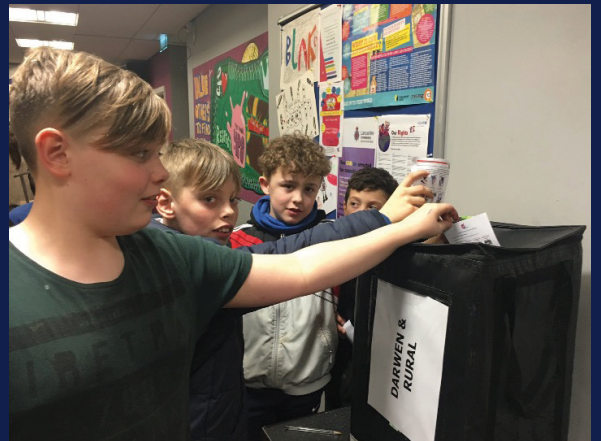


# Blackburn with Darwen Council

## Adolescent Strategy

### 2019/2023



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# Executive Summary

**This Adolescent Strategy for Blackburn with Darwen has been developed to clearly set out in one place all the services and support for young people aged 8 to 19. Over 600 young people, children's workforce partners and elected members have been consulted on what should be included, and this feedback has directly influenced the design of services and shaped our future plans.**

At the heart of the strategy is the drive to support young people more effectively and improve their experiences, wellbeing and life chances during these important transitional years. For some young people, issues affecting their families can repeat over time with growing intensity and complexity, which can lead to increased vulnerability in their teenage years.

Partnership working to prevent entry into care, custody and from becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and keeping young people safe is a focus for this strategy. The need to sustain improvements for young people for longer periods of time is paramount.

## Who is this Strategy for?

The strategy informs the children's workforce, both within and outside the Local Authority, of what Blackburn with Darwen's offer is to help navigate which service or services will be of most benefit to a young person, depending on their level of need.

For young people and their families the strategy outlines what to expect from services and how support can be accessed.

## What is an adolescent?

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines an 'adolescent' as a young person aged 10-19. However, whilst age can be a convenient way to define adolescence, it is just one characteristic of this period of development in a young person's life.

According to the WHO, 'age is often more appropriate for assessing and comparing biological changes, which are fairly universal, than the social transitions, which vary more with the socio-cultural environment'.<sup>1</sup> This is complicated by the fact that 'adolescents are not simply young adults or old children... the risks they experience, their pathways to risk, and the impact those risks have, are often different to those affecting other age groups'.<sup>2</sup>

With this in mind, in Blackburn with Darwen we have chosen to expand our definition of adolescence to 8-19 years to be inclusive of younger children, as part of our commitment to prevention and early intervention. This also ensures that all the children and young people we work with are represented in our strategy and the development of the Blackburn with Darwen offer.

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1 World Health Organization. (n.d.). Adolescent development. [online]

Available at: [https://www.who.int/maternal\\_child\\_adolescent/topics/adolescence/development/en/](https://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/topics/adolescence/development/en/)

2 Hanson, E. and Holmes, D. (2014). That Difficult Age: Developing a more effective response to risks in adolescence - Summary and Key Points. [online] Research in Practice, p.5.

Available at: <https://www.rip.org.uk/download/237/evidence-scope-that-difficult-age-summary-and-key-points.pdf>





# Introduction

There are approximately 18,500 children and young people aged 11 to 19 living in Blackburn with Darwen, for which Children's Services and partners deliver a range of support and intervention through both universal and targeted support. The Adolescent Services arm of Children's Services co-ordinates this offer to ensure that young people get the right help at the right time, and where they are in need of help and protection, they receive a service which safeguards and protects them.

A collaborative approach to providing support through aligned services is key to the success of the offer to our young people. Over a number of years, the local area has worked to build close and effective partnerships across services with multi-agency teams in many disciplines, and this has strengthened the quality and scope of support available.

The borough's vision for our children and young people recognises the need for us to be ambitious for our young people and that everyone needs advice, help and support at times in their lives:



***“Children in Blackburn with Darwen will grow to have a happy, healthy life and experience success, and overcome challenges. To achieve this we will work with our communities, with our partners and our children, young people and their families to ensure that children get the right help at the right time by building on their strengths and the strengths of their family.”***

## Context

The development of an Adolescent Strategy is a key Council priority to provide support and services for some of the most vulnerable young people aged 8-19 years. Evidence suggests some of our young people have needs that are far too great for individual agencies to meet on their own - such as schools, health or other universal services, and often the young people are not eligible for support from statutory social care services. These young people are referred to children's social care because of concerns around domestic violence, parental mental health, neglect and physical abuse (among others).

Where children and families are assessed but do not meet thresholds for statutory intervention, there is still an opportunity to provide early help to prevent further escalation at a later point in time. Some children may be stuck in a 'revolving door' into children's services, repeatedly referred and assessed but not accessing appropriate help. This potentially risks children enduring prolonged periods where needs are not addressed and increases the likelihood of recurrent episodes of abuse, neglect or maltreatment.

Addressing the financial pressures on local authorities and strengthening the statutory framework for early help would go a long way to meeting the needs of these children. It has to be clear who should do what, when, to make sure children get the right help at the right time. Therefore, it is timely to develop an adolescent framework to underpin a robust and seamless approach to working with vulnerable adolescents.

### Key Stats

**total population of the area**  
**147,500**

**29%**  
**of residents are aged 0-19**



**2nd lowest**  
**household**  
**income in**  
**the UK...**

**...and 22.2% of our children**  
**aged 10-11 years are obese**

### Demographics

Blackburn with Darwen has a population of approximately 147,500 and a comparatively high proportion (nearly 43,000 - 29%) is aged 0-19. This is the highest percentage of any local authority in England and Wales (2011 Census figures). 22,800 young people are aged 8-19 years and over half (52%) of all school children are from minority ethnic groups.



## Poverty

Child poverty in the borough is worse than the England average with 39.5% of children and young people living in poverty, compared with a national average of 27%. Blackburn with Darwen has the second lowest household income in the UK and the lowest in the North West. The impact of child poverty can lead to poor physical and mental health, poor dental and optical care, and a poor diet, with 22.2% of children aged 10-11 years in the borough classified as obese.

## Complex Needs

Children's Services and connected partners are working with an increasing number of young people with complex needs and challenging behaviour. Young people aged 11-17 and their siblings make up over 56% of the total children's social care cohort, excluding those young people who are care leavers or open to the Children with Disabilities team. Supporting young people and their families at an early stage and at all levels of need, through the framework set out in this strategy, reduces pressure on statutory services by intervening to prevent entry into care, where appropriate to do so.

Despite a challenging backdrop of deprivation in the area and cuts to services delivering youth provision over recent years, locally we have followed national trends of a reduction in youth offending. Alternative means of tackling and processing young people through the youth justice system has seen an overall reduction in numbers coming through the Courts, providing a more concentrated and complex cohort of young people for the Youth Justice Service to supervise through statutory orders.

Compounded with certain local issues specific to this area, most notably the disproportional over-representation of young people from the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community, Blackburn with Darwen Youth Justice Service consistently achieve results that outperform geographical and statistical neighbours and national averages. This is applicable in measures such as first time entrants into the youth justice system, reoffending and the number of young people receiving custodial sentences.

Youth work via informal education provides peer-group activities and trusted relationships, supported by professionally qualified youth workers and skilled volunteers, harnessing skills of young people not fulfilled by formal education and providing safe places for young people to learn together, and to have fun.

There is a great heritage of voluntary provision and local authority commissioned services. The collective impact is to ensure no young person is 'left behind'. With 85% of a young person's waking hours spent outside of school and formal education, where the loss of youth services is pronounced, vulnerable young people in particular are falling prey to loneliness, poor mental health and fear of youth violence. In areas of investment in youth services, we see a positive commitment to young people's inclusion in decision-making, community engagement and increased life-skills.<sup>1</sup>

Locally in Blackburn with Darwen (BwD) there has been a reduction in universal youth engagement opportunities which is being managed by the formation of a local Strategic Youth Alliance.

1 National Youth Agency. (2019). National Debate: Youth Services - NYA. [online]  
Available at: <https://nya.org.uk/2019/07/national-debate-youth-services/>



*“Over the years youth work has borne the brunt of significant spending cuts. Recent events and reports suggest the loss of youth work has had a negative impact on young people and communities.*

*In the face of rapid technological change and major economic and societal challenges we need to look again at what support young people need now and to meet their needs for the future”.<sup>1</sup>*

*Lloyd Russell-Moyle MP, April 2019*



# Key Issues & Challenges

Knowing the challenges that some of our more vulnerable young people face is key to being able to design services to support them. Key issues and challenges of particular concern are:

- Continuously missing from home
- Substance and alcohol misuse
- Anti-social behaviour
- Youth offending and re-offending
- NEET\*
- Health-related issues
- Poor support network
- Weak family support
- Children in Troubled Families Programme
- Teenage pregnancy and sexual health
- Children in Need
- Persistent absence from school
- Chaotic family lives
- Behavioural problems
- Child Criminal Exploitation
- Risk of homelessness
- Children on Child Protection Plan
- Poor emotional, social & coping skills
- Mental health issues
- Learning difficulties and SEND\*
- Low self-esteem
- Poor aspiration
- Risk-taking behaviour
- Grooming/Child Sexual Exploitation

**NEET** stands for “Not in Education, Employment, or Training”. This refers to a person aged 16-24 who is unemployed, not in school or vocational training, with a focus on those aged 16-18.

**SEND** stands for “Special Educational Needs and Disability”. This includes young people who have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for a special educational provision to be made.

# 118

young people received treatment for substance misuse in 2018/19

There has been an increase in the number of referrals for CSE for children 13 and under

In Oct 2019, 40 children were open to ENGAGE



1 in 8 young people in the United Kingdom are affected by mental health

# 98

young people aged 16 or 17 presented to Housing Special Needs in 2018/19

## Pupils with a Special Educational Need



# 734

children and young people on the Disability Links register



70% of 12-15 year olds who go online have a social media account



# Key Issues & Challenges: What do we know?

## Youth Homelessness

As a general rule, 16 and 17 year olds who are at risk of becoming homeless, or who are homeless present at Housing Needs for advice and assistance. The total number of 16 and 17 year olds who presented between 1st October 2018 and 30th September 2019 was 98. Of these, 62 were owed a Prevention Duty and three owed a Relief Duty i.e. were actually homeless.

There is a joint protocol in place between housing special needs and the Children's Advice & Duty Service. If a 16 to 17 year old presents at housing needs due to the breakdown of their home circumstances, their consent for a referral to Children's Social care for assessment is sought.

## Young People in Care & Placement Stability

Of the 400 children and young people in our care as at September 2019, 63 had three or more placements and 24 (38%) of them were aged 13 years or over.

The most common reason for disruptions was that foster carers felt unable to manage behaviour e.g. young people going 'missing from home', violence, aggression and sexualised behaviour.

