

Managing our Services

This section is about how we will manage our services and resources to achieve all of the objectives described in the previous sections.

Where are we now?

Ofsted has recognised the need for strong and effective service management in order to ensure that we achieve our objectives. In 2008, Ofsted reported that York's 'capacity to improve' was 'outstanding'. Ofsted felt that this reflected well on the leadership qualities within the YorOK partnership – but it is really a tribute to the professionalism and commitment of the entire workforce.

Every member of staff who works for one of the YorOK partners shares a common desire to achieve the best possible outcomes for all children and young people. However, good intentions on their own are not enough, and in recent years we have placed an increasing emphasis on work to promote equalities, which is one of our core principles. We have introduced a number of highly-praised initiatives such as our new mechanisms for listening to disabled children and their families, our education services aimed especially at Travellers and ethnic minorities, and our website for young people who are unsure about their sexuality - www.lgbyouthyork.org.uk. We need to build on these initiatives to ensure our equalities principle is woven into every action we take.

Increasingly our staff work together within the same premises, sharing a common set of values and speaking the same language: united in their commitment to improved services for all children and young people. This does not mean that specialist skills and knowledge are less important, but rather that we are all much clearer about each other's roles and responsibilities.

In our Children & Young People's Plan 2007-2010 we set out our strategy for workforce development. Since then, our Training & Development Unit has ensured the delivery of a high quality and focused strategy for





Manor CE School - opening Easter 2009

professional development at all levels. The Unit supports all staff within children’s services, including schools, and takes a proactive approach in supporting the training and development agenda for the wider Children’s Trust workforce.

World-class services can only be provided in buildings fit for the 21st century, constructed to the highest standard of sustainable design principles. Since the last Plan, we have continued delivering an ambitious programme of capital investment. The merger of two secondary schools has been successfully completed, with the opening of the new York High School in January 2009. This came after a challenging time for staff and students at the school following the disruption caused by a major school fire during the Autumn term 2008. The new Manor School building will open after Easter 2009, increasing the capacity of an outstanding and popular school. Exciting work is under way to complete the new Joseph Rowntree Secondary School, which will open in 2010, a year which will also see new primary school provision developed. During 2008, several new, highly successful Children’s Centres also opened their doors. These developments have complemented the construction of new state-of-the-art facilities at York College.

Our emphasis during the period covered by this Plan must be to continue to plan school places to meet changes in the pattern of demand, while at the same time ensuring that we assist York’s contribution to the battle against climate change by significantly reducing our carbon footprint.

Finally, in the economic and environmental context in which we operate, we recognise that we must ensure that efficiencies between partners and within our work settings are achieved. We also recognise the importance of jointly commissioned, high quality services in improving outcomes for all children and young people. There is more about this in ‘How we will monitor progress’ on pages 41-42 and in ‘Our spending plans’ on pages 43-44.

“Stop racist behaviour. Treat people individually.”

All quotations with a yellow border are from children and young people across the City

As a result our priorities are:

22. Make sure that a commitment to equalities underpins everything we do by:

- ▶ delivering fair services and achieving equitable life outcomes for all children and young people, whilst respecting diverse needs and aspirations;
- ▶ recognising that equality is not about treating everyone the same. Children and young people can only achieve their absolute potential if diversity is recognised, valued and supported;
- ▶ concentrating support on those children, young people and families struggling against disadvantage and discrimination;
- ▶ fulfilling our legal duties in relation to gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, religion and belief, and age.

23. Further develop a well-qualified, creative and integrated workforce by:

- ▶ recruiting professional staff of the best possible calibre;
- ▶ introducing common YorOK induction standards;
- ▶ supporting continuing professional development throughout people's careers, with new progression pathways based on a shared culture;
- ▶ commissioning a wide range of accredited and non-accredited training programmes in a fully supported learning environment, based on national standards and codes of practice;
- ▶ introducing and supporting integrated working practices and processes;
- ▶ establishing a reliable workforce profile to support workforce planning and development;
- ▶ actively promoting the involvement of children, young people and parents in staff recruitment, selection and training.

24. Invest in sustainable buildings and open spaces by:

- ▶ planning school places to meet changing patterns of demand, in consultation with local communities;
- ▶ recognising our role in tackling climate change by significantly reducing our carbon footprint, drawing on young people's natural instincts in this area;
- ▶ identifying opportunities for new buildings that incorporate sustainable design principles in their construction and procurement;
- ▶ creating schools equipped for 21st century learning at the heart of their communities;
- ▶ introducing the Learning Platform and faster Broadband, and improving information systems that support schools and services;
- ▶ building our ninth Children's Centre and additional 'satellites' to ensure services can be accessed across the whole of York;
- ▶ increasing the number of natural play spaces and parks/gardens with the Civic Trust Green Flag Award.

"Classes on: how to buy/rent a house; how to get a job; how to manage a bank account; what the credit crunch is."

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York High School - opened January 2009

25. Spend every penny wisely through 'integrated commissioning' by:

- ▶ making sure our new Integrated Commissioning Group has real influence over established partnership planning and delivery practices, including a sharp focus on performance management;
- ▶ making better decisions about where to allocate resources and the balance between universal services, specialist provision and preventative work;
- ▶ identifying opportunities to align or pool existing budgets, including capital and staff resources;
- ▶ establishing other joint working groups with a specific remit to focus on cross-cutting key themes and priorities as necessary, for example, reducing risky behaviours;
- ▶ ensuring all of our commissioning and planning is driven by high quality data;
- ▶ spreading the principles of integrated commissioning by establishing a wider network of key managers with an interest in these developments;
- ▶ offering children and young people an increasing opportunity to influence and challenge commissioning decisions.

How will we know we are making a difference?

The YorOK partnership collects a wide range of information about the performance of our services. As we make progress against the priorities set out above, we would expect to see improvements in:

- ▶ tracking and monitoring of the project milestones associated with building new schools and other facilities,
- ▶ monitoring levels of aligned or pooled budgets,
- ▶ numbers of Equality Impact Assessments completed.