Borders NHS Board

SCOTTISH BORDERS EARLY YEARS STRATEGY

Aim

To present for endorsement, consideration and approval the Scottish Borders Early Years Strategy.

Background

- The Children and Young People’s Planning Partnership, through their Strategic Early Years group, has responsibility for developing strategy and key actions in support of the Scottish Borders Children and Young People’s Services Plan and Single Outcome Agreement in line with the Early Years Framework.
- On 10 December 2008, The Early Years Framework was launched, signifying the Scottish Government and CoSLA’s commitment to the earliest years of life being crucial to a child’s development and their future outcomes. The Framework signals local and national government’s joint commitment through prevention and early intervention to give every child in Scotland the best start in life. This Framework sits within the foundation of Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) and builds on universal health and education services.
- The Framework covers the interests of children pre-conception to the age of 8 years and has a 10 year implementation period - acting as an important milestone in the ongoing partnership between the Scottish Government and CoSLA.
- In response to the Early Years Framework, the Strategic Early Years group has drafted the Scottish Borders Early Years Strategy (see Appendix 1).
- This is a Community Planning Partnership Strategy connecting all partner agencies (not restricted to Early Years providers) to this key Scottish Government priority within our community planning.
- The key aim of the Strategy is to break the cycles of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through the early years for children and families within the Scottish Borders.
- In addition to the Early Years Framework, the Strategy seeks to incorporate findings from practitioners, parents and carers through the work which has been undertaken in Tweeddale. This work has scrutinised the current Early Years model developing in Tweeddale and has developed the feasibility and opportunity to transfer best practice from this model to other localities. This work has also allowed the effectiveness of services to be examined by observing the journey of selected families within the Tweeddale locality. Thereby allowing the group to determine if the provision of services can be improved and be made more efficient. Further information on the developments stemming from the work in Tweeddale in relation to the Early Years locality model will follow in the coming months.
- The Early Years Strategy is the overarching context for the NHS Borders Maternity Care Action Plan recently endorsed by the Clinical Executive Strategy Group. This
plan sets out actions to improve maternity care and maternal and infant nutrition in Borders in order to address health inequalities
- The Early Years Strategy is supported by a body of evidence through the Scottish Borders Strategic Assessment, notably within National Outcome 5 - Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed. This Early Years Strategy aims to tackle issues identified within this assessment

Summary

- The Strategic Early Years group has responsibility for developing strategy and key actions in support of the Scottish Borders Children and Young People’s Services Plan and Single Outcome Agreement in line with the Early Years Framework.
- The Scottish Borders Early Years Strategy builds on the ten elements of transformational change contained within the Early Years Framework and in particular the key aim of the Strategy is to break the cycles of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through the early years for children and families within the Scottish Borders.
- The Strategy focuses on the importance of early years and early intervention. This has been reiterated through the work in Tweeddale where families have recognised that input at an early age to prevent more complex needs later on is a positive approach

Recommendation

The Board is asked to **endorse, consider and approve** the Scottish Borders Early Years Strategy, as detailed in this report.

| Policy/Strategy Implications | There is a need for a Scottish Borders Early Years Strategy to support the implementation of Scottish Government’s Early Years Framework and priorities identified within the Scottish Borders Children and Young People’s Services Plan, Single Outcome Agreement and the Scottish Borders Strategic Assessment |
| Consultation | All key stakeholders represented within the Strategic Early Years group have been involved in the development of this strategy. The findings of the work undertaken in Tweeddale (which involved feedback from practitioners, parents and carers) has also influenced the content of this Strategy |
| Consultation with Professional Committees | None |
| Risk Assessment | There are no other specific risks identified as a result of this report and its recommendations over and above those dealt with in the body of the report. |
| Compliance with Board Policy requirements on Equality and Diversity | An Equality Impact assessment has been completed on this Strategy. No negative impacts have been identified due to the |
following:

- This Strategy aims to serve all children in the Scottish Borders aged from pre-birth to eight years old and their parents, carers and family.
- The Strategy aims to reduce inequalities, to ensure the same outcomes for all and for all to have the same opportunities.
- This Strategy will support practitioners to take action to reduce inequality by identifying those at risk of not achieving these outcomes. Where these outcomes have not been achieved we will make sustained and effective interventions.

