



Annual Performance Assessment and Joint Area Reviews

Self-assessment

Part 2: The template for completion

Name of Authority: OLDHAM MBC

- Adult Learning Inspectorate
- Audit Commission
- Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI)
- Healthcare Commission
- HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate
- HM Inspectorate of Constabulary
- HM Inspectorate of Court Administration
- HM Inspectorate of Prisons
- HM Inspectorate of Probation
- Ofsted

Audience All	Published [Date]	Reference no. [00000]
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PART A Background Information

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Signed/agreed on behalf of the Children’s Services Authority	
Name	Ruth M Baldwin
Position	Executive Director of Services for Children, Young People and Families
Signature	
How partners have been involved in completing this form:	
<p>The Children and Young People’s Partnership (CYPP) has overseen the production of this self-assessment; monitoring and steering its development at a strategic level. The CYPP consists of an Executive Board and five sub-groups, correlating to the five key outcomes. The Executive Board brings together senior representatives of the Council, the Primary Care Trust (PCT), the Police, the independent sector and voluntary, community and faith sectors (VCF). Development of the self-assessment has been a standing item on the Board’s monthly agendas.</p> <p>More directly, the development of the self-assessment has been driven by the CYPP’s five outcome based sub-groups which are led by three Assistant Directors in the Directorate, an Associate Director from the PCT and the Chief Executive of Positive Steps Oldham (PSO). They bring together key individuals / agencies at service head or equivalent level, from a range of Council departments, including Adult and Community Services; Children, Young People and Families; Strategy and Resources; Regeneration; and Environmental Services. The PCT, Pennine Acute Trust and Pennine Care Trust are actively engaged in these groups, as are representatives from the Police, Connexions, the Youth Offending Service (YOS), VCF, Healthy Schools Programme, Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT), the Teenage Pregnancy Partnership, 14-19 Partnership and both the Economic and Local Learning Partnerships.</p> <p>Each group was tasked with producing the submission relevant to their thematic outline and through meetings, workshops and virtual communication, draft submissions were produced by each group. Following a quality assurance and gap analysis, process feedback was given to each thematic group for action. Following final submissions, an editing process was undertaken by the Chairs and the Change 4 Children Team to ensure the inclusiveness of the submission was captured. The five outcome sub groups, the CYPP Executive Board and the Authority’s Overview and Scrutiny Commission were consulted in detail on the final draft in May 2006. The process is embedded within the annual planning cycle.</p>	
Signed/agreed on behalf of the Children’s Services Authority’s partners:	
Name	Caroline Ball
Position	Chief Superintendent, Oldham Division (Greater Manchester Police)
Signature	

PART B Context and arrangements for joint working

Oldham is a borough of extreme contrasts: areas of affluence, mainly in the rural East; severe levels of deprivation in the inner areas; and a rich cultural tapestry, with 26% of our young people from minority ethnic origins. The largest of these groups are the Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities. Regeneration and community cohesion play a huge part in our work, and underpin the future prospects for the Borough. There continues to be a focus on community cohesion and on reducing the deprivation levels, where significant strides have already been made.

Based on the [2001 Census](#), Oldham's overall population was 217,273. Unlike the North West and England as a whole, the overall population is predicted to rise by 2.8% by 2021. It is a relatively young population, with 28.2% under the age of 20, compared with a national average of 25.1%. However, [population research](#) indicates that the 0-19 population will decrease slightly by 2011 and then remain steady for the next 10 years. Only 6.8% of the population are aged 75 or over compared with 7.6% nationally.

The percentage of Black & Minority Ethnic (BME) young people in Oldham is 28%. 26.6% of primary school aged children have a first language other than English, compared to the national average of 12.5%. In the secondary sector the figure is 17.9% for Oldham compared to 9.5% for England.

21.8% of primary aged pupils are eligible for free school meals compared with the national average of 16%. Similarly the secondary school average of 20.3% is well above the national average of 13.6%.

In addition, Oldham is ranked 46th on the Index of Multiple Deprivation (2004), an improvement since 2000 when Oldham was ranked 38th. According to the Index, 10 super output areas are amongst the most deprived 3% in England.

Improved outcomes for children and young people have been secured through a significant investment in partnership working at all levels, led by the Council. At a corporate level, a key feature of the Council's improvement has been the development of strong partnership arrangements. The LEA OfSTED inspection in 2004 found partnership working to be 'highly satisfactory' and the CSCI inspection of children's social care services noted the 'strong commitment to partnership working by key agencies'. The [Oldham Partnership](#) provides the overarching strategic infrastructure that underpins effective collaborative, multi-agency working, based on agreed priorities and approaches and communicated through Oldham's Community Strategy. The Oldham Business Planning Process (OBPP) has been developed to ensure synergy between the planning cycles of the Council and its partners. The Oldham Partnership brings together 10 thematic partnership groups, including the CYPP, established in 2003. The CYPP involves Council partners in a number of ways:

- an Executive Board;
- five sub-groups corresponding to the Every Child Matters outcomes; and
- multi-agency work stream groups, including [workforce reform](#), [integrated commissioning](#), [information sharing](#), Common Assessment Framework ([CAF](#)) , [children's centres and extended schools](#), and children and young people's [active involvement](#) .

