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Purpose of document

Merton's Children's Trust are responsible for commissioning and monitoring Merton's Children and Young People's Plans (CYPP). The plans are a set of joint priorities, commitments and agreed actions which come from strategies and service plans from across the Children's Trust Partnership. The purpose is to deliver key actions to improve those outcomes that will make significant improvements to the lives and life chances of children and young people in Merton, to narrow the gaps in outcomes that some of them experience and also to improve services for them to better meet their needs. The original plan commissioned by the Trust for the period 2013-2016 summarised the actions to be taken to meet key priorities for delivering services to *all* children, young people and families in the borough. In early 2015, the Trust updated and developed the initial CYPP for the next four years, from 2016-2019. The revised plan sets out how the agencies in Merton will collectively deliver the borough's priorities for children, young people and their families with a more targeted approach that specifically focuses on *vulnerable* families facing specific challenges and at high risk of poorer outcomes.

Summary of contents

The report describes the rationale for the CYPP within the context of ongoing issues nationally such as difficult funding pressures which are affecting children's services and an increasing population of children in some local areas. The plan contains commitments and actions that will be monitored by The Children's Trust Board. It mentions the Children's Trust values by the Merton Children's Trust Board and the Merton Safeguarding Children's Board, to achieve the strategic outcomes in the plan. The next section discusses performance management and governance within the framework of the Merton Child and Young Person Well-Being Model (MWBM) and briefly describes the role of the Children's Trust Board and how it will follow through its responsibilities for overseeing and monitoring the CYPP. It lists the key Board partners of the Children's Trust. Next, there is a section about what was used to inform the plan including demographic data, performance information and views from service users. The report then focuses on the 6 key priority areas identified. For each priority, the report explains why it needs to be focused on, what has been the key successes to date since the last CYPP, what Merton Borough Council will do and how performance will be monitored. The report ends with a matrix - a table which shows how all the Trust's strategies and plans link in with the key short to medium term priorities identified, to support and deliver improved outcomes.

Summary of outcomes

The six priority areas for 2016-19 include: 1) delivering early help and improving outcomes for those subject to the effects of disadvantage; 2) safeguarding children and young people; 3) looked after children and care leavers; 4) closing the gap in educational outcomes and opportunity; 5) engaging and enabling young people to achieve better outcomes and 6) children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The commitments and actions will be monitored through progress reports on each priority area and a number of key performance indicators. Merton Council hopes that by achieving what they say they will do in the plan, Merton will be an even better place for children and young people to grow up and thrive.

Summary of recommendations

- More support for parents (with confidence building, skills in living healthy lives, employment, benefits and housing). Improve access to child and adolescent mental health services (CAHMS). Develop pathways to access CYP services quickly.
- Prompt and appropriate safeguarding responses where necessary particularly to the issue of neglect. Maintain a robust focus on other key safeguarding issues.
- Achieve permanent care residency for looked after children quickly; improve placement choices and stability; expand range of placement options; identify right

placement for children early in their care journey; improve educational outcomes for looked after children and involve them in influencing services they receive.

- Identify those who might not receive or be able to benefit from the universal state education system. Ensure high quality local provision for those performing behind their peers. Additional places in local special educational needs (SEN) provision and an efficient and fair school application process particularly for vulnerable children.
- Increase young people's engagement in activities that support the reduction in the use of substances and promotes sexual health and positive health choices. Provide young people with appropriate mental health support.
- Partnership working to commission services that deliver integrated support for children and young people aged 0-25 with SEN and disabilities. Support the early identification of those with SEN, particularly in the early years of development.

Further information and resources

Merton Children's Trust/Board - Merton Partnership

<https://www.mertonpartnership.org.uk/thematic-partnerships/childrens-trust>

http://www2.merton.gov.uk/council/partnerships/merton_ct.htm