Help is given to parents, families and communities to develop their own solutions using accessible, high quality public services as required.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource/Staffing Implications</th>
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<tr>
<td>There will be no additional resource to support this strategy; a shift in our current resources will be required. This will mean all agencies will be required to redirect funding towards early years and early intervention. This shift will result in some service areas experiencing a reduction in both capacity and funding. Although there will be no additional core resource to support this Strategy, the Scottish Government has strengthened their commitment to the Early Years and Early Intervention agenda by announcing the introduction of an Early Years Change Fund. This fund has been designed to:</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Provide a focus on the Early Years and Early Intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Effect Transformational Change and make the shift to preventative spend</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Deliver effective early intervention for children and families using evidence based approaches</td>
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<td>• Develop individual, family and community capacity</td>
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<td>• Drive out cost savings by reducing need for acute services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Decisions made in relation to the allocations from this Fund will be linked directly to this Strategy and will be dealt with through existing financial governance routes within agencies.</td>
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### Approved by

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<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jane Davidson</td>
<td>Chief Operation Officer</td>
<td>Eric Baijal</td>
<td>Joint Director of Public Health</td>
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### Author(s)

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<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mandy Brotherstone</td>
<td>Head of Children’s Services/Child Health Commissioner</td>
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<td>Joint Head of Health Improvement</td>
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Scottish Borders Early Years Strategy – a Strategy to break the cycles of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through the early years for children and families within the Scottish Borders.

Foreword

This is the first overarching Scottish Borders Early Years Strategy. This Strategy has been developed in response to the national Early Years Framework, Vulnerable Families Pathway and links with the Scottish Borders Children and Young People’s Services Plan and to the Scottish Borders Single Outcome Agreement. A body of evidence also supports this Strategy through the Scottish Borders Strategic Assessment, notably within National Outcome 5 - Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed (see Appendix 1). This Early Years Strategy aims to tackle issues identified within this assessment.

Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) is the methodology underpinning service delivery for children and adult services working in partnership around the child and family. It builds on universal health and education services, and is embedded in the Early Years Framework.

The Early Years Framework has 10 Elements of Transformational Change and this Strategy will work to implement each of these elements. The overarching aim of this Strategy has a focus on the element which seeks to break the cycles of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through the early years for children and families within the Scottish Borders. This aim will be achieved by working collectively towards each of the other elements of Transformational Change.

This is a Community Planning Partnership Strategy connecting all partner agencies (not restricted to Early Years providers) to this key Scottish Government priority within our community planning.

This Early Years Strategy sets out our shared vision for our youngest children (aged between 0 and 8 years old) and their families and details our priorities for 2011-2015. With our accompanying Action Plan, it will be outcome-based linking to the Children and Young People’s Services Plan.

The Strategy will be dynamic and respond to newly identified needs. It will consider the ongoing priorities and challenges for children and their families.

Within this Strategy we will continue to build on the existing commitment to a multi agency, cross sector and locality based approach to delivering Early Years services within the Scottish Borders.

There is a robust evidence base about the importance of early years and early intervention. This demonstrates not just the impact of positive intervention on a child’s physical, mental and emotional development but also the very real economic case for investment in children pre-birth period and up to the age of eight years.

This Strategy is not an audit of current work, instead it commits us to making transformational changes within each agency to overhaul and redesign the way in which early years services are delivered. This will focus on improving both the quality and impact of these services. There will be no additional core resources to support this strategy; we
therefore require to make a shift in our current resources. In order to change our approach towards the delivery of early years services, agencies will be required to redirect funding towards early years and early intervention. This shift will result in some service areas experiencing a reduction in both capacity and funding.

Although there will be no additional core resource to support this Strategy, the Scottish Government has strengthened their commitment to the Early Years and Early Intervention agenda by announcing the introduction of an Early Years Change Fund. This fund has been designed to:

- Provide a focus on the Early Years and Early Intervention
- Effect Transformational Change and make the shift to preventative spend
- Deliver effective early intervention for children and families using evidence based approaches
- Develop individual, family and community capacity
- Drive out cost savings by reducing need for acute services.

