



Herefordshire  
Children and  
Young People's  
Partnership

**Giving children and young  
people a great start in life**

**The Children and Young People's Plan  
for Herefordshire**

**2019 - 2024**

## Foreword

The Children and Young People's Plan sets out our vision and priorities for children, young people and families in Herefordshire. We believe that everyone has a role to play; we can all contribute to making Herefordshire a great place to grow up.

Children and young people are at the heart of this plan. We have listened to their views and their experience of growing up in Herefordshire. They have told us about the things that matter to them and what things make a positive difference in their lives. We have listened to the views of families, staff and service providers as well as reviewed our local performance to help us to better understand the key areas for us to focus on in this plan.

It is encouraging that many children and young people have told us how much they like living in Herefordshire. They like the friendly communities, the good schools and report that interaction with professionals, including health professionals and social workers, is a positive experience; they also enjoy and appreciate the countryside, wildlife and quality of the environment.

There are also some exciting changes happening in the county over the coming years, including our new University focusing on engineering, and a new Cyber Security Centre, helping to make Herefordshire a more attractive place for young people to live, study and plan their careers.

We have achieved a great deal in the county over the last few years. The educational attainment of our children and young people is something to be proud of; this speaks to the unstinting efforts of our schools and teachers.

We have all worked together to improve support for mental health and will continue our efforts to keep this important area in sharp focus.

The range of support provided for children and young people across the county makes a huge difference to their quality of life and supporting families at the earliest opportunity remains key to our approach. We need to ensure that there is a sound joint understanding of thresholds of need across our range of multi-agencies so that we can be effective in keeping children safe. However, we are living in challenging times when rising needs are making ever increasing demands on public services. We need to ensure that we are doing all we can to target support so that it makes a difference, particularly to our most vulnerable, so that we enable families to thrive and young people to make a successful transition to adulthood.

Herefordshire Council and its partners have the wellbeing of children and young people as a core priority. We are working hard together to deliver a high standard of care, education, opportunity and support to all our children and young people and to increase their understanding of living in our diverse communities. We work with multiple partners to bring an integrated approach which will underpin the safeguarding, wellbeing and nurturing of children and young people. This plan identifies the areas which are to be the focus for the plan period – we have achieved a great deal to be proud of over the last few years, but there is always more to do, improvements to make, more to achieve.....so, let's get on with it.

Cllr Norman  
Chair of the Children and Young People's Partnership Board  
(Cabinet member for Children and Families)

## **Our vision for Children and Young People in Herefordshire**

We will work to ensure that:

**‘The children and young people of Herefordshire have a great start in life and grow up healthy, happy and safe within supportive family environments’.**

## **A profile of Herefordshire**

Herefordshire has the fourth lowest population density in England, with a land area of 2,180km<sup>2</sup> but a population of only 189,300 (2016).

Most of the county (95%) is rural and 53% of the population live in rural areas.

The county has an older age population profile than England & Wales, with 24% of the population aged 65 or older compared to 18% nationally; 16.8% of the current population are aged 0-15yrs compared to 19% nationally.

Overall numbers of children have declined by around 7% over the last decade. However, the number of under-fives and births have been rising for the best part of the last decade. The next five years are expected to show a gradual increase in the numbers of children, to around 33,200 by 2023.

A larger proportion of school-aged children (2017/18 academic year) have a statement for SEN or EHCP locally (3.1%) compared to nationally (2.9%). However, local figures are in line with those for the West Midlands region (3.1%).

Unemployment in the county is low, but average earnings in the county are significantly below both the regional and national averages. Average house prices are high compared with elsewhere in the region.

Annually there are more people coming into the county than leave across all ages except 18-20 year-olds, the ages at which young people are most likely to be moving away to study.

