

Creating Opportunities

'Partnership working for children, young people and families in Bracknell Forest'

Issue 1: September 2011

Welcome to the first edition of our newsletter for those working with children and young people within the Borough. We aim to publish this newsletter three times a year to inform you of developments in relation to children and young people. Each edition will spotlight one area and include an item from young people. Contributions and suggestions for future editions are welcome.

What is the Children and Young People's Partnership?

The Children and Young People's Partnership is a group that represents all the agencies and organisations who provide support to children, young people and families in Bracknell Forest. Its aim is to:

...."enable all children, young people and families to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, to play an active role within their community and realise their aspirations and potential through the well-coordinated provision of support and services"

The 'plan' for children and young people in Bracknell Forest



In April 2011, the Partnership produced a joint strategic plan for children and young people in Bracknell Forest 'Creating Opportunities' which explains how the Partnership will work together over the next three years to improve the life chances of children, young people and families in the Borough.

This plan (along with a summary and young people's poster) can be found at:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/living/liv-children-and-families/liv-children-and-young-peoples-plan.htm>

An action plan is in place to ensure the priorities in the plan are making progress.

Child Poverty Strategy "Breaking the Cycle"

Overall Bracknell Forest is one of the least deprived local authority areas in the country: analysis of Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2007 data shows that no areas¹ are in the 20% most deprived areas in England. This is the 'big picture' as there are pockets of deprivation and the information shows there are children in Bracknell Forest who are living in poverty.

The most recent picture² is that 11% of children in Bracknell Forest are living in poverty. This equates to approximately 2,500 children under 16 and 1,400 families.

To read the full child poverty strategy go to:

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/breaking-the-cycle-a-strategy-for-reducing-child-poverty-in-bracknell-forest-2011-to-2014.pdf>

¹ LSOA – Lower Super Output Areas – each approximately 1500 households.

² National Indicator (NI) 116 (from 2008). Definition: The proportion of children living in families in receipt of out of work (means-tested) benefits or in families in receipt of tax credits whose reported income is less than 60% of median income.

Focus onEarly Intervention and Parenting

In each issue of the newsletter we will be focusing on a different area of partnership working, evidencing good practice and highlighting positive outcomes for children, young people and families. This time we are looking at Early Intervention and Parenting – specifically the **Incredible Years Programme** www.incredibleyears.com

Background

Incredible Years is an evidence-based parenting programme delivered over 10 weeks. Parents are referred from a range of services including Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), Children's Social Care, Family Support Advisers and the Behaviour Support Team. Many of the referrals come through the Integrated Care Pathway connected to the Common Assessment Framework (CAF).

The course in this case study was delivered at the Primary Professional Centre by the Behaviour Support Team and an outreach worker from the Children's Centres. The families contained many children and some adults with a diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and/or autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and the programme has an evidence base of effectiveness with these conditions. As such it is used as the first therapeutic intervention for children with ADHD and mild to moderate autism in the area. All the families taking part were seeking solutions to managing challenging behaviour, building better family relationships and enjoying family life.

Outcome and Impact

At the start and finish of the programme parents complete three questionnaires. By the end of the course the parents showed significant reductions in stress levels and behaviour issues. Levels of clinical depression in parents decreased from 40% to 10%.

On a more qualitative level, the parents gained in confidence, learned strategies to help them build better relationships with their children and at the same time benefited from the support network of other parents coping with similar challenges.

What next?

Many of the parents now have the skills they need for managing their children in a positive and effective way, however there is further support available including family sessions over the summer holidays and weekly drop-in coffee mornings in term time. In addition some parents will be joining the ADHD support group, a group run by parents for parents, set up as a result of a previous Incredible Years course and regularly has over 20 families attending.

There is also a review session in the term after completion where any ongoing needs will be identified and addressed. There are plans to track the progress of this group over the coming year.

The Incredible Years parenting programme will continue to run twice a term. In addition an adapted programme for parents of children with disabilities has been developed.

For more details contact:

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Inspections for Children's Services

There have been a number of inspections already this year:

- **Youth Offending Service** inspection in April which finally reported in July.
- **Adult Learning** Inspection in June which involved of a team of six inspectors over a five day period, who looked at every possible aspect of adult education.