The CYPP is the vehicle through which the Council meets its duty to ensure that co-operation arrangements are in place locally. Partners have signed up to a vision. Information sharing protocols exist between all relevant partners and work to support the CAF has focussed on building shared language and understanding. Priorities have been agreed with partners for 2006/7 and there is a clear linkage between these, the Children and Young People's Plan and Local Area Agreement (LAA), which is driven through the Oldham Partnership and underlying thematic partnerships. The Council has also played a lead role in establishing the multi-disciplinary, multi-agency 'Change 4 Children Team', bringing together eight officers from across Council departments, the PCT and Positive Steps Oldham. The voluntary and community sectors are involved as key partners, and contribute both at a strategic level and as service deliverers. There is a VCF Partnership, and a Community Empowerment Network; an agreed protocol existing between the Community Empowerment Network and the Oldham Partnership. The VCF Partnership nominates a representative on the Executive Board of the CYPP, and voluntary and community organisations are involved in the thematic sub-groups and work-stream groups of the Partnership.

In 2005, Oldham progressed from a one star "Weak" Council to two star "Fair" and secured an "improving well" direction of travel judgement. The scorecard for Oldham Council recognised that service improvements have been made in priority areas including children's and young people's services and educational attainment. Nearly two thirds of key indicators of performance are improving.

There has been proactive work with over 3000 children and young people in the first phase of a needs analysis to ensure that [their needs underpin the setting of local priorities](#). A whole systems approach is being adopted to ensure children and young people will effect change throughout culture, structure, practice and review of provision. Phase two is now looking at how children and young people feel services should be continued and reconfigured to deliver against their identified needs and what currently works well for them. This work will influence the integrated commissioning strategy and has already underpinned the setting of our targets within the LAA and CYPP, alongside the mapping of service provision and key performance indicators.

The council's children's services	Grade
The contribution of <i>the council's children's services</i> in maintaining and improving outcomes for children and young people.	3

The council's children's services	Grade
The council's capacity to improve its services for children and young people	3

Additional area for judgement in 2006 only	Grade
Children's social care services	2

PART C Needs analysis, impact and involvement.

Being healthy

1.1 Parents and carers receive support to keep their children healthy

100% of children registered at birth in Oldham receive a holistic health assessment and health promotion advice about lifestyles from the health visiting service within the first month of their life. Maternity provision offers a range of options for ante-natal, labour and post-natal care within a variety of settings and 4.5% of women had a home birth in 2005 compared with 3% nationally. An action plan is in place to ensure that all childminders receive induction training prior to registration. Foster and residential carers receive support from the health nurse for LAC. [Infant mortality rates](#) in Oldham are higher than in the North West. The Local Delivery Plan (LDP) and LAA have set targets to reduce the percentage of women smoking during pregnancy by 1.5% (11.77% to 10.27%) and to increase breastfeeding initiation rates by 3% (60.6% to 63.6%).

1.2 Healthy lifestyles are promoted for children and young people

The Healthy Food in Schools Strategy Group has adopted a partnership approach to oversee the implementation of transforming food in schools and [improving the nutritional content of meals and snacks within schools](#). Six schools are piloting healthy menus, prior to roll out across the Borough. Residential children's units are all offering healthy eating options. Ahead of government guidance a healthy lifestyle survey identified that over 25% of Year 7 pupils were at risk of being overweight or [obese](#). Borough-wide interventions include universal education programmes delivered as part of PHSE curriculum, extended schools activity and community engagement through 'Sure Start' programmes. An action plan is in place to measure the height and weight of all Reception and Year 6 pupils annually from September 2006. Engaging BME and vulnerable groups is a priority. The Cottoning On and Sure Start Teams work with Asian women to promote healthy eating and healthier lifestyles and all the residential children's units across the Borough ensure that healthy eating options are available. Targets exist to increase the percentage of schools achieving [Healthy School Status](#). 25 out of 110 schools have already achieved this status, and the target for 2006/7 is 55 (50%). Increased resources from the LAA pump priming funds have been dedicated to ensure that this target is met. There is a Borough-wide partnership approach to increasing physical activity and the adoption of healthier lifestyles. Baseline data identifies that 68% of children and young people aged 5-16 [take part in PE or sport for more than two hours per week in school](#). The target is to increase this to 75% by 2007. A further target is to [increase the percentage of this group taking part in physical activity in the community for two or more hours a week from 78% to 80% by 2007](#). The Unity sport and [anti-bullying programme](#) is an after-school programme available to schools within the Borough. During the academic year 2004/5, it brought together 1350 children and young people from different cultures and backgrounds. It utilises physical activity to improve community

cohesion, improve health and encourage physical activity and remove barriers to participating in physical activity. [The LAA has set a target to increase this to 1450 by 2008.](#)

The Health 4 Me website, designed by young people in Oldham, provides young people with an alternative source of healthy lifestyle information.

1.3 Action is taken to promote children and young people's physical health

A multi-agency preventative strategy is in place to further [reduce teenage pregnancies in the Borough](#). There has been an 8.8% decrease in conception rates in females aged 15-17 years between 1998–2004. The 2005 rate is 55.3% (256 conceptions), compared to the 2004 rate of 60.3% (272 conceptions). An action plan is in place to target wards with the highest conception rates and a Contraceptive Services Strategy has been implemented across all young people's services. 100% of teenage mothers are seen by a specialist health visitor and midwife. Young parents are also encouraged and supported to access universal health visiting and education services.

Oldham is participating in the national Chlamydia [screening programme](#) and has a target of 20,000 screens (50% of sexually active under 25s) by 2009. During 2004/5, school health advisors delivered 220 sexual health sessions within secondary schools as part of PHSE curriculum. A condom distribution scheme is active in a range of venues across the Borough and since August 2005, 287 young people have registered.

Over 13% of young people accessing Brook services are from BME communities and a service has been established to support the needs of lesbian, gay and bi-sexual teenagers.