## **Where are we now?**

Since the previous Children and Young People’s Plan was introduced in 2015, there have been many achievements to be proud of in Herefordshire. Just some of these are highlighted below:

- The teen pregnancy rate has reduced year on year in Herefordshire and is now 13.2% per 1,000, which equates to just 39 pregnancies (2017). This is the lowest rate in the region and one of the lowest compared to other similar areas (the rate has more than halved since 2010).
- Changes in models of care to support children in mental health crisis have been implemented, including extended provision for urgent assessments for young people experiencing a crisis. This is now available seven days per week in partnership with the local Children’s Ward.
- A review into special educational needs and disabilities by the CQC and Ofsted in September 2016 acknowledged the low waiting times and flexible provision by Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

- 2018 saw Herefordshire young people out-performing pupils nationally in the Year1 Phonics Screening Check. Eighty four per cent of Herefordshire pupils achieved the threshold mark or better compared to 82 per cent across England. This represents a rise of 16 percentage points since 2013.
- There is clear evidence that standards are rising in both primary and secondary schools and academies across the county. In 2018 the performance of all pupils in Reception year in Herefordshire ranked in the top 25% (top quartile) of all local authorities, with 74.1% achieving a good level of development. Boys in Herefordshire outperformed the England average in 2018 and Herefordshire girls were amongst the highest performers in the country.
- Great progress has been made in implementing Education Health and Care (EHC) plans<sup>1</sup> – all children and young people with a Special Educational Need Statement now have a plan in place.
- In total 366 families with significant challenges and in need of early help have been supported to make sustainable change (up to December 2018).
- The rate (per 100,000 youth population) of first time entrants to the criminal justice system has reduced (from 565.2 in 2015 to 529 in 2016 to 447.2 in 2017), although this is still higher than the national average (295.1) and is currently a priority for the Community Safety Partnership.
- As part of its commitment to support looked after children into adulthood, the Local Authority has introduced a council tax exemption for care leavers (up to the age of 25).

“Amazing schools”  
and “amazing town.”  
Herefordshire child

## Establishing our focus for the next 5 years

In developing the plan, over 300 children and young people from across Herefordshire have been involved, through visiting schools, youth groups and clubs. This has included (but is not limited to) primary and secondary school aged children, children and young people with disabilities, those with mental health issues, children in care and young carers.

Children and young people have shared what it is like growing up in Herefordshire, the main issues that affect them, and about what they believe are the things that need to change over the next few years.

Families and professionals have shared the challenges faced locally and ideas to make a positive change.

Alongside this, performance in key areas has been considered, helping to identify areas that need greater focus.

The section below outlines the key findings:

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<sup>1</sup> An EHC plan is the document which replaces Statements of SEN and Learning Difficulties assessments for children and young people with special educational needs

## Health and wellbeing

### Children and young people said:

*'We want more opportunities to be active in our own community and better information and advice about keeping healthy'.*

*'Access to dentists can sometimes be difficult in rural areas'*

The importance of mental health was prominent in almost all groups involved in the engagement work: 'There needs to be more understanding and better access to early help. Knowing where to get help is really important'.

### Data tells us:

- In Herefordshire almost 1 in 4 reception age children (4-5yrs) and more than 1 in 3 year 6 children (aged 10-11yrs) are overweight or obese (2016/17). This was viewed as a key priority area by professionals.
- Recently released data shows that the percentage of five year olds free of decayed, missing or filled teeth has increased by 10.8% (2014/15 = 58.7%, 2016/17 = 69.5%,) however it is still below the England figure (76.7%). Engagement with professionals highlighted this as a priority area of focus.
- In Herefordshire, 1,073 children and young people were held on the caseload with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in 2017 - 18. Using national data we can estimate that 8,600 children and young people may require support with their mental health or emotional resilience, whether this is low level support or more intensive mental health support. Although waiting times for assessment and treatment for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services have improved considerably, there are a number of children that would benefit from support at an earlier stage with their mental health.

## Education and moving into adulthood

### Children and young people said:

*'There is a need to make sure every child has an equal education'*

*'We need more work experience opportunities, including jobs for under 16's'*

*'Make the most of the new university, support to follow your dreams'.*

**GET EXPERIENCE**

**STAND OUT  
FROM THE CROWD**



Many groups interviewed focused on how some need extra help to reach their goals.