Decisions made in relation to the allocations from this Fund will be linked directly to this Strategy.

The Financial Impact of Early Years Interventions in Scotland Report modelled the potential short term savings from investing in early years / early interventions from pre-birth to aged five. This report suggests that there are potential net savings of up to £37,400 per annum per child in the most severe cases, and of approximately £5,100 per annum for a child with moderate difficulties in the first five years of life.

The real impact of savings of much of the investments to the Public Sector will only be realised 10 years after the early years period. In the longer term, a failure to effectively intervene to address the complex needs of an individual in early childhood can result in a nine fold increase in direct public costs, when compared with an individual who accesses only universal services.

In addition to the Public Sector benefits detailed above, early years investment is the best route to overcoming intergenerational inequalities. The chart below, by economist James Heckman, illustrates the rates of return to education and training over a persons working life. The earlier the investment is made, the higher the return on this investment. This means that the best time to address inequality issues and to assist those children who might otherwise never be able to benefit from Further or Higher Education is in the years prior to the start of formal education.
Recent medical research suggests that the best time to invest may even be during pregnancy. The implication of Heckman’s curve is – the earlier the better.

This all means that the difficult decisions we have to make now will provide significant savings and better outcomes and ultimately allow us to reinvest these savings in future priority areas.

Introduction

On 10 December 2008, The Early Years Framework was launched. This signified the Scottish Government and CoSLA’s commitment to the earliest years of life being crucial to a child’s development and their future outcomes. The Framework signals local and national government’s joint commitment through prevention and early intervention to give every child in Scotland the best start in life. The Framework was developed through in-depth discussion with practitioners from a range of different agencies.

The Framework covers the interests of children pre-conception to the age of eight years and will have a 10 year implementation period - acting as an important milestone in the ongoing partnership between the Scottish Government and CoSLA.

The Framework sets out four principles of early intervention which can be used to underpin a consistent approach across a range of strategies:

- our ambitions are universal - we want to reduce inequalities, to have the same outcomes for all and for all to have the same opportunities
- we will take action to reduce inequality by identifying those at risk of not achieving these outcomes
- where these outcomes have not been achieved we will make sustained and effective interventions
- help is given to parents, families and communities to develop their own solutions using accessible, high quality public services as required.
Universal service provision is acknowledged as the crucial component of service delivery to individuals who need less input. Access to, and the quality of, universal services play a crucial role as a gateway to the specialist health and social care support that children and families with moderate and severe levels of need require. Therefore in implementing this Strategy and tackling disadvantage, we will be focussing on utilising the universal services available within the localities making them more accessible whilst also ensuring that there is specialist service provision available to those who need it.

**Our Early Years vision for Scottish Borders**

We have an ambitious vision for children and families in the Scottish Borders which is articulated through the Scottish Borders Children and Young People’s Services Plan and therefore is maintained within this Strategy. We will keep children and families at the centre of everything we do and develop our services with a focus on engagement and empowerment of children, families and communities.

Our vision is to break the cycles of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through the early years for children and families within the Scottish Borders.

‘Factors associated with poverty can add up to make it tougher for families. Working towards reducing health inequalities, debt and issues related to long-term unemployment will have a positive impact on families and children. In Scotland, one quarter of children aged under four had been ‘persistently poor’ since birth. Low income in itself does not have a negative impact on children’s development but poverty more generally is related to other disadvantages which together can have a negative impact on children’s development’. (Professor Susan Deacon, Joining the dots: A better start for Scotland’s children, March 2011 [http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/343337/0114216.pdf](http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Resource/Doc/343337/0114216.pdf))

We will use this Strategy to influence those areas of Community Planning that have an impact on the lives of children and their families.

Within the Scottish Borders, the Children and Young People’s Planning Partnership (CYPPP) is responsible for the delivery of the Children and Young People’s Services Plan. This Plan strives to improve our services further by working in partnership with agencies across the Scottish Borders.