A lack of foster placements in the region for older children and teenagers is also contributing to the number of those experiencing multiple placements and the associated instability that this may lead to.

## Inclusion

The Electively Home Educated population is fluid, as children can be withdrawn from school and return to school on a weekly basis, however there are approximately 100 pupils home educated at any one time. The New Directions team within Children's Services provides advice and guidance for Year 11 Electively Home Educated young people which reduces the risk of young people becoming NEET.

Myerscough College also offer provision for 14 to 16 year olds and Blackburn College delivers the Moving On Project.

With regards to permanent exclusions, the most common reasons in our secondary schools are aggression towards other pupils, disruptive behaviour and verbal abuse towards staff (72.1% 2017/18).

## Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing

One in eight children/young people in the UK are affected by mental health, with approximately three-quarters experiencing mental health problems before the age of 24.<sup>1</sup> New for 2019 in Blackburn with Darwen is the CAMHS Trailblazer project which will link every secondary school, special school and Pupil Referral Unit to a designated lead for mental health. The lead will offer advice to teachers within the school and have an understanding of services for children and young people to access support.

## Social Media

Social media has become an important feature in the lives of young people. Ofcom reports that 70% of 12-15 year olds and 20% of 8-11 year olds who go online have a social media profile.<sup>1</sup> Social media use is having both a positive and negative effect on our young people. Whilst social media makes the majority of young people feel happy or has helped them feel closer to their friends, studies have shown an association between social media use and depressive symptoms, particularly in adolescent girls<sup>2</sup>, and it can also pose a risk in terms of exploitation, radicalisation and offending. In the North West, an average of 7% of young people aged 10-15 years old have experienced cyberbullying and this figure is consistent with other regions across England.<sup>3</sup>

## Contextual Safeguarding - Child Criminal/Sexual Exploitation (CCE/CSE)

As at October 2019 - 40 children were open to the Engage service with an increase in the number of referrals for CSE for children 13 and under (17 children). Over the last 12 months, there has been an increase in the number of referrals for CSE for children 13 and under. One of the key challenges in mapping the extent of CSE is the fact that young people rarely report their experiences of abuse and professionals may not always identify or register concerns around CSE.

As such, it is difficult to compare our statistics with those at a regional or national level. Similarly, the vast majority of police forces and local authorities across England and Wales are unable to share figures of the number of children affected by criminal exploitation in their area. In Blackburn with Darwen, we are putting more efforts into raising awareness of CCE and so expect the number of referrals to increase accordingly. It is also important to note that children with a disability are more likely to be abused than their peers. According to the Home Office, young people with a physical or learning disability are also more vulnerable to criminal exploitation<sup>4</sup>.

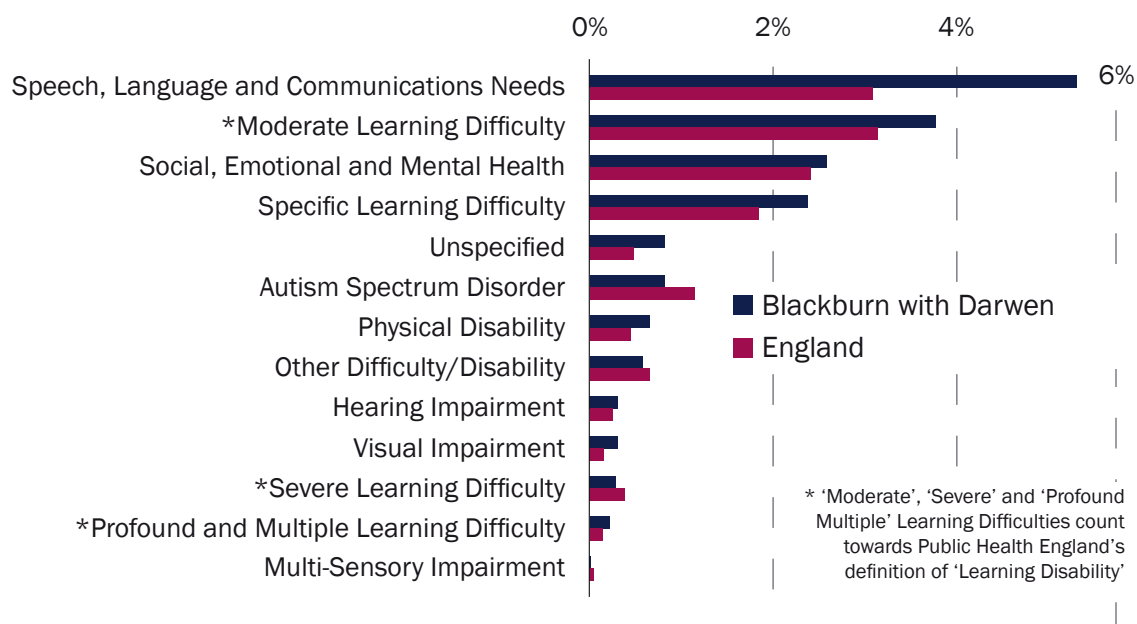
## Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND)

In October 2019, there were 734 Children and Young People on the Disability Links register aged between 8 and 25 years. 5171 children in Blackburn with Darwen schools had a Special Educational Need (SEN), or 17.7% of all pupils (Jan 2018). This is significantly higher than the average for England (14.6%) or the North West (14.8%).

"Table: SEND 1" shows the proportion of all pupils in the maintained sector having a Special Educational Need of each particular type. The rate of 'Speech, Language and Communication Needs' in Blackburn with Darwen is strikingly higher than average. The overall rate of SEN in the borough's state-funded primary schools (19.5%) is the highest in the country.

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- 1 Ofcom (2019). Children and parents: Media use and attitudes report 2018. [online] p.8. Available at: [https://www.ofcom.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0024/134907/children-and-parents-media-use-and-attitudes-2018.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0024/134907/children-and-parents-media-use-and-attitudes-2018.pdf)
  - 2 Kelly, Y., Zilanawala, A., Booker, C. and Sacker, A. (2018). Social Media Use and Adolescent Mental Health: Findings From the UK Millennium Cohort Study. *EClinicalMedicine*, 6, pp.59-68.
  - 3 Middlemas J (2018), Bullying in England, April 2013 to March 2018: Analysis on 10 to 15 year olds from the Crime Survey for England & Wales, electronic dataset, Department of Education. *Table 6b: Incidence of cyber-bullying by region*. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/754724/Bullying\\_in\\_England\\_2013\\_2018\\_annex.ods](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/754724/Bullying_in_England_2013_2018_annex.ods)
  - 4 Home Office (2018). Criminal Exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: County Lines guidance. [online] Home Office. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/741194/HOCountyLinesGuidanceSept2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/741194/HOCountyLinesGuidanceSept2018.pdf)





**Table: SEND 1 - Prevalence of particular types of Special Educational Need, January 2018**  
(maintained schools only, primary type of need only)

The Blackburn with Darwen Local Offer website brings together helpful and useful information for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), from birth to 25 years, and their families. The local offer covers services within Education, Health, Social Care, Voluntary and Private sector services, Leisure and Recreation and Preparation for Adulthood. The Young People's Service SEND Inclusion project forms part of the Local Offer.

As indicated in "Table: SEND 1", the term 'Specific Learning Difficulty' describes conditions such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, dyscalculia and dyspraxia. The other three categories of learning difficulty, marked with an asterisk, combine to form what Public Health England (PHE) refers to as 'learning disabilities'.

Based on the 2017 figures, PHE calculates that Blackburn with Darwen's combined rate of learning disability known to schools was significantly higher than average, and it was sixth highest in England for 'Profound & Multiple Learning Difficulty'.



## Substance Misuse

In the 2018/19 period, 118 young people entered structured treatment for substance misuse, with cannabis (42) and alcohol (18) being the primary drugs of choice. At both a national level and within the Borough, cannabis remains the most common drug for which young people require treatment. The majority of young people who accessed structured treatment during this period identified as male (63.6%), which is also consistent with national statistics.<sup>1</sup> A report published in 2018 by Public Health England found that two-thirds (66%) of young people who accessed specialist substance misuse services between April 2017 and March 2018 were male.<sup>2</sup> In the 2018/19 period, 99% of the young people that left the substance misuse services did so in a planned way, compared to 81% nationally for the 2017/18 period. Overall, however, the Borough is one of the worst performers in the country in relation to hospital admissions due to substance misuse amongst 15-24 year olds.<sup>3</sup>

## Emergency Hospital Admissions

The borough has significantly higher than average emergency admissions at all stages of childhood, and comes highest in the country for age 10-14. It is the top upper-tier authority for child admissions due to pedestrian casualties and second highest for asthma in the 10-17 age-group.

## Education & Employment

Participation figures for 16-17 year olds are higher than both regional and national figures at 91.8% compared to 85.9% for the North West and 85.3% for the England average. The New Directions team work with all schools across the borough to gather intended destination information and follow up those Year 11 students who leave school without an offer.

## Anti-Social Behaviour & Crime

Changes to Policing approaches around young people who offend, supported by the widely adopted 'Child First, Offenders Second' agenda, has rightly seen the number of young people arrested and processed through the system more than halve during the past five years. This has the positive impact of not criminalising young people but creates the challenge of accessing young people who may need help to support them and prevent their behaviour from escalating.