### Data tells us:

- Standards have been rising in primary and secondary schools and academies but, children and young people who are eligible for free school meals continue to attain less well than their classmates.
- A national report published in November 2017<sup>2</sup> highlighted that Herefordshire is a 'cold spot' in relation to social mobility<sup>3</sup> in fact ranking 271 out of 324 for local authorities across the country. Herefordshire children are less likely to be in education and training than the England average, and children have told us they want more opportunities to experience work and better chances to realise their ambitions and to prepare them for adult life.
- The achievement of children and young people with an Education Health and Care plan could also improve as this group has a lower level of achievement in Herefordshire than the same group nationally. Engagement undertaken with professionals has highlighted the need to improve support for children who may face challenges that could limit their achievement, including children living in income deprived families and children with special educational needs and disabilities.

## Safe environments



### Children and young people said:

*'We want Herefordshire roads to be safer for children '*

*'Poorer roads are difficult to cycle on'*

*'We want to feel safe at night and for our parents to feel safe letting us out'*

Children and young people largely focussed on safety outside the home. Some told us that that they don't always feel safe in some parts of the county and raised issues about roads in Herefordshire. They also want more education on safety, including online safety and

healthy relationships.

Professionals in Herefordshire who work with children and young people focussed on safety in the home environment and are aware of the high numbers of children who become looked after across our county. These professionals have consistently highlighted the need for a stronger approach to early identification and early help, including better intervention on specific issues such as domestic abuse and neglect.

### Data tells us:

- In the last 5 years there have been 210 accidents near schools in Herefordshire, of which 34 were categorised as serious<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-nation-2017](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/state-of-the-nation-2017)

<sup>3</sup> Social mobility may be defined as the ability of individuals or groups to move upward or downward in status based on wealth, occupation, education, or some other social variable.

<sup>4</sup> Herefordshire Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy (February 2018).

- Although more recent data is not available, we know that in 2011, the percentage of children walking to school locally (39%) is low compared to national figures (51.2%). This is also the case for the percentage of children cycling to school (1% locally compared to 1.8% nationally).
- In 2018 there were 315 looked after children in Herefordshire. This is 87 per 10,000 of the population which is much higher than the national average of 64 per 10,000.

## Environment and community



### Children and young people said:

*'Want to be involved in community developments and activities'*

*'More sport and outdoor activities/ community play areas, accessible to all'*

*'Children should have a stronger voice'*

*'Need to encourage recycling'*

It was clear from talking to children and young people that their communities and the local environment are issues that really matter to them. They want to feel part of the community, find ways to contribute and to have their voices heard. Protecting the local environment, having places locally where they could mix and be more active was a common theme for most children.

Many children and young people want to have a better understanding of people from different backgrounds, from different areas, or who are facing particular challenges, including disabilities. Children highlighted that they are keen to find ways to create more opportunities to be inclusive, and for local communities to be accessible for all.

## Where do we need to be?

As a result of the engagement with children, young people and professionals, and analysis of relevant local information, four priorities have been identified that will drive the work of the partnership.

### Over the next 5 years our pledges are:

1. Keeping children and young people safe – **BE SAFE FROM HARM**
2. Improving children and young people's health and wellbeing – **BE HEALTHY**
3. Helping ALL children and young people succeed – **BE AMAZING**
4. Ensuring that children and young people are influential in our communities – **FEEL PART OF THE COMMUNITY**

For each pledge, we have considered where we want to get to, ideas of how change could be achieved, and how we will know if we've succeeded. This plan on a page is our roadmap for the next five years (see appendix 1).

## Delivery of the plan

Those who have worked alongside us in the development of the plan are passionate about making a difference and improving lives and building on the strengths of children and young people across Herefordshire – it's not just about what we do but also how we do it. We have therefore agreed four principles that we will use to help guide the plan's delivery. These are:

**Right time:** Early identification of families and early intervention to prevent crisis

**Right people:** Recognising and involving all key partners in achieving change, including families, communities and children and young people.

**Right solutions:** use evidence to understand what works

**Right place:** wherever possible, supporting children, young people and families at home, in their communities.

We will ensure the child and young person is at the centre of all we do.

