



# FAQ

## Most Frequently Asked Questions

Issue 2 - May 2005



# Children's Trust News

FOR EVERYONE WORKING WITH CHILDREN IN SUNDERLAND

### Q Who are the LSCB partners?

A This is still under review but currently the following organisations are represented by the following people on the LSCB:

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Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust  
City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust  
South of Tyne and Wearside Mental Health NHS Trust  
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Strategic Health Authority

#### Voluntary and Community Sector



Hello and welcome to issue two of Children's Trust News. We've had positive feedback about the first issue and hopefully you will find this issue just as useful!

If you wish to make any comments about this newsletter or want to write an article for a future issue, please contact Kathryn Rutherford, Communications Officer, City of Sunderland Social Services, 50 Fawcett Street, Sunderland SR1 1RF. Tel: 0191 566 1832 email: communications@ssd.sunderland.gov.uk The deadline for the next edition is Friday 20 May 2005.

### In this issue...

- FOR THE CHILDREN
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We would like to include your questions in future issues of the Children's Trust Newsletter. So, if you have anything to ask, please get in touch with Kathryn Rutherford, Communications Officer, City of Sunderland Social Services, 50 Fawcett Street, Sunderland, SR1 1RF, Tel: 0191 566 1832 or email: communications@ssd.sunderland.gov.uk



# For the children

**SUNDERLAND IS LEADING THE WAY** in providing help and services to families with disabled infants and toddlers.

Sunderland's Children's Trust is stepping up efforts to improve the delivery of services to disabled children under three and their families by launching a new Early Support Programme which has been selected by the Government as one of only 46 Early Support Pathfinders in England.

The programme will place families at the centre of service planning, development and delivery and will also promote partnership working between parent/carers, Health, Education, Social Services and the Voluntary Sector.

Funding from the Early Support Programme has already helped to develop a computer system that enables different agencies to share useful information. Also helping with effective communication is Sunderland's website for disabled children,

which provides useful information on Health, Social Services, Education, Voluntary Agencies, leisure, holidays and much more.

The website is the only site in the country specifically for disabled children and young people, their families and those who work with them. The site can be found at [www.sncwd.org.uk](http://www.sncwd.org.uk).

Additional Early Support Programme funding will help to develop specialist carer support from Sunderland Carers Centre, and also the development of an Early Support Training Programme, which will train staff as Portage workers. This means that staff will work in partnership with families and children with special educational needs in their homes to provide structured play activities to build on children's abilities, and to help them develop new skills.



Inter-agency Development and Training Officer, Sharon Scott, said: "Parents of disabled children across the country have been involved in the design of the programme and its materials to ensure that their needs and priorities are addressed. It is designed to ensure families living in different parts of the country receive the same high level of care and support. It is great that Sunderland has been selected as one of the 46 Pathfinders as it has given us the opportunity to develop local services".

## Sunderland LEA - Ofsted Report *(published March 2005)*

Ofsted say that the performance of Sunderland LEA is highly satisfactory. It has made highly satisfactory progress since the last inspection, most notably in special educational needs and social inclusion. Senior officers have driven change rapidly. The Education Single Plan identifies clear priorities for action and progress is monitored rigorously. As a result, schools and other partners share the very clear vision of improvement for children and young people in Sunderland. Elected Members provide effective leadership and the Council is unequivocal about its corporate priority to improve standards and raise pupils' achievement further. Schools are optimistic about the future. This is an LEA that knows what it does well and what it needs to do better. Its capacity to improve is highly satisfactory.

### Priorities for the future:

- Improvements at Key Stage 3;
- Consolidation of recent developments in SEN and social inclusion;
- Partnership between the Inclusion Service and the School Improvement Service in monitoring and improving the attainment of underachieving children.

Children's Services is a service for all children, not just a service for vulnerable children and, therefore, all staff, within the Education Directorate and within schools, will remain committed to raising attainment as the first priority as we move from an Education Service to a Children's Service and beyond.