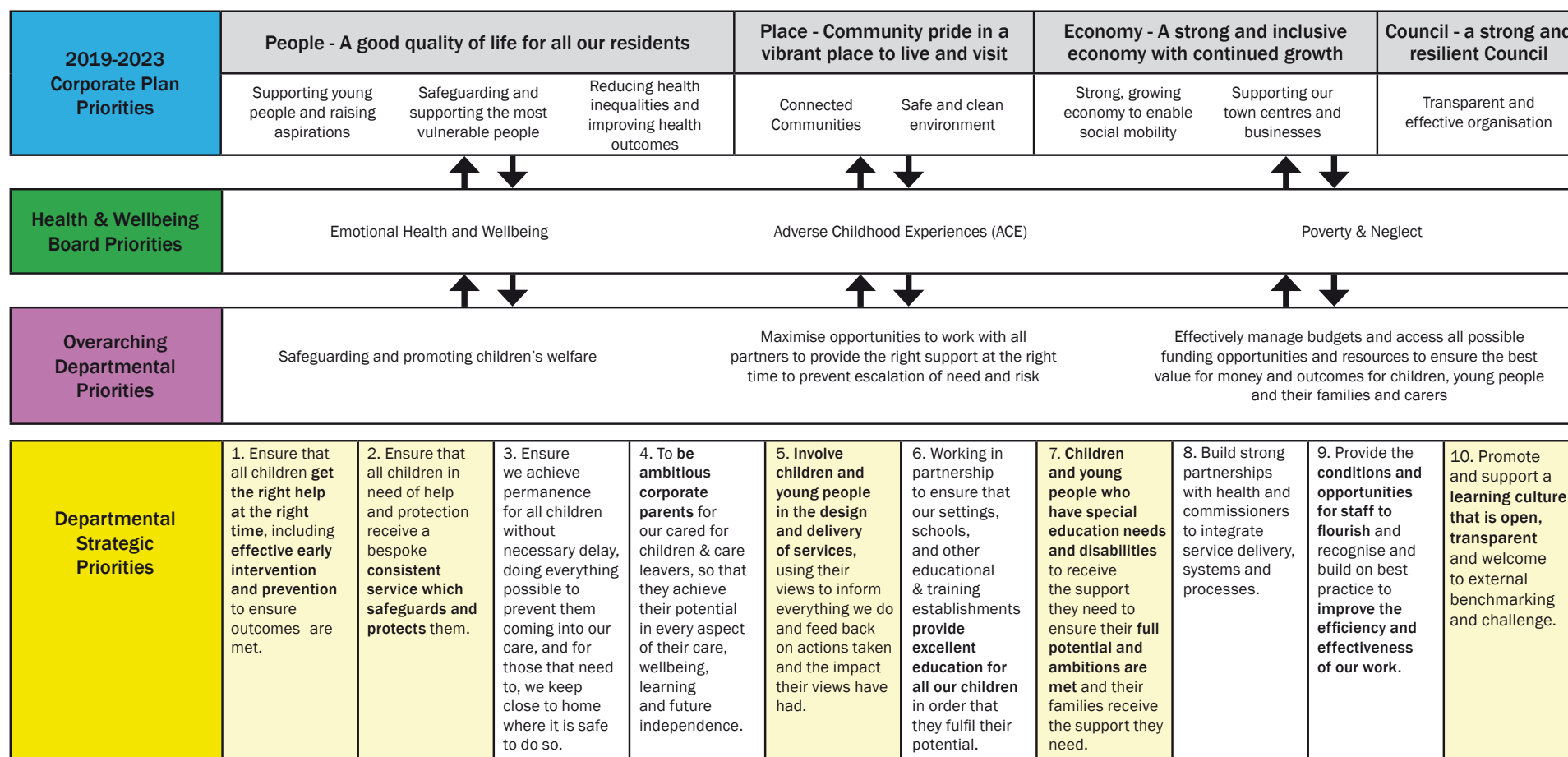


- 1 World Health Organization. (n.d.). Adolescent development. [online] Available at: [https://www.who.int/maternal\\_child\\_adolescent/topics/adolescence/development/en/](https://www.who.int/maternal_child_adolescent/topics/adolescence/development/en/)
- 2 Hanson, E. and Holmes, D. (2014). That Difficult Age: Developing a more effective response to risks in adolescence - Summary and Key Points. [online] Research in Practice, p.5. Available at: <https://www.rip.org.uk/download/237/evidence-scope-that-difficult-age-summary-and-key-points.pdf>
- 3 Public Health England. Public Health Profiles. [Cited: 26 Nov 2019] <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk> © Crown copyright [2019]

# Key Priorities - Plan on a Page

The key priorities within this strategy have been developed through consultation with young people and their families and key partners, but are also influenced by the wider borough's vision for children and young people.

The plan on a page below demonstrates the golden thread which links the borough's Corporate Plan, Health and Wellbeing Board and Children's Services Strategic priorities together. As part of Children's Services department, the Adolescent Service and key partners contribute predominantly towards Children's Services Departmental Strategic priorities 1, 2, 5, 7 & 10. **Below:** Vision for the Borough's Children & Young People (Aged 0-19 and 0-25 for SEND/Looked After Children).





# Strategic Aims & Objectives

The five strategic aims and associated objectives below set out how the local area pledges to support Blackburn with Darwen young people to have a happy, healthy life and experience success, and overcome challenges:

STRATEGIC AIMS	OBJECTIVES
<p>Keeping C&amp;YP safe in the home and in the community</p> <p><i>Links to Strategic Priority 1,2</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Take action and embed awareness of Contextual Safeguarding, particularly around Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation and deliver a multi-agency response</li> <li>Improve the physical health, emotional wellbeing and safety of our young people</li> <li>Work effectively with partners to safeguard children and young people including those vulnerable to exploitation, radicalisation or offending</li> <li>Develop an effective neighbourhood youth offer including outreach/detached programme</li> <li>Offer of support to children open to social care</li> <li>Provide effective intervention to support young people around reducing the risks of harm</li> </ul>
<p>Reduce the number of children &amp; young people in care</p> <p><i>Links to Strategic Priority 1,2,10</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer a timely intervention that is bespoke to each young person and family</li> <li>Increase the number of children accessing short breaks to support placement stability</li> <li>Develop individual support plans to highlight challenges, aspirations, the wishes of young person and their family</li> <li>Offer 1-to-1 support and focused group work activities</li> <li>Hold multi-agency meetings to identify and respond to concerns</li> <li>Link key agencies and professionals to support the young and their parents/carers/wider family</li> <li>Develop shared training &amp; capacity building across the partnership to ensure the workforce is able to meet future demands, quality of service delivery and sustainability.</li> </ul>
<p>Reduce the number of children &amp; young people in the criminal/ youth justice system</p> <p><i>Links to Strategic Priority 1,2,5,10</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work in partnership with statutory and third sector organisations, to provide a coherent and effective response to youth crime</li> <li>Contribute to a wider borough response to preventing youth crime</li> <li>Adopt a restorative approach wherever possible and help young people to understand the consequences of their behaviour</li> <li>Engage with and listen to the voice of children, young people, their families, and victims to shape services</li> <li>Co-ordinate and co-deliver detached work located in and around anti-social behaviour/'hotspot' areas of the borough</li> <li>Continue to develop integrated working opportunities across partners as the basis for the effective prevention and reduction of offending</li> </ul>
<p>Stop children from becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)</p> <p><i>Links to Strategic Priority 1,6,10</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with any young person post 16 who is not in education, employment or training (NEET) to re-engage and where possible, support those who are at risk of becoming NEET pre-16</li> <li>Work with vulnerable groups (including Looked After Children &amp; young offenders) pre-16 to engage them in appropriate education and secure suitable progression routes post 16</li> <li>Deliver democratic, educational and scrutiny involvement opportunities through youth participation</li> <li>Support young people who have entered the youth justice system to access education, training or employment and sustain this, contributing to improving their longer term prospects and reduce the likelihood and opportunities for re-offending</li> <li>Extend Quality Assurance to Education in order that every aspect of a child's life is considered</li> </ul>
<p>Effective intervention (right time/ right place/right young people)</p> <p><i>Links to Strategic Priority 1</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead and manage the direct delivery of services that benefit and support children and young people aged between 8-19 years, giving them the opportunity to develop their potential, social and life skills and to reduce risk taking behaviour</li> <li>Lead the development of a local Strategic Youth Alliance bringing together the Local Authority and Voluntary, Charity, Faith and Social Enterprise sectors to work more collaboratively and develop innovative local strategies and solutions</li> <li>Deliver a programme of positive activities to support other service areas and to generate income by tailoring programmes to external providers (schools, voluntary sector, youth organisations, local charities etc.)</li> <li>Improve the school nurse model of working to be more integrated with other adolescent services, including the new Adolescent Hub, and to increase visibility within schools and in the community</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cross Cutting Theme: Participation</b></p> <p>Involve children and young people in the design and delivery of services, using their views to inform everything we do and feedback on actions taken and the impact that their views have had.</p>	

# **Partnership Working**

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We know that there are increasing numbers of children needing help and protection. Rising numbers of teenagers entering care and sustained pressures on securing effective long term placements, all require the local authority to work differently against a back drop of increasingly stretched local authority budgets. Resources for providing support early are under pressure, making it harder for local authorities and their partners to fulfil this role.

Partnership working and multi-agency teams enable the borough to be innovative and responsive to the needs of our young people. The co-location of local authority workers and Universal 0-19 Health services is supporting early identification of needs and a co-ordinated response.

The multi-agency teams already in place in the borough are achieving better outcomes for young people, namely the Engage team, Targeted Youth Support and the Youth Justice Team which all have meaningful partnerships with the Police, Health and the voluntary sector (further explained in “What is the Blackburn with Darwen Offer?” on page 20).

## ***Strategic Partnership Developments***

### **Adolescent Panel**

Currently two panels are in place to consider and identify the most appropriate resources to support the needs of children, young people and their families. The multi-agency Transforming Lives Panel meets weekly and represents a thorough cross section of available services working across the entire life cycle of a person. The Children’s Services Resource Management Panel is internal to the council and meets weekly to provide additional support and guidance to social workers.

In development for 2019/20 is a dedicated Adolescent Panel consisting of key partners to create a bespoke resource to focus specifically on the support needs of young people. The process will enable the right professionals to collectively agree the right multi-agency package of support for a young person and their family which will lead to a faster response and more effective step down to universal provision through partnership working and effective signposting.

### **Strategic Youth Alliance (SYA)**

The Strategic Youth Alliance is a collaboration of Blackburn with Darwen Youth Organisations from the public, voluntary and faith sectors. The aim of the Strategic Youth Alliance is to provide quality universal provision for children and young people by working in partnership to an agreed set of aims and objectives. This collaborative approach will aim to reduce duplication, identify gaps in provision, and to work together to increase resources for young people in the borough and ultimately ensure a youth work offer for young people is available locally.

A Hub and Spoke approach is being developed with key locations identified as the main 'hubs' and smaller satellite provision spread across the neighbourhoods as 'spokes'. Blackburn Rovers Community Trust (BRCT) and Blackburn Youth Zone (BYZ) are commissioned to deliver the universal neighbourhood offer and have tailored their offers using intelligence and mapping from the SYA partnership.

## Adolescent Hub & Locality Hubs

The development of a multi-agency Adolescent Hub for 2019/20 will align teams and services in one place to better support our young people and improve their experience of working with the professionals in their lives. Referrals from the Adolescent Panel will be prioritised.

Young people in Blackburn with Darwen have told us that they want to access services in one location. In response, as a 'one-stop shop' Hub is being developed to access multiple services supporting young people across the continuum of need and response spectrum. The Hub will boast an integrated team to support young people throughout their adolescent life journey to prevent young people from being transferred between services, and instead supported by a dedicated multi-agency approach.

This team will comprise of key partners including Lancashire Care Foundation Trust, Child Action Northwest, Go2 and practitioners from East Lancashire Child and Adolescent Service (ELCAS), who will offer advice and signposting to appropriate services. Young people will have access to a lead professional or key worker to support them with their interactions with services, providing consistency to the young person enabling strong and trusting relationships to develop.

### Adolescent Hub key drivers:

- Designed with young people (and partners)
- Work across the Continuum of Need and Response (CoNR) spectrum
- Prioritise referrals from Adolescent Panel
- Integrate Blackburn with Darwen partners





## **Other Partnerships**

### **Kooth**

Kooth has been commissioned in Blackburn with Darwen to provide an online counselling and emotional well-being platform for children and young people, accessible through a mobile, tablet and desktop. It is free at the point of use, no referral is needed and young people can sign up themselves. The site offers online counselling and has a range of therapeutic tools, activities and moderated message boards 365 days a year, backed up by an out of hours service. The top three issues raised by our young people using the service are Anxiety & Stress, Self Harm and Friendships & Family.