Under the induction process a full health assessment is offered to all newly arrived asylum seekers and all identified traveller populations are visited by a health visitor to assess for unmet health need and signpost to services as appropriate.

The mental health practitioner based within the YOS consistently meets 100% target of acute and non-acute assessments to be commenced within the recommended timescale.

A dedicated mental health specialist school health advisor provides a broader consultative role for schools and staff in relation to mental health issues and also holds a therapeutic caseload linked into the Child and Adult Mental Health Service ([CAMHS](#)).

Dedicated health specialists work across [Oasis, the young people's drug and alcohol advice service](#), and YOS with a specific role to meet Youth Justice Board (YJB) targets in relation to [substance misuse screening](#). At present we are achieving 92% and 65% for access to full treatment services.

The number of young people attending the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) receiving drug education has increased from 33 (2004/5) to 146 (2005/6) due to targeted work. 149 young people are receiving substance misuse treatment at tiers 3 and 4, a rise from 130 (2004/5)

1.4 Action is taken to promote children and young people's mental health

CAMHS allocation is jointly commissioned and local authority and PCT budgets are aligned. There has been a 14% increase in CAMHS investment, exceeding the 10% National Service Framework (NSF) target for increased investment.

An Advanced Practitioner has been appointed to develop transitional and therapeutic support for 16 to 17 year olds between CAMHS and adult mental health services.

A BME project is in place, aimed at positive mental health promotion and increasing awareness of the support services available.

100% of new cases referred to CAMHS are assessed and [offered initial intervention within the national target of 13 weeks](#).

In response to a lack of tier 4 CAMHS provision across Greater Manchester, Oldham has established an In Reach / Out Reach Team to support young people identified as requiring tier 4 provision. 53 young people have been cared for effectively to date within primary and acute care.

1.5 Looked after children's health needs are addressed

There continues to be a steady rise in the percentage of health assessments of LAC, which is currently 79%, exceeding the national target of 70%. A plan is in place to improve the percentage of dental checks currently at 52%. 100% of initial health assessments on children and young people becoming looked after are achieved.

Oldham's health assessment tool is in line with the British Association of Adoption and Foster Carer (BAAF) documentation to ensure transferability of health record.

Increasing immunisation rates in LAC has been identified as a shared priority between health and social care. Guidelines have been produced to promote opportunistic immunisations to increase the uptake rates.

Brook are working with health care partners to offer sexual health drop-ins in residential children's units. There is a fast track service for LAC to access CAMHS with a Clinical Psychologist based in the Children in Public Care Team and no waiting list exists for LAC for CAMHS initial assessment.

1.6 The health needs of children and young people with learning difficulties and or disabilities are addressed.

All children and young people referred to disability services are assessed and offered initial intervention within the 17 week national target. 100% of LAC in this group have health assessments. The children's disability integrated services agenda has involved parents in the development of an action plan to re-design current provision in line with a 'team around the child approach'. The child development service already utilises this approach to offer comprehensive, co-ordinated assessment and early intervention packages (119 children were offered services in 2005/6).

To promote early inclusion rather than offering segregated nursery provision, outreach workers support children and young people on a one-to-one basis into local pre-school provision (54 children and young people were supported in 2005/6).

A tri-partite transition worker has completed person-centred transition plans on all Year 9 pupils in the special schools. It is planned to target children in mainstream schools in 2006/7.

Staying safe

2.1 Children and young people and their carers are informed about key risks to their safety and how to deal with them

A Positive Parenting Handbook, covering a range of topics including many under 'Staying Safe', has been distributed to all households with children 16 and under or 16-18 year olds in education via health visitors and schools.

A play and workshop called "Every Mother's Son", based around an Oldham death resulting from a teenager crashing a stolen car, explores the impact on the friends and family of all concerned and has proved to be a powerful device for engaging children and young people in schools with a local issue. 17 schools have been involved, with a further 10 schools scheduled this year.

The Crucial Crew project, a Greater Manchester Police-led initiative involving utility services together with the Fire Service, has engaged with 2,500 pupils from 62 primary schools in home safety issues and how to deal with emergencies.

The Trading Standards Service has a rolling programme to visit schools and advise children and young people about their role and inform them about home safety and consumer issues.

The Fire Service targets vulnerable households where there is a disabled child or foster homes, looking at fire prevention, evacuation planning and fitting smoke detectors where needed.

2.2 Children and young people are provided with a safe environment

Oldham's needs assessment highlighted [safety on the roads](#) as a key priority for children and families. The use of Road Traffic Accident (RTA) statistics ensures that targeted work is undertaken, resulting in extensive road calming work, benefiting almost 40% of residential properties and 45% of schools' frontages in the Borough, with a target to complete 100% by 2010. These figures are amongst the highest in the North West.

RTAs and casualties are reducing steadily with 753 RTAs (1082 casualties) in the Borough in 2005, down from 814 (1139 casualties) in 2004. Significant reductions have also been achieved in the numbers of child pedestrian casualties with 87 in 2005 compared to a baseline figure of 156, a reduction of 44%.

Oldham is a pilot for the Neighbourhood Road Safety Initiative targeting deprived areas, where children are five times more likely to be killed or seriously injured on our roads than their peers.

Oldham's Street Safe Scheme, which is led by the Oldham Against Crime Partnership has pioneered a proactive approach to addressing safety issues for young people out on the streets at night, recognising the impact of alcohol use. Police and local authority licensing officers undertake regular joint visits of licensed premises and also enforce an alcohol-free zone on the town streets. Street Safe has also informed the strategic deployment of CCTV cameras at hotspots.