Early Years is one of the priority areas for the CYPPP and therefore the Strategic Early Years Group (see Appendix 2 for membership) has responsibility for ensuring the Early Years Framework is implemented locally.
The Strategic Early Years group builds on work already undertaken whilst implementing the priorities contained within the Early Years Framework.

Single outcome agreements and the community planning process are the key local mechanisms for putting this Framework into practice. In doing so, the focus will remain on outcomes rather than inputs, and work will take place to develop better indicators of outcomes from early years policies and services. The Scottish Government and local partners will continue to work closely in partnership in taking forward action, and this will include building on work already in progress through GIRFEC and Curriculum for Excellence to provide child-centred, outcome-focused services.

In developing better indicators and outcomes we will do this in line with the ‘wellbeing indicators’ of GIRFEC, meaning that our children will be Safe, Healthy, Active, Nurtured, Achieving, Respected, Responsible and Included (SHANARRI).

What we are aiming to achieve

Since the introduction of the Early Years Framework, the Strategic Early Years group have been reviewing the work of Early Years services across the Scottish Borders and the progress we have already made towards implementing the 10 Elements of Transformational Change.

“Transformational change does not come easily but requires a raising of awareness, a redesign of how practitioners go about their business, multi-agency training that is based on common language and processes, and the fostering of trust and understanding across services and with children and families” – Adam Ingram, Minister for Children and Early Years, 2008. (Adam Ingram – Transformational Change – http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/earlyyearsissues/issue15/eyframework.asp)
The Strategic Early Years group (along with selected practitioners) have reviewed what the priorities should be in order to continue to implement the Elements of Transformational Change. The key actions identified are as follows:

A Coherent Approach

- We will ensure that the Early Years Strategy is integral to the Scottish Borders Children and Young People’s Services Plan 2012-2015 and will inform future Single Outcome Agreements through the Community Planning Process.
- We will strengthen Early Years partnerships within localities.
- We will review the existing groups which have a remit for Early Years in order to reduce duplication and develop a consistent approach to our work.

Helping Children, Families and Communities to secure outcomes themselves

- We will revisit the Scottish Borders Parenting Strategy and take into consideration national developments.
- We will build the capacity of families and communities to take control of their circumstances and influence making best use of services.

Breaking cycles of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through early years

- We will consider the key messages and themes from local and national policy and guidance documents and implement these locally (see Appendix 3 for a full list of current documents).
- Through the implementation of this Strategy we will break the cycles that lead to poor outcomes for children and their families in the Scottish Borders.

A focus on engagement and empowerment of children, families and communities

- The principles of GIRFEC will be integral to all our work.
- We will work towards developing stronger and more personalised services.
- We will adopt appropriate evidence based models of engagement and empowerment.

Using the strength of universal services to deliver prevention and early intervention

- Every child pre-birth to five years will have a named Health person and every child between 5 to eight years will have a named Education person.
- We will build the capacity of all universal services including up-skilling staff, more imaginative use of the Early Years workforce and removing barriers to families accessing services.
- Consideration will be given as to how the long term sustainability of universal services is safeguarded.

Putting quality at the heart of service delivery

- Self evaluation will be promoted across all services and used within improvement planning.
- A shared induction training for all staff working in the early years will be developed and we will facilitate and promote a comprehensive menu of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and accredited qualifications for these staff.
Services that meet the needs of children and families

- We will work towards more integrated services, for example, through exploring the concept of children and family centres in each major area of population with associated outreach services.
- Barriers to families accessing services will be identified and overcome.
- Parents will have access to the information that they need about services in their area.
- Consultation will be sought with families about the services that they require.

Improving outcomes and children’s quality of life through play

- We will promote the importance of play with parents, communities and professionals.
- An understanding of “risk” will be promoted amongst parents, communities and professionals.
- The possibility of a “Play Forum” to facilitate better links between Health Promotion, Scottish Borders Council’s Planning, Education and Lifelong Learning and “Play Borders” will be considered.

Simplifying and streamlining delivery

- We will develop a coherent 0-8 service which has clear, strategic leadership, with a particular focus on pre-birth to 3.
- A “continuum of service” in each locality, identifying and eliminating duplication will be developed.