### **East Lancashire Child and Adolescent Service (ELCAS)**

The East Lancashire Child and Adolescent Service (ELCAS) provides a mental health service for young people up to their 16th birthday, who may be experiencing a range of severe and complex difficulties with their mental health. In early 2020, the service will also be extended to young people up to their 18th birthday (up to 19 years of age for those who are already within the service). The majority of referrals are from GPs, however schools and other professionals can refer. The team is multi-disciplinary and includes Mental Health Practitioners, Mental Health Nurses, Child Psychiatrists, Clinical Psychologists, Social Workers and Specialist Therapists.

### **Mental Health Trailblazer**

Blackburn with Darwen has been successful with a bid to Public Health England, to deliver a mental health 'trailblazer' programme. The Mental Health Support Teams in schools, as set out in the Children and Young People Mental Health Green Paper and Long-Term Plan for the NHS, will be placed within high schools, with the aim being to develop models of early intervention for mild to moderate mental health issues and to support young people with early signs of mental distress before they escalate. This will help them to achieve the best educational outcomes and reduce the chance of them developing more serious mental health issues later in life.

### **Voluntary Sector**

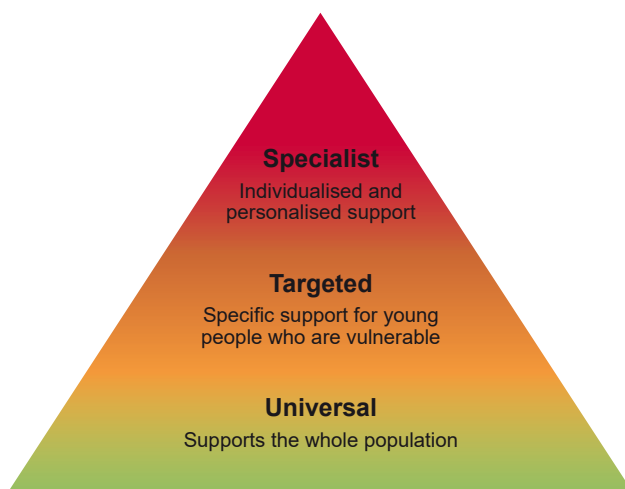
In Blackburn with Darwen strong working relationships have been established with our voluntary sector partners. Organisations who are part of the Strategic Youth Alliance include Blackburn Rovers Community Trust, Blackburn Youth Zone, Child Action North West, FACE, Healthy Living, Inspire Motivate Overcome (IMO), One Voice, Switch and Youth Action.

A dedicated drug and alcohol commissioned service for young people in Blackburn with Darwen is available offering free and confidential advice and information for anyone under 25, along with support for the whole family.

# What is the Blackburn with Darwen Offer?

## Levels of Provision

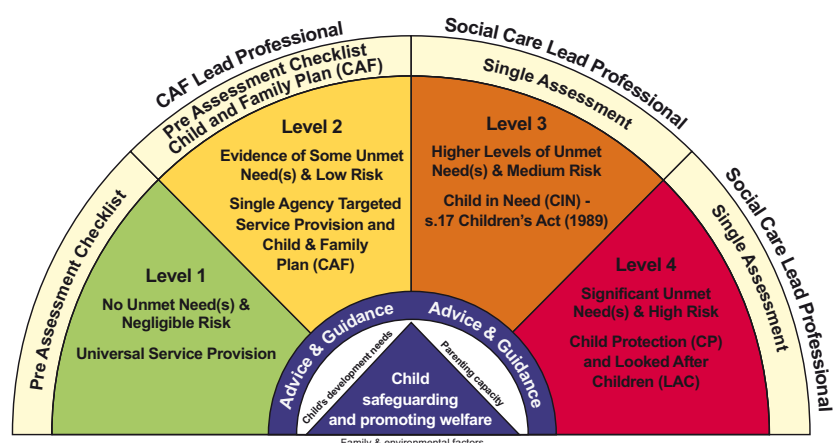
The strategy supports young people who collectively have a wide range of needs, and ensures that provision and intervention is offered across three broad levels; Universal, Targeted and Specialist.



The **Prevention Model** sets out and categorises services based on the type of service provided, with the majority of young people having their needs met by universal services. Each level works to meet the needs of the young person by recognising early what intervention is required to prevent entry into the next tier, which is more resource intensive and specialist.

The model also supports a step-down approach to allow de-escalation to universal provision when appropriate.

Similarly, the **Continuum of Need and Response** depicts working across levels and outlines the journey of the young person who may 'step up' and 'step down' again as their needs change over time. The Adolescent Strategy has been designed to enable teams to work collaboratively across the continuum, so that the most appropriate intervention can be identified and offered to match the needs of the young person at any particular point.



## ***Universal - support for the whole population***

### **Young People's Services – Neighbourhood Offer Commissioned to Blackburn Rovers Community Trust and Blackburn Youth Zone**

At its core, the aim of youth work is to support the personal and social development of young people through informal education. Its distinctive characteristics include the voluntary engagement of young people, young people's active involvement in developing provision, the use of informal education as the primary method of youth engagement, and an approach to provision that is responsive to young people's abilities and needs.

For many young people - a positive youth work experience can set them on the path to success, overcoming challenges relating to self and/or family circumstances and supporting young people through times of trauma to make better life choices that help support young people's development and help families to stay together and be happier together.

There is substantial and growing evidence that developing social and emotional capabilities supports the achievement of positive life outcomes, including educational attainment, employment and health. Capabilities such as resilience, communication and negotiation are also increasingly cited as being the foundations of employability. Evidence shows that approaches that focus on building social and emotional capabilities such as these can have greater long-term impact than ones that focus on directly seeking to reduce the 'symptoms' of poor outcomes for young people.

### **Emotional Health & Wellbeing**

Supporting the emotional health and wellbeing needs of young people is central to all teams within Adolescent Services. In addition, a number of services have a dedicated remit for emotional health and wellbeing and these include school nursing, mental health practitioners linked to all schools, ELCAS and CAMHS services, Educational Psychology, REVIVE and Kooth online counselling and support.

### **Schools**

There are 11 schools in the secondary school sector and 82% are judged good or better following inspection from Ofsted. Local pupils make really good progress during their time in school, in spite of the social challenges that they face in their wider lives. Every school is part of a School Improvement Group where schools work together to share best practice and secure the best outcomes for children.

Schools work closely with Children's Services including Early Help (CAFs), Early Years and Adolescent Services and Social Care to ensure the right support and services are available to young people.

### **Vulnerable Learners & Inclusion**

Attending school or an Alternative Provision setting opens up a support network for a young person to develop personally and academically with access to Social, Emotional and Mental Health guidance and support. Being absent from school increases the potential for a young person to become more vulnerable with less opportunity for professionals to identify any needs or safeguarding issues.



Each primary, secondary and special school within the Authority has a designated Inclusion Officer who works in partnership with schools to support pupils and parent/carers to break the link between poor attendance, disadvantage and reduced attainment. Core functions of the team include pupil absence, children missing from education, elective home education and child performance and employment licensing (for children involved in areas like television and theatre).

## **Healthy Child Programme**

The Local authority commissions the Healthy Child Programme to support children and young people aged 5-19 (up to age 25 for young people with SEND) which is delivered by School Nurses and specially trained community public health nurses.

The commission strives for integration between health, local authorities and partners to ensure that needs are met. More information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/healthy-child-programme-5-to-19-years-old>

## ***Targeted - specific support for young people who are vulnerable***

### **The SEEDS - ASU**

The SEEDS works in partnership with other agencies in order to offer holistic support and interventions for young people and families. It provides a supportive, nurturing and caring environment and staff are proactive in ensuring that the young people's needs are met in every way possible.

With specific individual support packages, strategies and guidance, it is envisaged that young people will be able to thrive again within family life and be able to succeed socially, emotionally and educationally. Quality time out is offered to vulnerable young people struggling to live within their own family unit and the service enables young people and their families to have structured and planned 'time out' or respite from their situation. All families have an assigned keyworker who will oversee their support package and work directly with the young person and their family. The service offers both an outreach offer as well as a short breaks service to meet the needs of young people and their families.

### **Targeted Youth Support (TYS)**

Targeted Youth Support is a voluntary participation service aimed at addressing the needs of vulnerable children and young people, aged 8-19 years, by offering them tailored intervention and support. The team works with some of the boroughs most challenging and vulnerable young people who can be referred in for high risk /significant issues from services like the Children's Advice & Duty Service, Engage, Social Care as well as from schools, police and Voluntary, Community and Faith partners.

The programme helps vulnerable young people by assessing their needs and develops tailored interventions to prevent their problems escalating. This often means working with young people who may not meet traditional thresholds for statutory or specialist services, but who, without help, are at risk of escalating and entering local authority care or youth justice system.

## New Directions - Post 16

### *Universal services also delivered*

New Directions provides independent and impartial careers information, advice and guidance to young people aged 16-19 (and up to 25 for those with a learning or physical disability). A drop in service is offered to help young people find and apply for employment, education and training; in addition young people are signposted to other partners/agencies for support around personal issues. This approach is to prevent young people from becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training). Blackburn with Darwen compares very favourably to both regional and national averages, with Participation at 91.8% (March 2019) compared to 85.9% for the North West and 85.3% for the England average.

## Young People's Services – Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND)

Every child, whatever their needs, has the right to participate fully in their community and to have the same choices, opportunities and experiences as other children; to make local friends, and to access play, leisure and recreational facilities.

Children with disabilities and their families suffer from social exclusion often as a result of a combination of issues, including poverty, segregation, discrimination and inadequate provision of support services. Children and young people with a disability are considered vulnerable and at risk.

Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council has signed up to the “Every Disabled Child Matters Charter” which ensures that the authority will uphold the framework of effective ways of working.

The YPS SEND Inclusion Project provides a high quality provision for children and young people aged 5-25 years . The Inclusion Project works with the whole SEND range – with projects tailored to meet the needs of children and young people with both additional and complex needs.

The term time offer provides evening and weekend opportunities for SEND children and young people to access activities and support in a traditional youth club environment.









## ***Specialist - individualised and personalised support***

### **Engage Service - Contextual Safeguarding including Child Criminal/Sexual Exploitation (CCE/CSE)**

*Universal services also delivered*

#### **Child Exploitation**

The Engage Team is a multi-agency, co-located team based at Greenbank Police Station, which through effective partnership working seeks to identify, support and protect children and young people in Blackburn with Darwen who are vulnerable to or may be experiencing Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE). The multi-agency team consists of staff from Police, Children's Social Care, Health and PACE (Parents Against Child Exploitation) – however wider partnership work with Children's Services, YJS, YPS, Education, Brook, Go2, Housing and other voluntary sector agencies, is integral in the support and intervention that the Engage team provides.

