties or the difficulties experienced by parents or carers;
- » may move up and down the tiers depending on how their needs change over time;
- » should, wherever possible have their needs met by universal provision, with service providers from the higher tiers of specialism (Tiers 2–3/4) facilitating universal service providers in meeting the additional needs of children and young people.

The CYPP has identified a number of priorities that range across the 4 tiers of intervention. The CYPP is also keen to ensure robust interfaces between the tiers so that children and young people are appropriately supported in a seamless way as their needs change.

As the CYPP moves to the new Families First programme the 4 tiered model may be replaced by a model based on prevention, protection and remedy.

Integration of Planning and Delivery Including Joint Commissioning and Pooling of Budgets

The CYPP believes that effective partnership working is essential for delivering real improvements in outcomes for the children and young people; and improving outcomes means working across organisational boundaries to plan and deliver services in a truly joined up way. An important sign of success is the alignment of resources to achieve specific priorities. This can include both jointly commissioning services and pooling of budgets.

The alignment of the CYP Plan with other plans has already been outlined. This has supported the revision of partnership structures within the Authority. Through the delivery of the previous CYP Plan, there has been some excellent examples of multi-disciplinary working, multi-agency working, joint point of referral and common processes, no better exemplified than the development of the Team Around the Child (TAC). The CYPP in the future will also explore other opportunities of joint working such as the co-location of teams and geographically based services.

The CYPP has explored joint commissioning opportunities throughout the lifetime of the last CYP Plan with some success and this will be developed further during the delivery of this CYP Plan along with the pooling of budgets. The CYPP have also linked with the LSB to develop a joint commissioning strategy across partnership agencies.



Workforce Development

The CYPP believes that a well trained and able workforce is crucial in achieving outcomes for children and young people. The CYPP have linked with Blaenau Gwent Social Service's Workforce Development Partnership to develop a Workforce Development Strategy for Blaenau Gwent. The further delivery of this strategy will be progressed through individual core aim action plans so that the workforce of Blaenau Gwent will be developed on multi agency basis. Also, workforce development issues identified through the CYP Plan's needs assessment and service mapping exercises will be included in relevant core aim action plans. The CYPP will also work closely with the LSB so that workforce issues can be addressed across statutory partnerships and organisations.

The CYPP will also adopt the principles set out in national workforce development strategy framework and an accompanying toolkit, *the Children and Young People's Workforce Development Guide for Children and Young People's Partnerships in Wales*, in its work to develop the workforce of Blaenau Gwent

Commitment to Equality and the Welsh Language

The CYPP are committed to valuing equality of opportunity, especially our requirements regarding:

- » Welsh Language Act 1993
- » Equality Act 2010
- » The Human Rights Act 1998
- » The Race Relations Act 1976 and Race Relations Amendment Act 2000
- » The Disability Discrimination Acts 1995 and 2005
- » Sexual Orientation Regulations 2003
- » Religion and Belief Regulations 2006
- » Gender Equality Act 2006

During the last CYP Plan the CYPP undertook an equality impact assessment, and will ensure underpinning action plans are committed to valuing equality, through the completion of further equality impact assessments.

Demonstrating Success/Evaluation

It is crucial that the Partnership is able to monitor the progress of it's work and demonstrate improving outcomes for children and young people arising from the delivery of the priorities set out in the plan.

The CYPP currently uses a RBA approach to monitoring the evaluation of local projects. This process will be developed further to evaluate the effectiveness of the CYP Plan 2011/14 especially in relation to population performance accountabilities. The CYPP will also undertake more in depth analysis of individual projects using a 'value for money' approach to ensure positive outcomes are being achieved for children and young people in Blaenau Gwent.

Each core aim contains detail of appropriate measures to reflect our priorities. Action plans will contain detail of these together with current position and targets for improvement.



Glossary

ALN	<i>Additional Learning Needs</i>
ASD	<i>Autistic Spectrum Disorder</i>
BME	<i>Black and Minority Ethnic</i>
Borough	<i>Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council</i>
CAF	<i>Common Assessment Framework</i>
CAFCASS Cymru	<i>Family Mediation Service</i>
CAMHS	<i>Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service</i>
Chatterbox	<i>Early intervention to improve children's speech and language</i>
Children and Young Young People's University	<i>Accreditation for children and young people's out of hours learning</i>
Children's Grand Council	<i>Blaenau Gwent's Children's Forum (0-10)</i>
Communities that Care Survey	<i>Undertaken with young people to identify risk and protective factors</i>
Community Focussed School's Programme	<i>A WAG initiative to promote use of school facilities for community usage</i>
Crucial Crew	<i>School based project to highlight dangers in home and community</i>
CSA	<i>Childcare Sufficiency Assessment</i>
CSI	<i>Core Subject Indicator</i>
CSSIW	<i>Care and Social Services Inspectorate for Wales</i>
Cymorth	<i>The Welsh Assembly Government's support fund for Children and Young People</i>
CYPP	<i>Children and Young People's Partnership</i>
Engage Project	<i>To work with disaffected young people to engage in leisure opportunities</i>
ESDGC	<i>Education for Sustainable Development and Global Citizenship</i>
Estyn	<i>Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales</i>
EYDCP	<i>Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership</i>
FE	<i>Further Education</i>
Flying Start	<i>A National early years initiative aimed to improve outcomes for children 0-4</i>



FSM	<i>Free School Meals</i>
GAVO	<i>Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations</i>
GELP	<i>Gwent Early Language Project</i>
HE	<i>Higher Education</i>
KS	<i>Key Stage (in education – may be KS1, 2, 3 or 4)</i>
LEA	<i>Local Education Authority</i>
LGBT	<i>Lesbian, Gays, Bisexual and Transexual</i>
LHB	<i>Local Health Board</i>
LSCB	<i>Local Safeguarding Children’s Board</i>
NHS	<i>National Health Service</i>
NSF	<i>National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services</i>
Plan	<i>Children and Young People’s Plan</i>
PSE	<i>Personal Social Education</i>
Safe Routes to Schools Initiatives	<i>To improve safety and environment for children walking and cycling to school</i>
SOGS	<i>Schedule of Growing Skills</i>
SSIW	<i>Social Service Inspectorate for Wales</i>
Sure Start	<i>A Borough-wide early years programme for children 0-3</i>
“Talk it Up”	<i>Blaenau Gwent Youth Forum</i>
TAC	<i>Team Around the Child</i>
UNCRC	<i>United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child</i>
Unicef Baby Friendly Programme	<i>An initiative to support breastfeeding</i>
WAG	<i>Welsh Assembly Government</i>
14-19 Learning Pathways	<i>Provision of academic and vocation routes and qualifications for young people aged 14-19</i>





Supporting Children & Young People to achieve their full potential

BLAENAU GWENT



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People's Partnership
Partneriaeth Plant a
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Supporting Children & Young People to achieve their full potential