## Seen AND Heard

Listening and responding to the views of children and young people is a priority for Sunderland Children's Trust. In each issue we will aim to include specific items about our work with children and young people.

If you want to showcase your work with children and young people, please get in touch with Kathryn Rutherford (contact details are on the front page). This is your chance to share your good practice across a number of agencies and an opportunity to blow your own trumpet - so use it!



## Every Child Matters Website

This is a great website and there is loads of new information on it - take a look, it's worth it! You can find information on:

- Director of Children's Services
- Children's Workforce Strategy
- Common core of skills and knowledge
- Lead professional good practice guidance
- Common Assessment Framework for children and young people
- Policy information on Safeguarding (Section 11 of the Children Act 2004)
- Regulations and guidance on the Children and Young Peoples Plan
- Duty on Local Authorities to promote the educational achievement of Looked After Children (Section 52 of the Children Act 2004)

**You can find it at:**  
[www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk)



## Beacon Status for Supporting Carers

**Support for carers in Sunderland has earned the City's Social Services national recognition.**

The City Council has been celebrating the news that it is only one of four authorities nationally to have been awarded Beacon Status by the Government for its work in supporting carers.

A delegation of staff from the City's Social Services Directorate, accompanied by Councillor Eric Timmins, Portfolio holder for Health and Social Care and Ailsa Martin, Co-ordinator for Sunderland Carers' Centre, travelled to London in March to receive the award on behalf of the Council.

The successful application centred around strong partnership working between the Council, the NHS trusts in Sunderland and local carers groups.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Local Government Minister Nick Raynsford were present at the ceremony to congratulate the Council.

Glenys Jones, Director of Social Services, said: "The Beacon Status process represents the opportunity for Local Authorities to profile their work. To attain the status ensures that the best Councils come together on a regular basis to share good practice throughout the country.

"This is a fantastic achievement and represents a great opportunity to raise the profile of the work that Social Services and its partners take forward for un-paid carers and, in particular, young carers in Sunderland."



**Pictured:** left to right - Councillor Eric Timmins, Nick Raynsford MP, Ailsa Martin, and Graham Burt

Dave Willcock, Young Carers' Development Worker at Sunderland Carers' Centre added: "I am delighted about Beacon Status for Sunderland City Council - particularly as young carers have been included in so many Local Authority and multi-agency policies".

Here's what some young carers had to say about Sunderland Carers' Centre...

"I love Sunderland Carers' Centre as I get a break from home and go on trips and residential." - Amy

"I like to meet new friends who are in a similar situation to me." - Lisa

# GUIDANCE ON...

## The Children and Young People's Plan

Government guidance on the production of a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP), is out for consultation. The CYPP is an important element of the reforms underpinned by the Children Act 2004.

The Government intends that all areas should produce a single, strategic, overarching plan for all local services for children and young people. This should support more integrated and effective services to secure the outcomes for children set out in Every Child Matters: Change for Children and reflected in the Act. It will identify children and young people where outcomes need to be improved and how and when this will be achieved.

The plan must cover services for all those aged 0 to 19, those over 19 receiving services, including leaving care, and those over 19 and under 25 with learning difficulties.

The plan replaces requirements for seven statutory and ten non-statutory plans. There is a commitment to review the need for a statutory plan after the first CYPPs have been prepared.

### Statutory plans replaced

- Behaviour Support Plan
- Children's Services Plan
- Class Sizes Plan
- Early Years Development and Childcare Plan
- Education Development Plan
- Local Authority Adoption Services Plan
- School Organisation Plan

### Non-statutory plans replaced

- Area Child Protection Committee Business Plan
- Asset Management Plan
- Behaviour Improvement Plan
- Excellence Cluster Plan
- Excellence in Cities Plan
- ICT Development Plan
- Primary Strategy Plan (formerly literacy and numeracy plans)
- Teenage Pregnancy Strategy (to be subsumed by the CYPP from April 2006)
- Underperforming Schools Plan
- Youth Service Plan

The plan should be provided by the local authority and all relevant partners, and the local authority should prepare the plan jointly with those partners. This refers not just to those under the duty to co-operate, such as local health and certain youth justice bodies, but also others like schools, colleges and the voluntary and community sector.