Test purchasing initiatives undertaken by licensing officers and using young people under 18 are effectively policing under-age sales. Furthermore licence renewals are reviewed by the LSCB where premises identified as being problematic can be challenged and licence renewal refused.

Oldham operates a Responsible Licensee Scheme which ensures that children do not get access to age-restricted goods and 80% of licensed premises are signed up to this scheme.

Anti bullying policies are in place in all schools and residential children's homes and are proactively monitored.

2.3 The incidence of child abuse and neglect is minimised*

Three Serious Case Reviews have taken place in the last year all of which have had strong inter-agency collaboration, producing shared action plans which are either completed or on target to meet agreed timescales.

Initial and Core Assessments within timescale have continued to improve. Specific training for front line workers focussed on 'back to basics' social work practice and improved business process practices are addressing this issue by simplifying processes and reinforcing good practice.

A robust system on Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks is in place, which has ensured 100% coverage across children's services. 100% of child protection reviews are within agreed timescales. The duration of children on the child protection register (CPR) remains low at 0.6%, exceeding the target of 3% and is evidence of proactive work with this group, ensuring no drift.

Analysis of the ethnicity of children on the CPR, show the figure to be 22% from BME communities, which is line with local demographics, as is the ratio of children in need from BME communities.

Field work and family support services have been integrated to provide a more holistic intervention response. An intensive support team has been established for families where higher levels of support are needed.

Domestic Violence referrals remain high. Attending police officers are now carrying out an initial assessment of any potential risks to children ensuring that the resulting referrals enable social work services to be targeted more effectively (see also section 4.2).

The Faith and Family Forum and Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) have delivered child protection training courses to Madrassas. 32 Imams attended the courses and further courses are being commissioned by the Madrassas themselves. The Faith and Family Forum and the LCSB are in the final stages of producing a local protocol to deal with forced marriage.

2.4 Agencies collaborate to safeguard children according to the requirements of current government guidance*

The [LSCB](#) went live from April 2006 and a development worker is in post. Sub-groups have been formed and a work programme established. One sub-group will focus on community engagement in the safeguarding agenda. The LSCB has undertaken a baseline audit using IDEA and NSPCC toolkit to assess fitness for purpose.

A joint initiative with the Police and social care around the sexual exploitation of children and young people has been established. An experienced social work practitioner is leading on communication with Police and facilitating close working relationships to ensure timely and appropriate responses. This has resulted in the targeted intervention of adults involved in sexual exploitation and led to arrests in relation to child abduction and successfully closed down licensed premises associated with the case. The Council and partner agencies comply fully with the requirements for the management of sex offenders in the community.

Multi-agency collaboration via international social services, Interpol and local agencies located a pregnant mother whose unborn child was at risk and who had fled abroad. A planned return of a child to Oldham was successfully achieved.

A multi-agency [CAF Strategic Board](#) has been established and an action plan agreed which will lead to full implementation by April 2007. Training and development of workers from statutory and voluntary sector agencies will be undertaken by area and will help maximise the multi-agency working potential at ground level.

An [Information Sharing Toolkit](#) is being used to established information sharing protocols with CYPP agencies as part of the CAF development.

A multi-agency group is reviewing and revising the [Borough-wide Prevention Strategy](#). A Housing Strategy for young people is in place, which includes dedicated supported hostel facilities for young people with chaotic lifestyles A partnership has been agreed with a housing association for the provision of a new build offering five accommodation units for young care leavers.

2.5 Services are effective in establishing the identity and whereabouts of all children and young people 0–16*

Oldham has robust Children Missing from Education (CME) processes, which led to the identification of 1088 children and young people in 2004/5; in 2005/6 the figure reduced to 906. Partnership working across schools and agencies has resulted in the introduction of protocols improving the

awareness of child movements across and out of the Borough.

Truancy patrols undertaken by Police, Education Welfare and YOS Officers are helping to ensure that young people who are not at school are identified. Between October 2005 and March 2006, 12 sweeps took place in which 607 pupils were stopped and 40 who were not with parents were returned to their school. This initiative enables one-to-one work by Education Welfare Officers to address additional risk factors when working with children and young people found truanting. This will be enhanced with the introduction of CAF.

2.6 Action is taken to avoid children and young people having to be looked after

All requests for children to become looked after are reviewed by a provider panel which has been established to 'gate keep' entry to the LAC system. A robust family support service is in place which offers intervention into families with complex difficulties and therefore reduces the numbers of children who may be referred to the provider panel. The intensive support team targets young people identified as being at risk of becoming looked after and works with them and their family to keep them in the community. Proactive work with YOS is undertaken to utilise bail and community support as an alternative to remand.

2.7 Looked after children live in safe environments and are protected from abuse and exploitation*

The timeliness of reviews of LAC indicator dipped from 90% to 73.5%. This relates to a management information issue that has been resolved. Remedial action has since improved this to 80% and business process re-engineering of the review system has resulted in an automated 'INFO-VIEW' facility on the desk-top computers of reviewing officers and their manager. This ensures that reviews take place within agreed timescales.

The number of LAC who have had three or more placements has reduced from 13% to 9.8%, which is within the best practice range. We have a low proportion of LAC placed far from home due to proactive planning and placement decisions.