Each child or young person open to the Engage team has a dedicated Young People's Worker who is highly specialised in completing CSE assessments, delivering trauma-informed 1:1 support and direct interventions to work towards the child being safer and to ensure that effective risk management is in place. The intensity and duration of Engage intervention is determined on the level of vulnerability and risk, balanced against the child's wishes and feelings and is reviewed in line with Children's Services Care Planning. Parents can also be offered support through the provision of the PACE Parent Liaison Officer, who works in partnership with parents to assist in developing their understanding of CSE and how to respond effectively, and to also empower parents to work proactively with other professionals to safeguard their child. The team also works closely with the Children's Advice & Duty Service through contribution to assessments. They deliver preventative and awareness raising interventions to children and young people prior to the need for Statutory Children's Services intervention. This works to prevent concerns and the level of risk escalating.

Engage holds responsibility for the Local Authority response to children who get reported Missing from Home or Care within Blackburn with Darwen, including those children who are not currently open to Children's Services. Once a child has been found by the Police, the Engage Missing from Home Worker offers the child a 1:1 Return Home Interview within 72 hours. This Return Home Interview assists to inform a wider assessment of risk in regards to understanding why a child went missing, early identification of risk, vulnerability or unmet need, and addresses strategies to prevent the child going missing again. Close liaison with Police and Children's Services also forms part of this response.

Child Exploitation by its nature is a hidden crime, and therefore in addition to specialist casework and Missing from Home provision, the Engage team continues to offer and provide awareness raising and training across agencies, professionals and the community to raise awareness and encourage proactivity to assist in the early identification of concerns, risk and vulnerability.

## Contextual Safeguarding

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationship.<sup>1</sup>

The Contextual safeguarding approach within the borough seeks to create a response to extra-familial forms of abuse by:

- Targeting the contexts in which that abuse occurs, from assessment to intervention
- Utilising partnerships between children services and agencies who have a reach into extra – familiar contexts (such as transport providers, Community Safety Team, youth workers, in-house residential homes, schools, Blackburn Rovers Community Trust, Blackburn Youth Zone, Go2, Brook, Police, Housing, parents, carers, Youth Justice Service prevention offer etc.) to ensure children and young people are safe from harm.

## Youth Justice Service

### *Universal services also delivered*

The principle aim of the integrated Youth Justice Service is to prevent offending and reoffending by children and young people thus contributing directly to increased public protection in Blackburn with Darwen. It does this by engaging pro-actively with young people based on a detailed assessment of factors underpinning their offending and then providing access to a range of activities and interventions, encouraging them to understand the causes and consequences of their actions, take responsibility and make amends by achieving positive change.

This is achieved by:

- Working in partnership with statutory and voluntary sector organisations to provide a coherent and effective response to youth crime.
- Adopting a restorative approach wherever possible and helping young people to understand the consequences of their behaviour and actions.
- Ensure that we have an effective service for victims of youth crime.
- Ensuring there is a competent and committed workforce.
- Placing emphasis on the prevention and reduction of youth crime and allocating sufficient resources to achieve this.
- Providing a quality service which is effective, efficient and value for money.
- Engaging with and listening to the voice of young people, their families, and victims in shaping our services.

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1 Firmin, C. (2017). Contextual Safeguarding: An overview of the operational, strategic and conceptual framework. [online] University of Bedfordshire. Available at: <https://contextualsafeguarding.org.uk/assets/documents/Contextual-Safeguarding-Briefing.pdf>

## Social Care

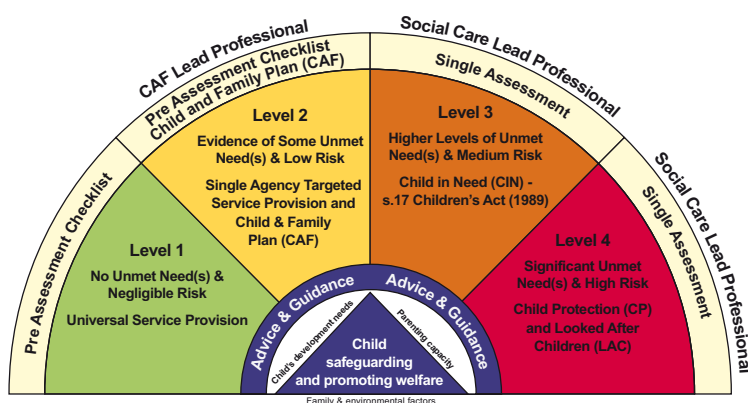
Every young person who is looked after has an individualised support plan and a linked social worker who visits the young person at least 6 weekly until the age of 18. Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) advocate for the young person to ensure that the right support is in place. Support available includes life story work which aims to help children in care begin to understand and accept their personal history.

Young people and carers can also access support from the Revive service, which provides direct therapeutic work, such as Play Therapy, and therapeutic work focussed on attachment issues between young people and their carers.

For Care Leavers, Personal Advisors support the young person into independence up to the age of 21, should the young person choose to continue to be supported. The 'Staying Put' policy enables young people to continue to live with their foster carers until the age of 21 and the proportion of young people choosing to do this is growing.

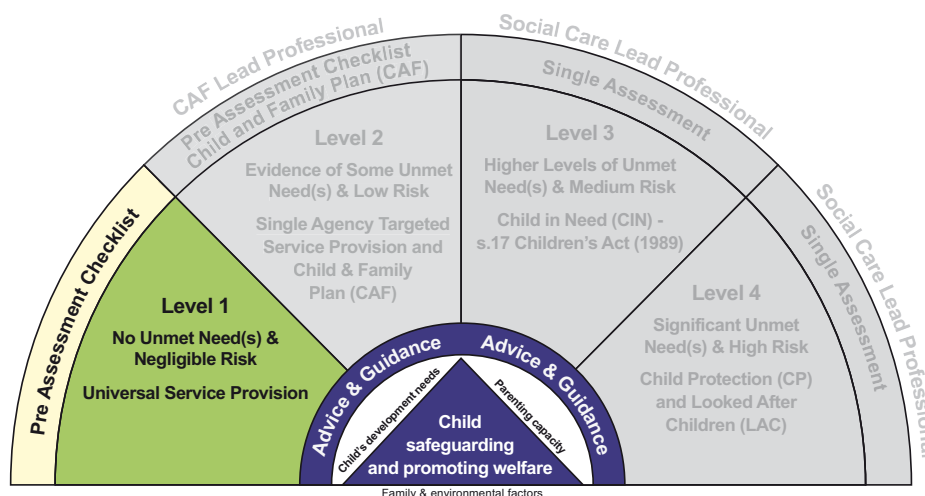
## Working Across the Continuum of Need and Response

The support and services available in the borough stretch across the four levels of the Continuum of Need and Response (CoNR) from universal services through to low risk, medium risk and high risk. The tables on the following pages set out the support available across the service depending on level of need:



*The Blackburn with Darwen Children's Continuum of Need and Response (CoNR) Framework*

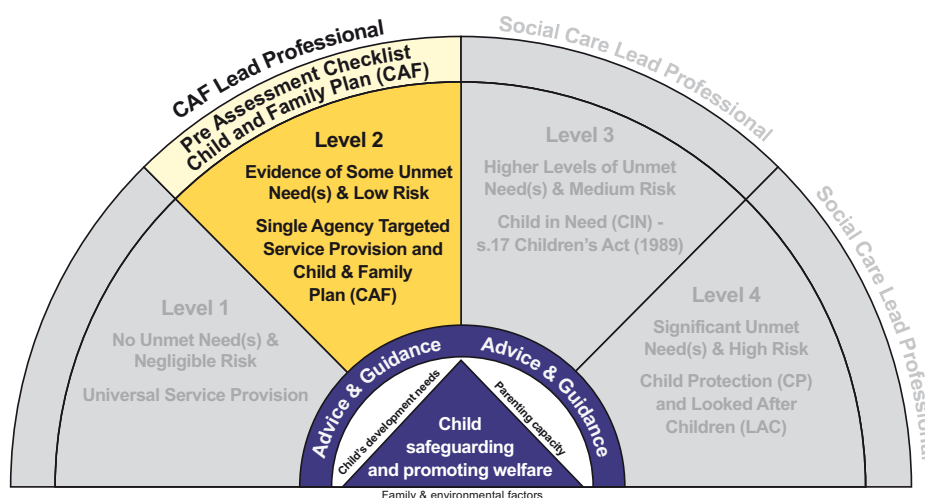
# Working Across the Continuum of Need and Response: Level 1



Service	Support Provided
<b>Engage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Professionals can make direct contact with Engage for advice and support</li> <li>All referrals into the Children's Advice &amp; Duty Service (CADS) where CSE/CCE is identified as a potential risk factor have Engage Management oversight. Appropriate signposting, recommendations, advice and information provided</li> <li>All Secondary Schools in Blackburn with Darwen have a named Engage Link Worker within the Engage Team whom they can contact directly for advice, information and signposting. Engage Link Workers also carry out awareness raising within Schools to staff and students to support prevention work</li> <li>Awareness raising and training is offered to partners and agencies in Blackburn with Darwen</li> <li>Intel and information sharing takes place with Engage Police</li> <li>Any child who is reported Missing from Home (MFH) in Blackburn with Darwen (open or not open to CSC) are offered a Return Home Interview (RHI) and this is offered and completed within 72 hours. If the child is not open to Children's Social Care, welfare checks are also completed (with parental consent) – advice, recommendations and signposting takes place as appropriate. All RHIs and MFH episodes receive Engage management oversight</li> </ul>
<b>YJS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevention offer – delivery of awareness raising and intervention to a wide audience e.g. school year groups on key messages</li> </ul>
<b>YPS, Strategic Youth Alliance &amp; SEND Inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Town centre and neighbourhood universal offer providing informal education sessions and referral pathways for targeted support</li> <li>Development programmes such as NCS, Duke of Edinburgh, and Youth Ambassadors</li> <li>Youth Voice opportunities enabling children/young people to shape support at all levels</li> <li>Programme of detached and outreach, visiting areas of Anti-Social Behaviour/youth nuisance, offering signposting support</li> <li>Exclusive provision for children and young people with SEND who cannot access universal support</li> </ul>
<b>New Directions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Careers information, advice and guidance is offered to all schools within the Borough via a traded service</li> <li>Young people with an education, health and care (EHC) plan will receive a specialised service at key transition points</li> <li>Commissioned services are delivered to young offenders and those who are looked after both pre and post 16</li> <li>Guidance is offered to young people post 16 to support them into employment, education and training</li> </ul>
<b>Voluntary Sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kooth Counselling – online/text messaging service for 11-19 year olds</li> <li>Lancashire Mind &amp; Brook - answers a wide range of queries face to face, web and telephone, and actively signpost to appropriate services</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Nurse - supporting with immediate advice, self help tools and signposting</li> </ul>