The overarching plan will cover all local authority services affecting children and young people:

- Early years and child care
- Education
- Lifelong learning
- Youth and play services
- Children's social services, including safeguarding
- Planning and regeneration
- Housing (a district council responsibility in two-tier areas)
- Leisure services (a district council responsibility in two-tier areas)

### It will also cover:

- Health services for children and young people, including child and adolescent mental health advice and guidance for 14 - 19 year olds (including Connexions).
- Services to tackle the misuse of drugs and alcohol.
- Services provided by relevant youth justice agencies.
- Voluntary and community services.
- Education provided other than by the local authority.

Arrangements will need to be made to capture in the plan the key elements of the following plans, to ensure the consistency, which is required by regulations with the plans of other statutory partners:

- The local police authority's three year Strategy Plan and local Policing Plan.
- The statutory annual Youth Justice Plan prepared by the local multi-agency Youth Offending Team.
- The Probation Area Annual Plan.
- Crime and Disorder and Misuse of Drugs and Alcohol Strategies.

School Development Plans will show how schools contribute to positive outcomes for children and young people. Schools are the only universal service all children have contact with most days of the week. Schools will play a key part in delivering services for children and young people, with their role in the prevention and protection agenda crucial to its success. They will need to work closely with Children's Trusts preparing and delivering the CYPP.

Other plans which need to be consistent with the CYPP are LSC local strategic plans for 14 - 19 education, the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Strategy, the Healthy Schools Programme Plan and play strategies

### The first plan must be in place by 1 April 2006

### Regulations require the CYPP to cover:

- Improvements which the authority intend to make during the plan period to the outcomes for children and young people. *Performance information will be published annually in the CYPP.*
- A local vision for children and young people.

- An assessment of needs in relation to the outcomes.
- Priorities and key actions planned to achieve the outcomes.
- A statement of how resources will be deployed to achieve the outcomes.
- An explanation of how the plan relates to arrangements for performance management and review of services.
- The arrangements for co-operation under the duty to co-operate and with other partners.
- An explanation of how the CYPP is consistent with the strategic plans of local partners.

**If you want to know more about the guidance you can access the consultation document at [www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations) or you can contact John Markall on 0191 566 1836 if you want to know more about local response and arrangements.**



# The Lead Professional - it could be you!

It is the Government's intention to introduce the role of lead professional to all children's services along with the Common Assessment Framework and Child Index as part of the Information Sharing Programme.

The aims of the lead professional are to:

- Act as a single point of contact to ease children and families through the system.
- Ensure that they receive appropriate interventions that are effectively delivered.
- Reduce overlap and inconsistency from other practitioners.

To support the implementation of lead professional within children's services the Government has published good practice guidance, which describes a model for the role and supporting processes.

## What will you be required to do?

The lead professional, in taking the role will:

- Build trust and secure the engagement of the child and family.
- Through assessment (usually Common Assessment Framework):
  - Identify support needs and establish how they are being currently delivered.
  - Identify other services and practitioners who need to be involved.
- Set up engagement process in order to:
  - Agree and review outcomes.
  - Identify key actions to be taken.
  - Identify resources and services to support the process.
  - Identify strengths within the family/ community to support the process.
  - Ensure clarity of roles to ensure seamless services.
  - Ensure clear link and no overlap between targeted support.

- Act as a conduit and contact point.
- Agree a support plan and monitoring arrangement.

## How will this be decided?

The decision to allocate a lead professional will depend on:

- The complexity of the child's, young person's, family's needs.
- Practitioners already involved and if duplication and inconsistency is evident.
- Whether professional help in a number of interlinked areas is evident.
- Whether agreed interventions require other practitioners to be involved.
- Whether there is already a lead professional, key worker or care co-ordinator involved.

Local areas in consultation with the child/family will need to set out clear criteria by which lead professionals are appointed and how this will be managed at a local level.