The proportion of LAC placed for adoption remains relatively low. Eleven children are currently placed for adoption and waiting final orders. The high numbers of LAC under 'Placement with Parents Regulation' (PPR) and with relative/friend/carers skews this indicator and actual performance on adoption is good. All PPR cases are being reviewed closely and care orders may be revoked over the next 3 to 6 months. Oldham actively promotes residence orders and special guardianships as an alternative to kinship care. Fostering and adoption panels are in place and fully compliant with standards. Oldham has recruited five sets of prospective adopters from the BME community to increase placement choice and is a partner with the Greater Manchester Adoption Consortium: which is part of the North West Regional group Adoption 22, helping to access prospective adoptive parents across the north west and maximising ability to appropriately match children, particularly from BME communities.

Policies and procedures have been developed in respect of private foster care. All active referrals are reviewed to identify any potential private fostering situation. There have been three private fostering situations assessed in recent months, which were found to be unsuitable in promoting the welfare and in safeguarding the child without additional support. It was therefore agreed to move the children into looked after status and placed with foster carers. Three cases are currently being addressed.

Review processes are in place for children in out-of-borough placements. For those children with complex care needs, joint visits are undertaken by Education Welfare and Social Care staff to ensure the continued appropriateness of the facility and safety and security of the child. A robust case file audit process has been developed and implemented. This ensures that 100% of LAC and Child Protection case files are audited in year. A similar audit process on electronic records on the SWIFT database has been developed. All residential children's units and foster placements are actively promoting safe care.

2.8 Children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities live in safe environments and are protected from abuse and exploitation*

The specialist multi-agency, "Children with Disabilities Team" is linked to the Children's Assessment Team to ensure effective and appropriate response to disability issues identified in mainstream assessments. The team also facilitates specialist respite and short-break provision, as well as providing support and training to relevant health and social care professionals such as nursery nurses. Respite care unit is monitored in line with national standards which includes safe care. Anti-bullying policies are in place in special schools and specialist residential provision.

The Home to School Transport Service ensures the safe transportation of 451 children with SEN. Currently Oldham has 82 Pupil Escorts who support all 331 pupils with complex needs travelling in a variety of approved vehicles according to their individually assessed requirements.

Enjoying and achieving

3.1 [Parents and carers receive support in helping their children enjoy and achieve](#)

Parenting and Family Learning Strategies bring together professionals, parents and carers from various backgrounds. The services for Early Years and Lifelong Learning collaborate on a children's workforce development programme. Oldham is recognised as the lead authority in the North West and the regional lead on the national advisory group. Children's Fund and the PCT joint fund the Parenting Co-ordination Team. Projects are impacting significantly on children's personal and social development, reducing parental depression and improving self-esteem. There has been a 10% increase in parents' ability to read and understand English with improved communication between parents and children.

The development of Extended Services involves parents and carers in their design to ensure innovative and relevant opportunities are available. One cluster of schools is delivering family swimming classes for Asian mothers and children in partnership with Sports Development and Recreation Services. Projects are having a positive effect on the health and well-being of families and are building strong links between schools and families.

In 2005/6 103 courses were delivered by The Lifelong Learning Service, with over 700 families attending family learning opportunities. 42% of learners on longer programmes achieved national qualifications, well above the national target of 25%. 90% of parents/carers reported that they have become more involved in their children's education. Family Learning was graded two in the Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) Inspection, March 2005 and gained Skills for Families, 2005-7.

Social Care and the Family Learning Team have piloted a model of learning delivered to teenage parents at a family support centre and this will be rolled this out in 2006/7.

Brook provides teenage parents with accredited learning opportunities through volunteering. 35 young parents are involved in courses and 20 are active volunteers within the organisation. Two young parents have gone onto university; three have got full time jobs and several have progressed into post-16 education. Parents' views are sought and an advocacy service is provided through the Parent Partnership.

3.2 Early Years provision promotes children's development and well-being and helps them meet early learning goals

Early Years provision is of a high standard: 100% of early years and child care providers inspected were rated satisfactory or better by Ofsted, Local Authority action is integrated within the Support and Challenge Strategy. Overall quality of childcare services is in line with national trends.

Recommendations by Ofsted to improve provision at the registration stage is being addressed through re-organisation of training to promote attendance at training before making an application for registration. School Improvement and Early Years work together to ensure that the [Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 links are secure](#).

Sufficient capacity of childcare places exists within Oldham. 100% of three and four year olds have access to a free part time place, and places in out-of-school and crèche provision have increased by 10%, 9% more than national rates. After-school care is being developed through the [Extended Schools and Children's Centre Strategy](#) with a framework being established. Currently 32% of primary schools are delivering sustainable wraparound childcare throughout the year, this compares favourably, nationally and regionally.

The Early Years Childcare Partnership (EYCP) is well represented by all sectors and drives forward the strategic direction of the Early Years Service (EYS).

3.3 Action is taken to ensure that educational provision 5-16 is of good quality

[Reading](#) and [writing](#) are priorities at Key Stage 1 and have become a LAA stretch target for 2009; a delivery strategy is in place with schools.

Key Stage 2 results in [maths level 4+](#) are above the national average, up 3% on 2004. [English](#) results are improving well and above comparator authorities. Further improvement is a priority and is a LAA stretch target. Results for BME pupils, whilst falling back slightly, have an upward trend. 20 schools are accessing Playing For Success at KS2 targeting underachieving boys to help improve their literacy and numeracy skills. There is one primary school with a notice to improve and no

schools in special measures. Effective differentiated challenge, support and monitoring systems are in place giving a clear picture of school vulnerability, enabling preventative action to be taken. This has been praised by the Senior Regional Director, National Strategy. The Primary Strategy is underpinned by partnership arrangements, with collaboratives commissioning work at a local level.