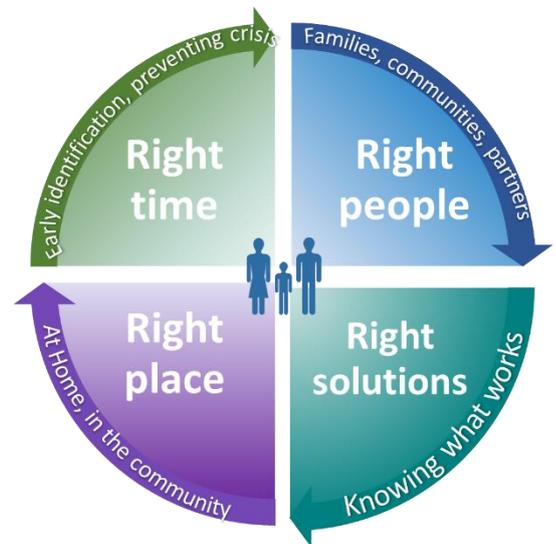
The Children and Young People's Plan is overseen by the Herefordshire Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) with partner agencies working together to address issues affecting children, young people and their families. The plan contributes to delivering the Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Herefordshire and is aligned with a number of key partnership plans. Keeping children in Herefordshire safe is a key focus of the partnership and it works closely with the Safeguarding Partners Board and the Community Safety partnership to ensure a co-ordinated partnership response to key issues, including child sexual exploitation, abuse and neglect, alongside trends such as County Lines.

Many organisations play an important role in supporting Herefordshire children and young people. Mapping a child's journey through life illustrates a number of opportunities to maximise a child's life chances. This includes provision of quality maternity services that can support positive health and wellbeing for mothers, health visiting services, breastfeeding support and early year's provision. Schools, local communities, the local voluntary sector and specialist services all play an important role in helping children grow in safe and supportive environments. Further and higher education, employment opportunities and appropriate housing are all key for successful transition into adulthood.

Whilst the pledges in the plan represent what we aim to achieve for all Herefordshire children, throughout its delivery clear recognition of those children and young people who face additional barriers is necessary. Work to develop the plan has highlighted the specific needs of particular groups of children, including but not limited to; children with special educational needs and disabilities, young carers, children living in poverty, children in care, and children of particular minority groups such as Gypsy, Roma and Traveller families.

The diverse needs of children living in different parts of the county has also been recognised, for example the additional barriers faced for children and families living in more rural parts of the county, in terms of accessing services and support.

All partners engaged in the delivery of this plan are committed to providing equitable rights for children and families in Herefordshire, whatever their disability, age, gender, race, nationality, religion, marital



status, maternity, sexual orientation or background. The plan is an opportunity to make sure equal rights are fully considered when:

- providing services
- purchasing and procuring services
- employing staff
- working in partnership with other organisations
- engaging with our communities

We believe that promoting equality is essential for the creation of a cohesive society and for a strong economy.

The Children and Young People's Partnership Board will oversee the development of more detailed delivery plans and identify or develop multi-agency groups that are best placed to deliver against our pledges. The partnership will ensure that the specific needs of children and families facing additional barriers are recognised and responded to.

Progress will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the board, including the ongoing review and development of targets to track progress. Children, young people and families will be involved in an annual review of what we have delivered to ensure the areas of focus and priority actions are the right ones for the whole plan period.

Responsible for a minimum estimated spend of £42.6 million in children and young people's provision, partners have a real opportunity to make a difference and will together identify:

- Priority areas which can be responded to more efficiently;
- Emerging issues which may require review of available resources;
- Opportunities to use partnership resources more effectively.

Any potential resource implications relating to specific actions will be fully explored within delivery plans.

### **Statement of Partnership Commitment**

The contribution of children and young people in establishing our priorities for the coming years has been invaluable and we look forward to working alongside children, young people, families and communities to deliver the plan.

We are committed to the delivery of the plan and recognise the role we all must play in ensuring the children and young people of Herefordshire have a great start in life and grow up healthy, happy and safe within supportive family environments'.