## The Local Scene

In Sunderland we are looking to extend good practice around common assessment and lead professional from the ISA pilot in North Washington into mainstream children's services. This will provide practitioners and organisations with an opportunity to work hands on using the new assessment processes and practice and to identify and appoint lead professionals to follow through the agreed action plan focussed upon the child and families needs.

The schools who have provisionally agreed to adopt these practices are: Southwick Primary, Wessington Primary and Town End Farm Primary with further meetings planned with Sandhill View, Farringdon and New Silksworth Infants School.

The following children's services have already agreed to adopt the new practices which will be phased in over the coming months as part of multi-agency training delivering common core skills to identified practitioners:

- Children's Centre North Washington
- BEST
- Health
- Junior YISP
- Connexions

Children's services wishing to adopt the CAF, Lead professional and receive the training can contact Dave Hills the ISA project manager.

## Preparing the way forward

Fifty six staff from Connexions services in Sunderland, (mainly personal advisors), each received a half day Information Sharing and Assessment (ISA), awareness training.

The aim of the training was to prepare the organisation and key staff for the implementation of the lead professional role, common assessment processes and the introduction of the child index.

The training was well received by staff. Feedback identified that the new arrangements would add value and streamline their current services and improve information sharing across linked services.

It was generally agreed that this more holistic approach would help to identify and resolve the additional needs of the child and family.

Some of the key questions on lead professional raised by the training were:

## What is meant by additional needs?

Needs, which cannot be met by you or your services alone, or which are likely to escalate if not addressed immediately.

## Will this add to my current workload?

When the new processes are embedded it is envisaged that they will streamline services and eliminate unnecessary or duplicated processes and reduce bureaucracy.

## What will happen if I decline to take on the role of lead professional?

Supporting organisations will need to agree the criteria and sign up to the process before a lead professional is appointed. The role will be fully supported and managed through this agreed process.

## Where does the authority to make this happen come from?

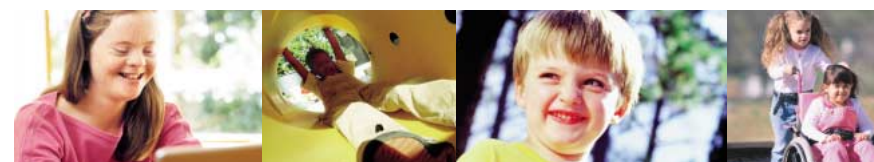
Through the Children Act, section 10,11, and 12. Services will have a duty to co-operate and accountability will be through the Director of Children's Services.

## Will we get further training on this?

Lead professional and common assessment will be implemented in all local authorities. This will be a supported process and common core training will be announced very shortly.

## At what point in the process will the lead professional be appointed?

This may vary but it will be after the first assessment has been carried out and will usually take place at the multi-agency meeting to agree the action plan.



## Spring

**Publication** - final version of statutory guidance for Directors of Children's Services and lead member.

**Publication** - final version statutory guidance on new duty to co-operate to promote children's well-being (section 10, Children Act).

**Publication** - final version lead professional guidance.

**Publication** - final version toolkit for multi-agency working.

**Publication** - summary of responses to index consultation on 'Sensitive Services' and 'flags of concern'.

## April

**Publication** - Children's Workforce Strategy.

**Publication** - Common Core Prospectus [www.dfes.gov.uk/commoncore](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/commoncore).

**Publication** - refined Common Assessment Framework (CAF) guidance, materials and implementation plan - start testing in some areas now.

**Publication** - statutory guidance new duties to safeguard and promote welfare (section 11, Children Act) - final version summer 2005.

## May

**Publication** - framework for Integrated Inspection of Children's Services (starts Sept 2005).

## September

**Publication** - cross government guidance for practitioners on information sharing.

## October

Announcement of Ministerial decisions on timetable for implementing child indexes.