KS3 Maths and English results are in line with statistical neighbours, but behind national rates. [Maths](#) results rose significantly this year (by 3%) with [English](#) showing a moderate increase. [Science](#) had a substantial increase of 6.3% points in 2005 and decreased the gap to the national figure.

Over time gaps are being closed in terms of ethnicity and achievement. In 2005 English results for Pakistani pupils improved by 2.4%, compared to 0.7% for all pupils.

Although boys are outperformed by girls at English, the gap has steadily reduced from 18% in 2000 to 11% in 2005. The percentage of 5+ A*-C results at [Key Stage 4](#) made a step change in 2005, up by 6%. Performance is well above statistical neighbours, and closing on national figures.

Strategies are in place around Key Stage 3/4 [English and maths](#), including the Intensifying Support Programme in five schools. Key Stage 4 Study Plus will be in all secondary schools from September 2005. LAA Stretch Targets include improving Key Stage 4 English and maths.

There are cultural differences in achievement at Key Stage 4. However, Bangladeshi pupils in 2005 saw an improvement of 15% and, at 65%, is well above the national average. Pakistani pupils' results have stabilised this year and white pupils have improved performance (44.6% to 52.5%). Oldham is a member of the National Strategy, Minority Ethnic Achievement Pilot with five secondary schools involved. Gender differences are present but are declining and there is a Local Authority officer working in partnership to address boys' underachievement.

The 14-19 Strategy is embedded with diploma development progressing well. Significant curriculum diversification and opportunities for personalised and vocational learning pathways at Key Stage 4/5 have been developed through the 14-19 Partnership, with 10 schools offering DIDA courses and 15 schools offering BTEC programmes. There has been a 25% increase in take-up of vocational courses since 2001. Collaboration is strong with over 500 students enrolled in shared timetable provision. The Youth Service delivers targeted accredited programmes at Key Stage 4 in partnership with schools and the PRU, with 116 young people involved and 50 receiving accredited outcomes in 2005/6.

Children's Fund delivers projects that explore self-esteem in 27 primary schools, reaching 1400 children, and citizenship courses in 45 schools reaching 425 children.

The implementation of Primary School Improvement Partners (SIPs) is on track for January 2007 and secondary SIPs were in place from April 2006. All secondary schools have either achieved or are in the process of submitting specialist bids, and two have dual specialisms.

There are currently two secondary schools in Ofsted categories, one in 'Special Measures'. No schools have gone into Special Measures for over 18 months. Work with secondary schools is underpinned by a strong secondary partnership, which is jointly funded by the Local Authority and all secondary schools. The Partnership has a strategic plan with clear priorities and two secondary headteachers from this partnership work part-time as consultant Headteachers.

3.4 Children and young people are enabled and encouraged to attend and enjoy school and achieve highly

School place planning and admissions procedures are robust with the effectiveness of the Local Authority's planning of school places in the upper quartile nationally (2005 School Survey). Action plans exist for all schools with surplus places above thresholds (primary 10%, secondary 25%) and local levels are significantly lower than comparators, with no secondary schools above 25%.

The Co-ordinated Admission Scheme is implemented and all deadlines met. Parents' first preference of schools was met in 99.5% of secondary allocations and 96% of primary in 2005.

Oldham has two "priority schools" receiving high levels of support and challenge that are on trajectory to meet their attendance targets. The DfES has given the LA a green rating using their Red Amber Green (RAG) framework. In the School Survey, schools rated Local Authority support for attendance as in the upper quartile nationally. 2004/5 has seen the highest ever attendance rates for Oldham schools at 93%, and the highest ever secondary attendance (91.7%), above target of 91.6%. A drop in unauthorised absence has been sustained over three years to 0.75% and is now under the national average (0.79%). [This decrease has continued](#) although nationally figures are rising.

Target-setting meetings are held with all Oldham schools, incorporating the DfES free school meal quintile targets. Education Welfare support is agreed depending on individual levels of need. All secondary schools have electronic registration linked to a central system. Attendance Blitzes and

Audits are undertaken and support targeted where most needed. Statutory action is progressed, including Fixed Penalty Notices and 'Fast Track to Attendance.'

Clear and effective referral routes for identifying Children Missing Education are in place, which has been evidenced by an increase in referrals received from outside agencies.

3.5 Educational provision is made for children who do not attend school

The PRU offers alternative educational provision for children who do not attend school and was recently judged by Ofsted as 'good' with some outstanding features. An alternative provision brochure has been recently produced detailing 22 providers across the statutory, voluntary and community sectors. In 2005/06 notschool.net has been delivered to 94 Key Stage 4 students.

Behaviour Improvement Programme (BIP) schools, comprising 3 secondary and 16 primary make educational provision for excluded pupils from day one of any fixed term or permanent exclusion. In the period 2001-5, BIP secondary schools reduced the rate of permanent exclusions by 50%, with one school decreasing fixed term exclusions by 86.5%. In the same period, BIP primary schools decreased fixed term exclusions by 66.3%.

3.6 All children and young people can access a range of recreational activities including play and voluntary learning provision

Extended Services are brought together through the joint strategy of [Children's Centres and Extended Schools](#). Extended Services have developed considerably over the last year with 6 Children's Centres being built in areas of deprivation and 12 clusters of extended schools being developed in addition to a Full Service Extended School campus. The Partnership was given a green light from the DfES, exceeding national and regional neighbours.