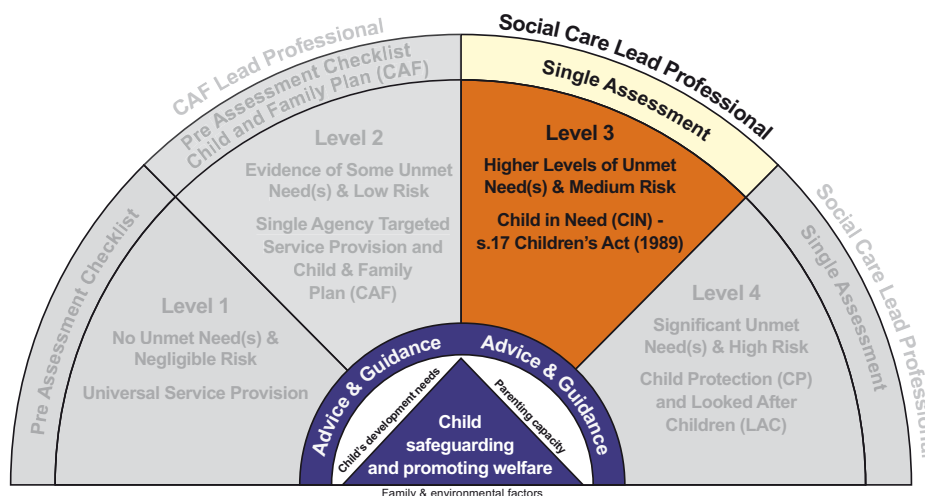


## Working Across the Continuum of Need and Response: Level 2



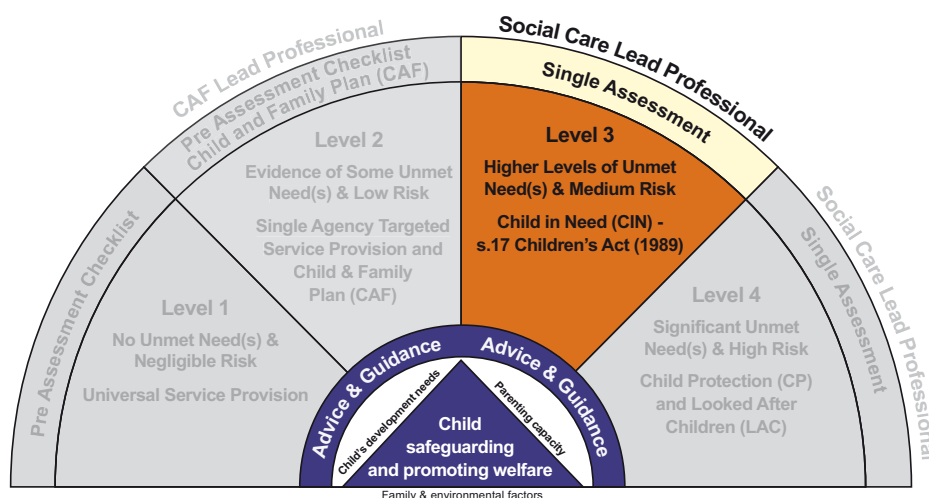
Service	Support Provided
<b>Engage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As Level 1...</li> </ul>
<b>YJS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Statutory cases (those with Court Orders or Police sanctions) may fall under this level for intervention to address offending and criminogenic need as a minimum requirement. A higher level of need assessed would escalate to Level 3 or 4</li> <li>Prevention offer – Support Around Sexual Harm (SASH) – low level, brief input to an individual young person considered to have displayed ‘problematic’ sexualised behaviour</li> <li>Individual consultation or prevention offer to young people open to CSC at risk of Anti-Social Behaviour/offending</li> <li>Re-connect programme – YJS support delivery of this programme through various agencies, working with those young people considered to be involved in anti-social behaviour and at risk of offending</li> </ul>
<b>YPS, Strategic Youth Alliance &amp; SEND Inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TYS Prevention Offer. Casework support to address identified needs (DA/Neglect/Mental Health/ASB/Social Isolation/Substance Misuse) based around programme of activities, informal education and signposted support.</li> <li>TYS/SEND Inclusion. A tailored programme of activities and support for C/YP identified as SEND requiring additional support.</li> <li>Level 2 support for children aged 8-10 years</li> </ul>
<b>New Directions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Directions provide a careers service to all vulnerable young people. This includes a commissioned service to the Virtual School and Youth Justice Service, supporting young people with impartial careers information, advice and guidance and in re-engaging young people into education/training</li> </ul>
<b>Early Help &amp; Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole family working, addressing all unmet needs and low risk</li> <li>Routine enquiries of ACE/Parental Conflict</li> <li>Graded Care Profile</li> <li>Routines, parenting, home conditions</li> <li>Think Family Therapeutic Programme</li> <li>Parenting programmes and Children Centres School Readiness Offer</li> <li>Family Support Children's Group</li> <li>Family Group Conference offered</li> <li>CAF is central to the work for children who have or may have SEND needs. PVI providers, Portage and EY SEND support services use the CAF as the tool to co-ordinate support for these children ensuring that parents are central to decision making about their children.</li> </ul>
<b>Voluntary Sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go2 Young Persons Service - confidential information, advice and guidance around all substances.</li> <li>Lancashire Mind and Brook - 1-to-1 Wellbeing coaching &amp; group wellbeing training in schools &amp; community venues</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to School Nurse and Mental Health Practitioner in school settings</li> </ul>

# Working Across the Continuum of Need and Response: Level 3



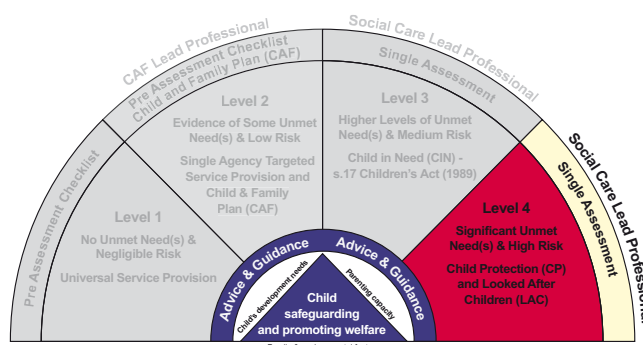
Service	Support Provided
<b>Engage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All children/young people identified as vulnerable or at risk of CSE allocated an Engage Young People's Worker who completes a CSE assessment within 10 days, alongside a Single Child &amp; Family assessment completed by the allocated Social Worker</li> <li>Engage Health nurse contributes to CSE assessment and assess if further health support is required</li> <li>1-to-1 intervention and CSE plan if required</li> <li>Parents can be offered support from the Parents Against Child Exploitation Parent Liaison Officer</li> <li>Engage intervention is reviewed as part of CSE case supervision and CSC care planning</li> <li>Engage contributes to risk management planning and CSC care planning. Engage YPW attends strategy discussions and CP conferences/LAC reviews</li> <li>Multi-agency partnership working</li> <li>Intelligence and information sharing with Engage Police</li> <li>Professional awareness raising and support offered to Social Workers and Team Managers, reflective and joint case supervisions offered with CSC</li> <li>Return Home Interview offered within 72 hours if a child is reported Missing from Home (MFH)</li> </ul>
<b>YJS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intervention with statutory cases, as set out in Level 2, but with increased risk and need, assessed at a medium risk of serious harm or medium safety and wellbeing concerns.</li> <li>Prevention offer – SASH – Possible AIM assessment and related intervention thereafter for young people whose behaviour may be considered more harmful than problematic</li> <li>Re-connect programme – YJS support delivery of this programme in partnership with various agencies, working with young people considered to be involved in anti-social behaviour and at risk of offending. YJS is supported by YPS in Re-connect activities</li> <li>Consultation/contribution to strategy discussions for young people pending police investigation</li> </ul>
<b>YPS, TYS &amp; SEND Inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TYS Intervention Offer. Intensive Casework support to address identified complex needs. Supported work with key partners (ELCAS, GO2, Police, Community Safety, ENGAGE, YJS, SEEDS). Support can involve supported periods away from family home and will have CSC and multi-agency reporting and scrutiny. Individually tailored support package including activities, information, AIG.</li> <li>TYS/SEND Inclusion. A tailored programme of activities and support for C/YP identified as SEND requiring additional support at CoNR level 3/4</li> <li>Level 3 support for children aged 8-10 years</li> <li>Crisis intervention (bespoke) for young people at risk of placement breakdown/no placement</li> </ul>

## Working Across the Continuum of Need and Response: Level 3



Service	Support Provided
<b>Social Care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Worker support allocated</li> </ul>
<b>New Directions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Directions provide a careers service to all vulnerable young people. This includes a commissioned service to the Virtual School and Youth Justice Service, supporting young people with impartial careers information, advice and guidance and in re-engaging young people into education/training (as Level 2)</li> </ul>
<b>SEEDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Five Planned Short Breaks Friday to Monday Inclusive</li> <li>Emergency Short Breaks up to 72 hours</li> <li>Offers information, support, advice and guidance, after hours and crisis support</li> <li>Family support – tailored individual packages as per SMART Plan</li> <li>Home visits – including in the evenings and weekends</li> <li>Transportation to school, sessions, appointments etc.</li> <li>1:1 sessions (direct sessions)</li> <li>Focused Group Work activity sessions</li> <li>Multi-agency partnership working e.g. MACSE meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Early Help &amp; Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole family working, addressing all unmet needs and low risk</li> <li>Routine enquiries of ACE/Parental Conflict</li> <li>Gradeded Care Profile</li> <li>Routines, parenting, home conditions</li> <li>Think Family Therapeutic Programme</li> <li>Parenting programmes and Children Centres School Readiness Offer</li> <li>Family Support Children's Group</li> <li>Family Group Conference offered</li> </ul>
<b>Voluntary Sector</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Go2 Young Persons Service (substance misuse referrals) focusing on harm reduction, risk management, safeguarding and goal setting</li> <li>Lancashire Mind and Brook - 1-to-1 Wellbeing coaching &amp; group wellbeing training in schools &amp; community venues (as Level 2)</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ELCAS and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) – support from Adolescent Psychiatrists, Clinical Psychologists and Cognitive Behaviour Therapists</li> </ul>

## Working Across the Continuum of Need and Response: Level 4



Service	Support Provided
<b>Engage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As Level 3</li> </ul>
<b>YJS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multi Agency Risk Management (MARM) meetings with senior managerial oversight are held for those young people assessed using ASSET+ tool as a high risk of serious harm or high safety and wellbeing concerns.</li> <li>Young people who are eligible for Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) by virtue of their offence, sentence or assessed level of risk, are overseen through the MARM process and can be escalated through the MAPPA process if risk/need requires.</li> <li>Intervention delivered to statutory cases, as set out in Level 2, but where those young people are assessed as a high risk of serious harm or high safety and wellbeing concern. This work also covers those who receive a custodial sentence or intensive supervision and surveillance requirement</li> <li>Prevention offer – SASH – Possible AIM assessment and related intervention thereafter for young people whose behaviour may be considered more harmful than problematic</li> </ul>
<b>Social Care</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social Worker support allocated</li> </ul>
<b>YPS, TYS &amp; SEND Inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TYS Intervention Offer. Intensive Casework support to address identified complex needs. Supported work with key partners (ELCAS, GO2, Police, Community Safety, ENGAGE, YJS, SEEDS). Support can involve supported periods away from family home and will have CSC and multi-agency reporting and scrutiny. Individually tailored support package including activities, information, AIG.</li> <li>TYS/SEND Inclusion. A tailored programme of activities and support for C/YP identified as SEND requiring additional support at CoNR level 3/4</li> <li>Level 3 support for children aged 8-10 years</li> <li>Crisis intervention (bespoke) for young people at risk of placement breakdown/no placement</li> </ul>
<b>New Directions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Directions provide a careers service to all vulnerable young people. This includes a commissioned service to the Virtual School and Youth Justice Service, supporting young people with impartial careers information, advice and guidance and in re-engaging young people into education/training (as Level 3)</li> </ul>
<b>SEEDS</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As Level 3</li> </ul>
<b>Early Help &amp; Support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As Level 3</li> </ul>
<b>Revive</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Family Support groups</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ELCAS and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services – support from Adolescent Psychiatrists, Clinical Psychologists and Cognitive Behaviour Therapists (as level 3).</li> </ul>



# Youth Voice & Participation

Youth participation is the process by which individuals and groups of individuals can influence decision making and bring about change. All children and young people have the right to have their views, wishes and feelings taken into account when decisions are made about their lives.