## January 2006

**Publication** - final version of CAF for national roll out 2006/8.

**For more information on any of the above subjects please contact Dave Hills, ISA Project Manager, telephone 0191 566 1841 or e-mail [IRT@ssd.sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:IRT@ssd.sunderland.gov.uk)**

# Sunderland Voluntary Sector Youth Forum

**Sunderland's voluntary sector youth work projects are leading the way in terms of the contribution made to the lives of children and young people, by bringing together a network of over 11 neighbourhood-based projects to form the Sunderland Voluntary Sector Youth Forum (SVSYF).**

The members provide a diverse range of services for children and young people which complement the work undertaken by mainstream providers.

SVSYF was established in 1993 and has provided opportunities for staff from voluntary youth projects across the City to share information and access mutual support. It has also been used as a contact point for statutory agencies and was asked to nominate representatives to take part in working groups and committees regarding the development of new initiatives and services.

The Forum has three strategic aims:

- To act as a representative body for the voluntary youth work sector in Sunderland in order to ensure that voluntary youth work provision is adequately represented in new developments and existing structures.
- To promote and encourage effective operational practices within the Sunderland voluntary youth work sector.
- To enable the Sunderland-based voluntary youth work organisations to undertake collective initiatives on a City-wide basis.

The Forum is now well positioned within local networks and

partnerships linked to key statutory sector bodies. The Forum also has good links with regional bodies such as the Regional Youth Work Unit and has national connections through the National Youth Agency. The links have been developed in a robust manner and there is tangible evidence of direct benefits to the voluntary youth sector in general and the member organisations in particular.

Statutory agencies value the ability to communicate and liaise with the sector through a single contact point and have highlighted the effective and 'two-way' nature of this communication. Agencies have profited from the ability of the Forum to act strategically and authoritatively on a City-wide basis and to participate effectively in planning and developmental processes.

The Forum has been successful in generating a higher level of support to member organisations in the form of direct inputs of advice and support in key areas of operational management, as well as underpinning an enhanced level of information sharing and mutual support. Through accessing funding, largely from the Connexions Service, the Forum has also been able to generate resources in the form of a mini-bus and IT equipment and has accessed



member organisations to training opportunities. There is evidence that member organisations have benefited in the form of increased organisational capacity and effectiveness.

Membership of the Forum has enabled organisations to significantly scale up their local work to have a City-wide impact and to add value to their existing programmes. Without the co-ordinating and administrative roles performed by the Forum centrally it is most unlikely that these initiatives would have taken place or have been as effective.

#### Forum members include:

- Pennywell Youth Project
- Southwick Neighbourhood Youth Project
- Hendon Young People's Youth Project
- Box Youth Project
- Lambton Street Fellowship Centre
- Catholic Youth Centre
- Commercial Road Youth Project
- Sunderland North Business Centre
- Oxclose and District Young People's Centre
- Herrington Burn YMCA
- A690 Youth Initiative

**For more information on the Sunderland Voluntary Sector Youth Forum, please telephone 0191 520 3643.**

# The Service Delivery Room

In each issue the Service Delivery Room will focus on a specific area of work that contributes to the wider agenda for integrating children's services.

## This issue focuses on: **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)**

### An Introduction to CAMHS

The CAMHS Strategic Partnership is committed to improving the mental health and psychological well-being of all children and young people living within Sunderland.

As a partnership we aim to achieve this by promoting the mental health of all children and young people, providing early intervention and also meeting the needs of children and young people with established or complex problems. We believe that all children's services have a significant role in this from universal service providers to specialist CAMHS Services.

We are committed to ensuring that CAMH Services are configured around the needs of the child and family, that there is a greater move towards more integrated community based services and children, young people and their families are actively involved in service planning and delivery.

### The Tiered Framework

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services support the mental health needs of all children from birth to their eighteenth birthday. A tiered framework is helpful in broadly conceptualising child and adolescent mental health needs:

**At Tier 1**, universal services work to promote emotional health and well being of all children, and, with support address mild early stage problems that approximately 15% of children and young people may be experiencing.