More effective collaborations

- This Strategy will be endorsed at a strategic level (Community Planning Partnership) to ensure inclusion of Early Years priorities within the Community Planning process.
- Consideration will be given to the need for a central multi-agency Early Years team, bringing existing staff together.
- Multi-agency Early Years networks will develop in each locality reporting to the Strategic Early Years group.

Moving the Strategy forward

The Strategic Early Years group will be responsible for the implementation and ongoing evaluation of this Strategy. Through the actions contained within the accompanying Action Plan, they will report back to the CYPPP on a six monthly basis as to their progress.

The Strategy provides a range of actions to be taken to improve the quality and impact of Early Years services and the outcomes for children and families in the Scottish Borders. The impact of this Strategy will be measured through the use of the Scottish Government’s Early Years indicators and outcomes developed locally.

The Community Planning Partnership will be kept fully informed of progress and outcomes.
# Appendix 1

## Extract from the Strategic Assessment for the Scottish Borders (June 2011 V7)

### National Outcome

### 5. Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed

#### Summary of Borders Situation
- Low birth weight, smoking at booking, and a rising rate of 13-15yr old pregnancy are of particular concern to child health.
- Rates of increase of childhood obesity are of concern (low rates of physical activity among children and young people, girls in particular) as are the rates of improvement in dental health.
- Our low wage economy means that 44% of children live in low income households.
- The number of children on the Child Protection Register has increased by 27% combined with a slight rise in neglect and sexual crimes against children.
- There has been a significant increase in the numbers of children witnessing Domestic Abuse but increased report and improved service provision should contribute to long term improvements.

#### Overview

##### National Drivers
- Early Years Framework
- Curriculum for Excellence
- Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC)
- LTS National Guidance - Pre-Birth to three
- Equally Well
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children
- Children (Scotland) Act
- Literacy Action Plan (published 27/10/2010)
- National Domestic Abuse Delivery Plan for Children & Young People

##### Local Policy Framework
- Scottish Borders Early Years Strategy
- Integrated Children’s Services
- Child Protection
- Children and Young People’s Planning Partnership (with responsibility for GIRFEC)
- Violence Against Women Partnership – Children and Young People Experiencing domestic abuse (Sub Group)
- LetSBsafe 2 Project
- Domestic Abuse Service Redesign

#### Key data and analysis

1. Child demography
2. Pregnancy rates 13-15 year olds
3. % of first time mothers U19/O35
4. Immunisation rates
5. Breastfeeding rates
6. Low weight singleton birth rate
7. Smoking at booking
8. Child dental health
9. Childhood obesity
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Children living in low income households</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Numbers on the Child Protection Register</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Number of child neglect offences</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Sexual crimes against children</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Children in households where domestic abuse is recorded</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Parental Substance misuse</td>
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Appendix 2

Strategic Early Years group membership

Scottish Borders Council's Education and Lifelong Learning
Scottish Borders Council's Integrated Children's Service
Scottish Borders Council's Community Learning & Development
NHS Borders
Lothian and Borders Police
Scottish Children's Reporter Administration
Childcare Partnership
Appendix 3

National and local policy and guidance documents

The Early Years Framework: The Scottish Government, 2008

Scottish Borders Data and Indicators (taken from Data and Indicators – Early Years Framework Team, The Scottish Government, 2010)

Delivering the Early Years Framework through a locality model, Children in Scotland report to Scottish Borders Children and Young People’s Planning Partnership, 2010

Scottish Borders Children and Young People’s Services Plan 2009-2012

Pre-Birth to Three: Positive Outcomes for Scotland’s Children and Families - National Guidance: Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2010

A Pathway of Care for Vulnerable Families (0-3): The Scottish Government, 2011

The Financial Impact of Early Years Intervention in Scotland: The Scottish Government, 2010

A New Look at Hall 4: The Scottish Government, 2011

Refreshed Framework for Maternity Care: The Scottish Government, 2011


Reducing Antenatal Health Inequalities: The Scottish Government, 2010

Scottish Borders Single Outcome Agreement

Scottish Borders Strategic Assessment, June 2011

Getting It Right For Every Child

Growing Up in Scotland research results

Curriculum For Excellence