## Young people want...<sup>1</sup>

- *Vigilance*: to have adults notice when things are troubling them
- *Understanding & action*: to understand what is happening; to be heard and understood; and to have that understanding acted upon
- *Stability*: to be able to develop an on-going stable relationship of trust with those helping them
- *Respect*: to be treated with the expectation that they are competent rather than not
- *Information and engagement*: to be informed about and involved in procedures, decisions, concerns and plans
- *Explanation*: to be informed of the outcome of assessments and decisions and reasons when their views have not met with a positive response
- *Support*: to be provided with support in their own right as well as a member of their family
- *Advocacy*: to be provided with advocacy to assist them in putting forward their views



1 HM Government (2018). Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. [online] HM Government, p.9. Available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/779401/Working\\_Together\\_to\\_Safeguard-Children.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf)

## Democracy

Young People Services deliver a number of weekly sessions around 'voice', including the Youth Forum and the Youth Integration Forum.

A Youth MP and two Deputy MPs are at the helm of the Youth Forum and this places young people firmly in the democratic decision making process to influence local decisions and shape and design services that affect children and young people.

Every young person aged between 11 and 18 is eligible to vote in the annual Youth elections with voting taking place in secondary schools, colleges and youth organisations.

Young People's Services also facilitates and leads the annual 'Make Your Mark' campaign within the borough, which is led nationally by the British Youth Council to focus on the top ten issues affecting young people locally, regionally and nationally.

These issues are debated at a national level and the top two issues influence the strategy of the Youth Parliament.

All service areas within the Adolescent Services make sure that young people are at the heart of decision making. Young people's feedback helps shape how the service is delivered and how professionals work with young people.

## Investing in Children

Teams within Adolescent Services all have Investors in Children accreditation which recognises active inclusion and dialogue with young people to bring about change.

As part of the assessment, young people are interviewed about how they feel about the services they receive and they collectively make the decision about whether a service should gain accreditation.



# Feedback from Our Young People

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This strategy has been developed in consultation with 600 young people across the Borough to enable them to shape, improve and influence our practice. These are some of the most common themes that emerged during this process, and this feedback has been used to influence the development of the Strategy:

“We’d like our siblings and parents to be better supported with advice”

“Access to a peer mentor who has [experienced] similar difficulties”

“We want and need these services after 5pm and at weekends”

“Increase the focus on preventing crime rather than punishment”

“I want more access to training opportunities and work experience”

“Access to places and spaces to socialise and meet new friends”

“We need more activities and clubs to keep us out of trouble”

“Better mental health support for young people and family members”

“More youth clubs, sports clubs, residential trips and funding for projects”



# **Practice & Approach**

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**The approach in this strategy is informed by recognised good practice and discussion with national and local partners, which has shaped our thinking locally to adopt an innovative and proven models of practice when working with adolescents.**

## **Strengths Based Approach**

A strengths based approach represents a way of implementing and embracing out-of-the-box thinking and, in order to facilitate this, managers and leaders should encourage a positive attitude towards. They should also empower and trust the workforce. The strengths-based approach is about reducing dependency and challenging a 'prescription culture'.

Crucially, it is about protecting and promoting the person's independence, resilience, choice and wellbeing. This approach is fundamental in developing relationships with young people and their families within adolescent services. Prevention services based on a strengths-based approach support an individual's independence, resilience, ability to make choices and wellbeing. Senior managers and team managers within the adolescent services model the values and behaviours associated with strengths based approach in order to cultivate and reinforce culture change.

In practice, this includes managers being visibly involved and ensuring learning through practice, as well as working alongside people embracing a collaborative relationship with practitioners, young people and their families.

## **Systemic Practice**

Systemic practice is a way of working which emphasises people's relationships as key to understanding their experiences. Understanding the complex context of families can help people to change patterns of thinking. Families are worked with rather than 'done to'. They are better supported to stay together and practitioners are more satisfied with their jobs and more likely to stay in them giving continuity to the young people and their families.

The idea is that every conversation is an opportunity for change, and so practitioners must be given the tools to be more adaptable and react to different and complex situations as they arise. The model of practice is key in the world of adolescents in understanding the challenges young people's face and developing meaningful relationships to bring about positive change.



## **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) Awareness & Trauma Informed Practice**

There is a growing recognition that early intervention and collaborative working are essential to reduce trauma and the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE). ACEs are a complex range of stressful or traumatic experiences that children can be exposed to whilst growing up, including those that directly harm a child (e.g. abuse, neglect) and those that affect the environment in which a child grows up (e.g. parental separation, domestic violence). ACEs can be prevented, even in difficult circumstances, and it is crucial to support and nurture children and young people as they develop and grow. Professionals across the Blackburn with Darwen partnership have access to trauma informed training which is incorporated into practice.

### **Neglect**

Analysis of serious case reviews by the Department of Education 2009-2011 found that the eight young people included in the category of risky or violent behaviour were all young men, with an average age of 16 years. Their actions were taking place in a community setting, rather than within the home, and seven of the eight young men were already known to children's social care. The review from 2009-2011 it was determined that neglect was a feature of 60% of the 139 serious case reviews.

In a study completed by The Children's Society (2016) it highlighted that neglected young people are significantly more likely to behave in ways which risk their health or jeopardise their future opportunities through truanting from education, getting drunk/misusing substances and offending – all of which impact upon their emotional well-being. There is an association between any experience of neglect and young people's well-being. Young people who reported multiple forms of neglect had significantly worse levels of well-being than their counterparts who were neglected for one type of parenting in isolation.

Within Adolescent Services, all frontline staff will have completed online neglect training by 2019-2020, more specifically over the next 12 months staff will be fully trained in completing the Graded Care Profile. This will ensure the signs of adolescent neglect are fully recognised, acknowledged and appropriate responses are put in place.

The research notes that as a general 'rule' more parental input was found to be beneficial – i.e. high frequency of care and support was associated with a lower propensity for risk-taking behaviours and with higher levels of well-being. The strongest correlations were between emotional support and well-being (e.g. for life satisfaction and 'relatedness'). SEEDS, ENGAGE, TYS and YJS offer a high level of support and care to young people they show them emotional warmth, encouragement, seek to protect them and promote their health.

Adolescent Services support young people who are experiencing or have experienced neglect by raising their self-esteem and giving a feeling of hope and optimism about their future.

## **Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Programme**

Prevention as a core of our strategy will be supported through programmes such as “Pause 4 Thought” a Trauma Informed, ACE aware Cognitive Behaviour therapy programme where young people learn how to recognise the warning signs for actions which may end up with young people getting into trouble, hurting others and or doing harm to themselves. It will show young people how to watch out for these warning signs, how to think before they act and be able to see the bigger picture; thinking ahead rather than risking making bad decisions on the spur of the moment as they might have done previously.

## **Restorative Practice**

The primary aim of restorative practice is to address and repair harm, through building and maintaining relationships, working ‘with’ young people to improve outcomes for all involved.

A number of principles are key to the restorative approach. Participation in such processes must be voluntary and based on informed choice. Neutrality is also important – restorative processes must be fair and unbiased towards participants. The safety of participants is also paramount and we must create safe spaces for our young people to express their feelings and views about harm that has been caused. Our restorative processes must also be non-discriminatory and available to everyone affected by conflict and harm, in line with our commitment to accessibility and meeting all needs. Finally, our restorative processes must be respectful to the dignity of all participants and those affected by the harm caused.

By embedding restorative practice into our work, we can help our young people to prevent and repair conflict by enabling people to communicate in more appropriate ways, thereby helping to build and restore relationships.

## **Dedicated Adolescent Social Workers**

To effectively respond to the very specific needs of adolescents, Children’s Services is progressing to having dedicated Adolescent Social Workers to primarily focus on contextual safeguarding, working across all Adolescent Services teams, particularly the SEEDs and Engage. Adolescent social workers will work alongside children’s social care teams in supporting and coordinating bespoke interventions for complex adolescents.

## **Placement Stability**

Already in place to maintain placement stability for young people in care is the therapeutic support provided by the Revive service, to strengthen attachment issues between young people and their carers. The service provides a formal consultation involving all relevant professionals, family and carers, followed by therapeutic support, practical support and training.

A lack of suitable foster placements for older children and adolescents is a challenge and the Blackburn with Darwen Sufficiency Statement (2019-2021) sets out the Fostering Service’s recruitment and retention strategy. The service works alongside the regional ‘You Can Foster’ campaign to maximise opportunities to attract potential carers from both within and slightly outside the local authority.

# Digital Innovation & Engagement

Digital technology has fundamentally changed the way that young people make friends, access services and interact with organisations. Given that 93% of 8-11 year olds and 99% of 12-15 year olds use the internet<sup>1</sup>, we are devising new ways for young people to interact with our services to keep pace with this digital shift.

One such innovation is the development of a Young People's Services (YPS) website specially configured for mobile devices. This recognises that nationally 83% of young people aged 12-15 years old own a smartphone, and the likelihood of owning one increases with age<sup>2</sup>. Young people from the BwD Youth Forum participated in the development of the website, following a consultation with a wider group of young people, and their input was invaluable in terms of making the website user-friendly and ensuring it met user needs.

The BwD Youth Forum has also been instrumental in setting up YPS social media profiles as a platform to promote campaigns and services. The YPS Twitter account in particular sees good engagement on many of its posts, with content being retweeted and liked by both professionals and young people.

The Youth Justice Service use digital channels to keep in touch with their young people where appropriate and this includes WhatsApp, a popular cross-platform messaging service.