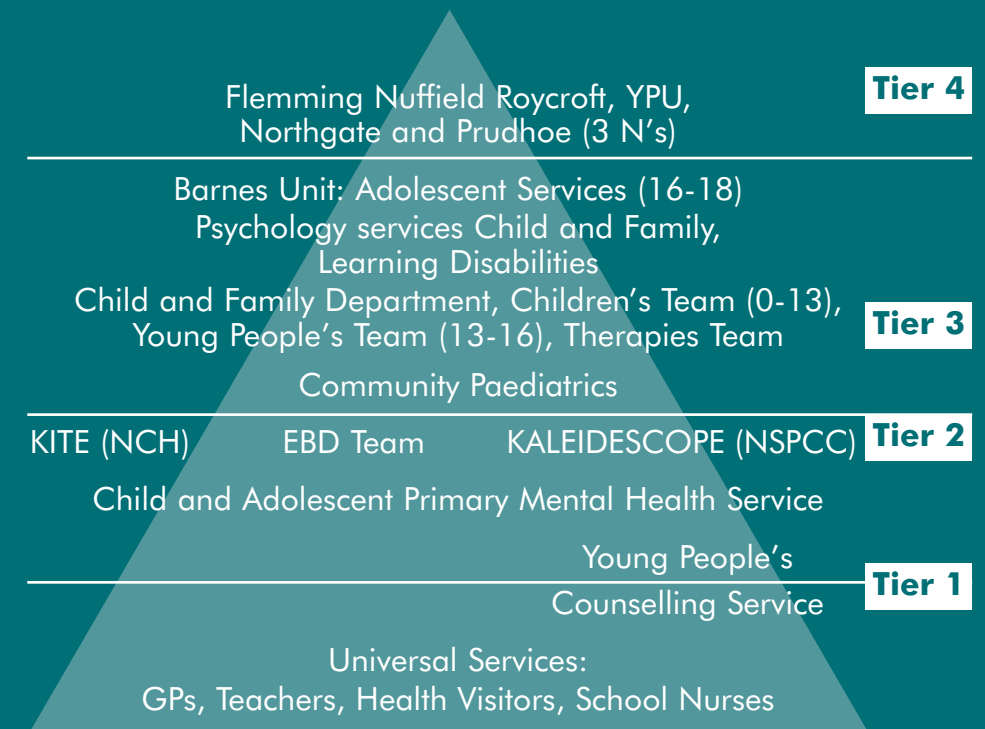
**At Tier 2**, professionals trained in mental health support children and young people with moderately severe problems through both direct and indirect work (approximately 7% of children and young people).

**At Tier 3**, specialist multi-disciplinary services support the needs of children and young people with severe and complex needs (approximately 1.85% of children and young people)

**At Tier 4**, highly specialised services support the needs of children and young people with very serious or life threatening problems (approximately 0.0075% of children and young people).

*There is a need for effective partnership working between agencies across the tiers.*

### Diagram 1: Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services within Sunderland.



# Children's Trust Stakeholder Meetings - What you said...

During February and March, six stakeholder meetings were held to share the vision for developing the Children's Trust approach in Sunderland and to seek views about the proposals. Over 300 staff from partner organisations attended, and some of the points raised are summarised below.

## Communication and consultation

Almost everyone who responded stressed the importance of involving staff at every stage of the developments and ensuring that all partners have a voice. Briefing sessions and newsletters were popular methods of communication and, not surprisingly, many people favour use of e-mail and websites, so we'll work on that!

The next stage of briefings for staff will be more focused and will address in more detail some of the building blocks of service integration such as the Common Assessment Framework and lead professional role.

There were some good ideas for involving children and young people, particularly using those settings where children and young people feel comfortable such as youth clubs and schools.

## Benefits of service integration

There was strong support for more integrated service delivery and shared processes as a means of achieving more effective use of resources through avoiding duplication of effort and improving communication and information sharing. This was seen as bringing benefits for children, young people and their families by making services more accessible and co-ordinated, more tailored to need and so leading to better outcomes.