- The Unannounced Inspection of **Contact, Referral and Assessment** took place in June and truly was unannounced, as we were not anticipating it at all.
- In August there was an Ofsted good practice review in **Children's Social Care**.
- Ofsted spent four days in July inspecting the Children's Social Care **fostering services**. We achieved a grade of good overall with strong elements of outstanding practice.
- **Larchwood** our residential provision was also inspected by Ofsted and the team were graded overall as 'outstanding'. This is the seventh consecutive inspection that has been graded as outstanding which is a tremendous achievement.

The annual Ofsted Children's Services Assessment 2011 will also be taking place over the next few months as a desk-top exercise which pulls together the results of a range of Ofsted inspections, such as in schools, child care providers, children's homes. The final format is new this year and the usual grading of the LA will not take place. The Children's Services Assessment will report in the autumn.

Preparations are underway for the Announced Inspection by Ofsted. This is the successor to the Joint Annual Review (JAR) which took place in 2007. We will receive 10 days notice from Ofsted in advance of this inspection. The inspection will focus on Safeguarding and Looked After Children but will examine a wide range of the services we provide and initiatives which are underway.

Youth Council Update

The impact of domestic violence – young people's view



We, at the Youth Council, were asked once again by the LSCB to create a session based around the impact of domestic violence and give a presentation at the annual LSCB / CSP³ conference.

The process began by getting into small groups and researching domestic violence. Information that we gathered included horrifying statistics and heart-breaking true stories. Using all of the information that we gathered, helped us create 'feeling cards' and to put our message across in the best way, we decided to create a film.

As well as the DVD being shown at the conference we read out the true stories as if we were the victims of domestic violence or as if we were another member of the family. The 150+ audience were captivated, afterwards they described the presentation as 'inspirational', 'powerful' and 'thought-provoking'.

'Say it Loud Say it Proud' (SiLSiP)



The Bracknell Forest Children in Care Council (re-named by young people as SiLSiP - Say It Loud Say It Proud) has been in existence since 2007. All Looked After Children are members of SiLSiP and receive a copy of their newsletter and have the right to table agenda items at meetings. There is a core group which meets regularly, two of whom are original members who have been attending since 2007.

What has SiLSiP achieved over the last year?

- Developed a new logo and newsletter for looked after children

³ Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

- Took part in activities and workshops including poetry. Some of the poems were recorded and broadcast as part of “Handle with Care” project.
- Delivered training for Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel on the value of listening to young people.
- Applied for Youth Opportunity Fund money - they received £1,820 towards the cost of the Education Awards Ceremony activities.
- To mark Takeover Day four young people from SiLSiP stepped into the shoes of staff for the day and developed and delivered a quiz on children’s rights for Foster Carers.
- Four members of SiLSiP completed their Berkshire Award. This award credits young people aged 13-19 for Individual Skills, Group Work Skills and Work in the Community.

New Anti-Bullying Strategy

Bracknell Forest Anti-Bullying Group (ABG) was set up several years ago as a multi-agency forum to bring together representatives from all who are involved in dealing with bullying, whether working with victims or perpetrators and their families and schools.

“Taking Action Together”, the updated Anti-Bullying Strategy for Bracknell Forest for 2011-2014, has just been published. There is also a detailed action plan to accompany the strategy which focuses on three Strategic Priorities:

- **Information Gathering** - Work with schools, partners, children, young people and parents/carers to gather information and manage data collected
- **Preventing and Tackling Bullying** - Empower schools, partners and the wider community to respond to bullying behaviour
- **Addressing Bullying with the Local Community** - Ensure the wider involvement of partner agencies, the voluntary sector and the local community to tackle bullying

This Anti-Bullying Strategy is an important tool to help us to ensure children and young people feel safe, and we hope that by “Taking Action Together” we can help to reduce bullying and ensure children and young people feel safe and able to participate within their communities, and achieve their full potential.

<http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/liv-anti-bullying-group.htm>

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Future publication dates

Do you have an article or information that you think would be of interest to others working with children and young people in Bracknell Forest?

Please send any suggestions and/or contributions for the newsletter to alison.burnell@bracknell-forest.gov.uk by the dates specified below.

Future Issues:	Contributions by:
January 2012	16 December 2011
May 2012	13 April 2012