Similarly to the YJS, the Engage team also use popular digital channels to communicate with the young people they are working with. This includes WhatsApp, Snapchat and Facebook Messenger. Digital communication has proven to be a successful method of engaging with young people compared to direct telephone contact, and staff will continue to be supported in using these apps in their work. During 1:1 sessions and awareness-raising sessions, staff also use tablets to show engaging videos and other online media to our young people.

A Facebook page for SEEDS (ASU) is also being developed and this will be used for awareness raising and to provide useful information such as contact numbers.

Key partners in our Strategic Youth Alliance also use digital channels such as websites and social media accounts to engage with young people.

It can be said that offline vulnerability extends to online life<sup>3</sup>; the internet can pose a risk to all young people. To combat this, all of our services work closely to safeguard our young people, with some services delivering and promoting online safety awareness, and relevant key messages.

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1 Ofcom (2019). Children and parents: Media use and attitudes report 2018. Children and parents media use and attitudes: annex 1. [online] p.40. Available at: [https://www.ofcom.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0027/134892/Children-and-Parents-Media-Use-and-Attitudes-Annex-1.pdf](https://www.ofcom.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0027/134892/Children-and-Parents-Media-Use-and-Attitudes-Annex-1.pdf)

2 As above, p.20.

3 El Asam, A. and Katz, A. (2018). Vulnerable Young People and Their Experience of Online Risks. Human-Computer Interaction, 33(4), pp.281-304.

# **Governance & Monitoring**

**Adolescent Services falls within the Children's Services department, which is led by the Director of Children's Services. There is one political portfolio - Children, Young People & Education which is led by the Executive Member for Children's Services who has the political responsibility for leadership, strategy and effectiveness of the provision of services to all children and young people.**

Both the Executive Member and the Director are members of the statutory Children's Safeguarding Assurance Partnership, the statutory Health and Wellbeing Board for Blackburn with Darwen and the Children's Partnership Board subcommittee, which is responsible for driving the Start Well (0-25) agenda.

In terms of accountability and regulation, all services contribute towards the Children's Services Ofsted inspections, with the SEEDS Adolescent Support Unit having an Ofsted inspection every year. The Youth Justice Service is regulated and inspected by Her Majesty's Inspector of Probation. The service is led by a Youth Justice Board which provides strategic direction, and national standards are monitored for assurance.

Decision making is transparent across Adolescent Services with key decisions presented by the Executive Member for Children, Young People & Education to the Council's Executive Board. The Strategic Youth Alliance reports into the multi-agency Children's Partnership Board.

Senior managers, Director for Children's Services & Education and the Executive Member also engage informally with young people directly to seek their views and provide feedback on key developments around strategy, service delivery and models of practice.

## **How do we evaluate success?**

The effectiveness of the Adolescent Strategy is monitored through the Children's Services Service Development & Practice Improvement Plan. Appendix 1 is an extract of the plan and sets out the priorities and actions that Adolescent Services is responsible to deliver.

The plan identifies measures to enable performance analysis against the priorities and updated are shared quarterly with the Children's Services Service Development and Practice Improvement Board which is chaired by the Director of Children's Services.



# Appendix I: What will success look like?

**Adolescent Strategy Action Plan:** this plan outlines the strategic direction for aligned Adolescent Services and sets out how performance is measured and monitored.

Children's Services Priority Theme:	Action	Indicators of Success	How performance is measured
Ensure that all children <b>get the right help at the right time</b> , including <b>effective early intervention and prevention</b> to ensure outcomes are met.	<b>Adolescent Services:</b> Develop a co-ordinated offer of support to keep young people safe and prevent entry into care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved experience for young people &amp; their families</li> <li>Increased engagement with children and young people</li> <li>Reduced need for targeted support</li> <li>Reduced social care intervention</li> <li>Appropriate step down to universal provision</li> <li>Bespoke resource &amp; signposting</li> <li>Faster response, direct path for support</li> <li>Joined up working across the partnership</li> <li>Increased referrals to the Adolescent Support Panel</li> <li>Rapid response to reported ASB via Detached Partnership offer</li> <li>Quality programme of Neighbourhood Delivery and Town Centre hub</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of YP accessing outreach offer (SEEDS)</li> <li>Number of young people accessing short-breaks</li> <li>SEEDS quarterly report (progress, referral &amp; closures)</li> <li>SEEDs supervisions with young people, families &amp; carers</li> <li>Reg 44 Monthly reporting (SEEDs)</li> <li>Engage quarterly reporting (feedback from supervisions &amp; children and young people)</li> <li>Engage QA activity to measure referrals, progress and effectiveness of intervention</li> <li>Adolescent Panel referral times to provide the service</li> <li>Number of referrals to adolescent panel</li> <li>QA of Adolescent Panel membership and contributions from partners</li> <li>No of young people worked with across Adolescent Services</li> <li>Targeted Youth Support (TYS) caseload numbers at Continuum of Need and Response levels 2/3/4 (YPS)</li> <li>Level of need and response reduced during intervention (YPS)</li> <li>Targeted Youth Support step downs (YPS)</li> <li>Number of Assessed needs closed (YPS)</li> <li>Number of Targeted Youth Support case studies reviews per quarter</li> <li>% of young people accessing support at the SEEDS who are not in care and who do not enter care following support.</li> </ul>

<b>Children's Services Priority Theme:</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Indicators of Success</b>	<b>How performance is measured</b>
Ensure that all children in need of help and protection receive a bespoke <b>consistent service which safeguards and protects</b> them.	<b>Contextual Safeguarding:</b> Develop a multi-agency approach to contextual safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adolescent Resource panel established</li> <li>• Direct path for support &amp; reduced delay for access.</li> <li>• Appropriate referrals</li> <li>• Staff trained with the right skills set</li> <li>• Young people protected/ safeguarded</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adolescent Resource panel established</li> <li>• QA of Adolescent Panel membership and contributions from partners</li> <li>• Direct path for support &amp; reduced delay for access.</li> <li>• Appropriate referrals</li> <li>• Staff trained with the right skills set</li> <li>• Young people protected/ safeguarded</li> <li>• Training activity</li> <li>• Contextual Safeguarding training to BWD Children's workforce (Council and Partners)</li> <li>• Numbers of young people who have been referred at high risk due to contextual safeguarding, who after intervention risks have been reduced to medium</li> <li>• Number of potential victims (young people) referred to the National Referral Mechanism to compare with the national trends and nos. of referrals around child criminal exploitation (identifying and referring potential victims of modern day slavery (slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour &amp; Human Trafficking))</li> </ul>

<b>Children's Services Priority Theme:</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Indicators of Success</b>	<b>How performance is measured</b>
<b>Involve children and young people in the design and delivery of services</b> , using their views to inform everything we do and feed back on actions taken and the impact that their views have had.	<b>Participation:</b> Increase the quality and quantity of participation activity with children and young people across all service areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voice of the young person is clear</li> <li>• Planning is young person centred including design and delivery of services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation Champions Quarterly reporting on activity</li> <li>• Number of plans evidencing voice</li> <li>• Number of consultation events resulting in service development</li> <li>• Analysis of feedback received from CYP which has resulted in service improvement</li> <li>• Number of service areas awarded the Investing in Children accreditation</li> </ul>

## Appendix II: Published Documents

The strategy links with and complements other existing strategies in the Borough for children and young people and their families, and does not replace them. This includes the Multi-Agency Neglect Strategy, Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy, Social Integration Strategy and the Healthy Child Programme.



**Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy  
2018-2021**

[Download link](#)



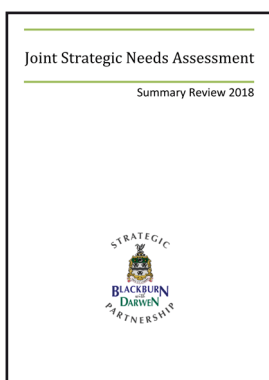
**Multi-Agency Neglect Strategy  
2019-2021**

[Download link](#)



**Blackburn with Darwen  
Social Integration Strategy  
2018-2021**

[Download link](#)



**Joint Strategic Needs Assessment,  
Summary Review  
2018**

[Download link](#)



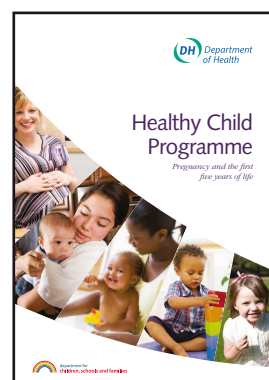
**Blackburn with Darwen Sufficiency Statement  
2019-2021**

[Download link](#)



**Positive for Youth  
cross-government  
policy, 2010-present**

[Download link](#)



**Healthy Child Programme,  
2009-present**

[Download link](#)

## **Appendix III: How to Access Services**

**Most of our partners have their own websites, which provide information about how to access their services, opening times and more. Below, we have compiled a list of links to some of the most relevant websites for young people living in Blackburn with Darwen.**

Blackburn Rovers Community Trust

<https://www.brfctrust.co.uk>

Blackburn Youth Zone

<https://www.blackburnyz.org>

Brook

<https://legacy.brook.org.uk/find-a-service/service/blackburn>

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

<https://www.healthyyoungmindslsc.co.uk/home>

East Lancashire Child and Adolescent Services (ELCAS)

<https://elht.nhs.uk/services/east-lancashire-child-and-adolescent-services>

Go2

<https://refreshbwd.com/service/go2-blackburn-with-darwen-young-peoples-drug-and-alcohol-service>

Kooth

<https://www.kooth.com>

Lancashire Mind

<http://www.lancashiremind.org.uk>

Youth Justice Service

Telephone: 01254 666 995

Young People's Service

<http://www.bwd-yps.co.uk>

Telephone: 01254 298 622



# Acronyms & Abbreviations

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<b>AIM</b>	Assessment, Intervention and Moving On
<b>C&amp;F</b>	Child and Family
<b>CADS</b>	Children's Advice and Duty Service
<b>CAMHS</b>	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
<b>CCE</b>	Child Criminal Exploitation
<b>CoNR</b>	Continuum of Need and Response
<b>CSC</b>	Children's Social Care
<b>CSC</b>	Children's Social Services
<b>CSE</b>	Child Sexual Exploitation
<b>ELCAS</b>	East Lancashire Child and Adolescent Service
<b>LAC</b>	Looked After Child
<b>MAPPA</b>	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
<b>MARAC</b>	Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference
<b>MARM</b>	Multi Agency Risk Management
<b>MFH</b>	Missing From Home
<b>NCS</b>	National Citizen Service
<b>NEET</b>	Not in Education, Employment or Training
<b>PACE</b>	Parents Against Child Exploitation
<b>PHE</b>	Public Health England
<b>PVI</b>	Private, Voluntary and Independent
<b>RHI</b>	Return Home Interview
<b>SASH</b>	Support Around Sexual Harm
<b>SEND</b>	Special Educational Needs & Disabilities
<b>SYA</b>	Strategic Youth Alliance
<b>TYS</b>	Targeted Youth Support
<b>YJS</b>	Youth Justice Service
<b>YPS</b>	Young People's Service
<b>YPW</b>	Young People's Worker