A new Study Support Strategy was launched in 2006, developed in line with Extended Schools. As part of the strategy, "Playing for Success" (PFS) provides 20 hours of free study support for literacy, numeracy and ICT to 360 pupils per year. The capacity of PFS will be doubled with the opening of a second centre at Werneth Cricket club. The value added impact of PFS on pupils' numeracy and literacy skills was 31% for primary and 21% for secondary.

Over 1200 Gifted & Talented pupils from Years 7 to 11 access centrally organised enrichment and extension activities throughout an academic year.

Over 1500 pupils from across Oldham's 15 secondary schools and the two colleges have participated in Aimhigher activities. This is in partnership with the Neighbourhood Renewal Funded (NRF) Junior University Project.

The Outdoor and Environmental Education Service provides schools with opportunities to develop and enrich the curriculum outside the classroom. Four days of developmental adventure activities each week are delivered to pupils from the PRU, two secondary schools send groups of young people who are at risk of exclusion each week and 500 hours of activities per year are delivered to Youth Service groups. The Service works with the Schools Linking Project, by providing problem solving and team building activities to mixed ethnicity groups.

Oldham Music Service provides a range of after school activities with 950 children and young people each week. 75% of schools buy in the Music Service with over 6,500 children benefiting each week.

Sports and Recreation Development deliver Junior Sports Leader Awards and Community Sports Leader Awards courses in 10 secondary schools and in community settings. Unity In The Community, a community cohesion initiative utilising sport as a tool has become the focus of a LAA stretch target. All primary schools are now involved in the Mini-Games ensuring that younger children are exposed to and enjoy an increased variety of sporting opportunities.

Through Oldham Community and Voluntary Youth Services (OCVYS), take up of Millennium Volunteers has risen by 100% in the first quarter of 2006. Connexions organises the Positive Activities for Young People programme during school holidays and engages 240 young people at risk of being involved in crime.

Oldham Youth Inclusion Project (YIP), a prevention programme offered by the Youth Offending Service, has won the National Citizenship Award operated by the LSDA.

Greater Manchester Police and the Youth Service led "No Room For Racism" day. This event provided a safe environment for young people from across the different backgrounds to voice their feelings and concerns. It has brought together young people, practitioners and senior officers from GMP, Extended Schools, Groundwork, the Army Recruitment Service, First Choice Homes, Victim services and the Fire Service.

Oldham's Play Strategy is being developed in partnership, and builds on the locality approach of

Extended Services and the expressed needs of children young people and parents.

3.7 Children and young people that are looked after are helped to enjoy and achieve

All LAC children are guaranteed admission to first choice, nursery, primary and secondary schools at admission stages. A hard to place protocol ensures that LAC receive priority when wishing to change school placement. Two learning mentors have been appointed to target [LAC by specific year group around attainment](#) alongside designated teachers and carers. A dowry of £750 is attached to each LAC in secondary schools to enable additional support towards attainment and achievement.

'Social Access', a programme for LAC ran from January to December 2005. 39 young people engaged on the course, with 24 achieving at least one basic skills unit qualification at a higher level than their entry point. In addition, 4 young people achieved full basic skills qualifications. Foster and residential carers attend parent evenings and provide support to LAC in their education.

3.8 Children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are helped to enjoy and achieve

The Early Years SEN Service supports children and their parents and carers at Early Years Action and Action Plus. Children with complex needs are supported through Statements of SEN. The funding mechanisms for these processes are clear and allow for early intervention. In order to ensure that pupils are supported early, funding is available for individual named pupils without the need for a Statement. Mainstream settings are supported to make provision for young people with complex and long term learning difficulties and disabilities through the work of the SEN Service resulting in the percentage of pupils placed in special schools being below the national average, at 0.82%. No school has been judged to make less than satisfactory provision for children and young people with learning difficulties and disabilities in Ofsted reports.

Pupils with social emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) in the primary sector are supported by a flexible provision provided by Spring Brook School; the numbers of pupils permanently excluded is very low and the numbers of pupils placed on the roll of the SEBD primary school is very low. In the secondary sector pupils with SEBD are supported through the PRU, ensuring that permanent exclusion from mainstream school is low.

Holiday periods are a priority. Partnership work ensures that provision for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities during school holidays is co-ordinated. This is supported by the pooled budget from Children's Centres, Extended Schools and Children's Fund.

The Terence O'Grady Organisation provides social education and recreational opportunities for people with disabilities over 16. They have approximately 25 young people under 25 who access the weekly provision. The Youth Service employs two Youth Workers who are seconded to Terence O'Grady; similarly, there are two Youth Workers seconded to the Physically Handicapped and Able-Bodied (PHAB) Club which is also operating in youth centres.

5-course Meal Project is an integrated arts project for children and young people of all abilities, run at New Bridge School and engaging five primary, secondary and special schools across the locality. The launch involved 172 children and young people, 12 of whom had additional/special needs and is now being delivered after school twice a week.

Sports Development and Recreational Services deliver sports leadership courses through New Bridge School, offering comprehensive sporting provision to children and young people with disabilities, increasing the numbers participating in sport and physical activity. They also co-ordinate a local disability development group to ensure appropriate Borough-wide provision.

Early Years childcare is rated as satisfactory or better for support of children with SEN. The Local Authority School / College Transport Policy exceeds statutory requirements to provide support for all pupils with SEN who attend special schools.

Making a positive contribution

4.1 Children and young people are supported in developing socially and emotionally

The Child Dinosaur Programme has worked in schools with 1614 Foundation Stage children, aiming to increase children's emotional literacy, encourage pro-social behaviour, problem-solving skills and the development of anger management techniques through the use of puppets. Evaluation shows significant positive impact on self-esteem and well-being. Recent OfSTED inspections into schools making a positive contribution to the community, deemed 2 of our schools as 'outstanding' and almost all the others as 'good'. Oldham's Youth Service provision figures for 2005 show 5673 contacts (26%) surpassing the DfES target.