## Issues for development

Though there was general enthusiasm for underpinning principles, the importance of effective change management was stressed. Hopefully, shared commitment to the creation of a climate of openness in which staff are kept fully informed about developments, with opportunities through working groups and other forums to influence change, will help to address this.



Some concerns were expressed about loss of professional identity. Integrating services and processes means breaking down service and professional barriers which can stand in the way of meeting children's and young people's needs. It doesn't mean losing the uniqueness of services and professions, but it does mean becoming much clearer about what each service contributes to the whole.

The importance of links to other partnerships whose work impacts on children's well-being was raised, as was the need to collaborate with providers of services for adults in ensuring that parents receive the support they need.

The significant role of the Voluntary and Community Sector as a major provider of services for children, young people and their families was raised many times, and will certainly be given full recognition in the development of services and commissioning arrangements.

## In conclusion...

**Thank you to everyone who attended the meetings. Your views will help to shape the future of services for children, young people and their families in Sunderland.**



## Most Frequently Asked Questions

### Q What exactly is the Children's Trust?

**A** In the last issue, we explained that the Children's Trust would not be a new organisation, but a number of people have asked for further clarification.

It is recognised that improving outcomes for all children and young people in relation to staying safe, being healthy, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and economic well-being, is only possible when agencies work together.

The term "Children's Trust" describes the local arrangements, which will support joint working by agencies to design and deliver integrated services, which are built around the needs of children and young people.

The arrangements, which have improving outcomes at the very heart of all activity, will cover the following key areas:

- Integrated services (and already there is a number of strong local models to build on).
- Shared processes to support front line staff in their work (information sharing, common assessment, lead professional).
- Joint planning and commissioning of services, supported in some areas by pooled budgets and shared resources.

Measures will also be in place to ensure that children and families have a voice in the planning and delivery of services.

Partner organisations in the Children's Trust arrangements will continue to be responsible for their own specific functions, but they will be responsible for co-operating to make joint working towards shared outcomes a reality.

The Children Act 2004 gives the Council responsibility for putting in place arrangements to support co-operation between partners. Within the Council, there will be changes to the way children's services are organised. From April 2006 there will be an integrated children's service created by joining together the Council's functions in relation to education and children's social care.

The Children's Trust aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people. That means that it is concerned with the delivery of universal services and also more specialist services, which only those children with additional needs will require.

### Q WHAT IS A LSCB?

**A** Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) are the statutory successors to Area Child Protection Committees (ACPCs). Their purpose is to co-ordinate what is done by the organisations that are represented on the Board to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

All local authority areas must have a LSCB by April 2006, but in Sunderland we made an early start by establishing our LSCB, which is directly accountable to the Children's Trust, in October 2004.

### Q How does the LSCB differ from the ACPC?

**A** In some important ways it is very similar, and in developing the LSCB we will build on the arrangements which made up the ACPC.

In particular, it will be important to maintain progress in working together to protect the most vulnerable children - those who are at risk of significant harm from abuse or neglect within their families.

The LSCB will also play a role in ensuring that all staff working with children and young people have the right knowledge and skills to support them in safeguarding children. Lynne Thomas, recently appointed as Safeguarding Children Development Officer, will lead on the planning and delivery of a multi-agency staff development programme.

However, the LSCB has a broader role than the ACPC. It will be concerned with developing strategies to prevent children from suffering harm. This is a huge challenge and will require the involvement of a wide range of agencies and links with other partnerships such as the Safer Sunderland Partnership. We are currently reviewing membership of the Board and its sub groups to ensure that appropriate agencies can contribute to the new agenda.

In order to ensure that there is a clear focus for the preventative work of the LSCB, the Children's Trust has agreed that priority will be given to certain groups of children. They are children who are affected by parental mental ill-health, parental drug and alcohol abuse and domestic violence. These children are known to be at high risk of failing to achieve good outcomes, but they are not necessarily on the child protection register. The aim is to ensure that the needs of these children are identified and that multi-agency approaches to meeting need are developed.