A co-ordinated approach to parenting is developing, with the creation of a Borough-wide parenting strategy and multi-agency conference. The survival skills programme has worked with 39 parents exhibiting “significant impact across the five outcomes”. Dads and male carers are now being targeted to participate.

Oldham continues to excel in its work around community cohesion; as Cattle states in his latest report, “few cities, towns and districts in other parts have done as much as Oldham in seeking to build community cohesion”. He was also “impressed by the effort, thought and resources invested by Oldham MBC, the Oldham Partnership and other stakeholders in responding to the many challenges identified in reports on the causes of the disturbances that took place in Oldham in 2001.” Peacemaker and VCS partners work in schools, transforming classrooms into places where children can safely explore the challenges of diversity through the Tell It Like It Is Project. The Youth Service engaged 1700 young people in seven Borough-wide events around cultural diversity and the Music Service has also developed an Asian songbook for school use. 99% of Oldham schools were judged ‘satisfactory’ or ‘better’ around cultural development in OfSTED inspections. 20 young people have been involved in the launch of ‘No Room For Racism in Schools’ and packs have been distributed to all Oldham schools.

The Shared Futures Project has been developed in conjunction with the Spirit of Enniskillen Trust promoting opportunities for 14-19 year olds to develop skills, knowledge and positive attitudes in youth leadership, active citizenship, emotional intelligence and community cohesion, involving 150 students from Oldham's schools. This builds on the work done since the civil disturbances.

Unity in the Community, an after school initiative, brings together different communities in a fun and safe environment. 89% pupils made new friends from different schools, one young person commented, “I feel happy because you know what people are like from different backgrounds”.

Racist incident reporting procedures have been reviewed, improving the quality of data. 294 racist incidents have been reported by schools and partners, up from 258 reports last academic year. Of this number 10 were considered to be at a level serious enough to be reported to the Police for further investigation, down from 15 last year. Specific data has helped identify trends in schools enabling targeted work to take place. Race equality groups have been set up in schools to help [counter racist bullying in the school](#).

Oldham Rugby League players deliver programmes in schools and actively condemn bullying. Impacts include reported improvement in behaviour and pupils sharing problems more openly

4.2 Children and young people, particularly those from vulnerable groups, are supported in managing challenges and responding to changes in their lives

Joint funding has enabled Oldham's Citizen's Advice Bureau and Peacemaker, to work in partnership to examine how refugees and asylum seeking children relate to extended schools and other local services. This will result in more accessible services for this group, enabling swift and easy referral to targeted services.

Oldham Young Carers, in partnership with other organisations, provide access and information, ensuring that the most vulnerable young carers are targeted and prioritised. 112 young carers have been engaged over the past 12 months. Oldham Young Carers work closely with the Youth Service and other organisations to ensure that identified needs can be supported. The number of schools taking part in school linking has risen to 50 with solid impacts being reported.

Oldham has developed targeted work and preventative work with children and young people around domestic violence. A children's domestic violence counsellor has worked with 77 children in the last year. Family crisis has worked with 158 children undertaking preventative work around domestic violence; they create a safe space for children to explore their feelings and examine why domestic violence occurs. Impacts include improvement in children's well-being, improved social skills and anger management. This work has been recognised for its innovation. CAMHS funds a domestic violence worker, working specifically with BME communities.

4.3 Children and young people are encouraged to participate in decision making and supporting the community

In phase one of the [needs analysis](#) the Local Authority worked with over 3000 children and young people in their localities, to ascertain their needs in relation to the five outcomes. This work has underpinned the development of Oldham's LAA and CYPP, the development of Children's Centres and provided the foundation for the extended schools commissioning strategy. This work has received commendation from the MJ achievement awards in best achievements in children's services

and we are now working with other councils to share our good practice. Phase two of the needs analysis is now being undertaken to work with young people to find out how they feel services can deliver against the needs they have identified. This work will underpin the integrated commissioning strategy and the development of locality-based needs led service provision. Young people have been involved not only as consultees but also as consultants in this work.

Regular consultation is undertaken in all youth centres through Youth Council committees. At present there are 40 young people elected onto the Borough Youth Council who meet regularly with elected members. Their future plans include the development of a Youth Strategy and to be the decision-making group around the Youth Opportunities Fund. Young people are trained as peer inspectors to undertake internal inspections of The Youth Service; all youth centres will have undergone this peer inspection by 2006. Young people have been involved in a number of senior appointments including the recruitment of the Executive Director of Children's Services.

4.4 Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour by children and young people

Oldham's multi-agency response to reducing anti-social behaviour and offending is embedding itself. Services including the Police, Youth Service and Community Safety Unit area action teams work closely to provide a holistic response in order to reduce both incidences of [youth nuisance](#) and adult perceptions. Oldham Police data, through GMAC, is used to identify hotspots, which are targeted by detached youth workers enabling more positive relationships to be built between the Police, community and young people, resulting in a positive impact around dispersal activity.

Since 2003, over 400 acceptable behaviour contracts (ABCs) have been arranged, with a 97% attendance rate recorded. In November 2005 a total of 147 anti-social behaviour orders (ASBO) are in place of which 47% were under 17 years. Members of the Anti-Social Behaviour Team work on a township level. The ASBO is seen as a trigger to initiate a multi-agency response to tackle the root causes of individual behaviour. The YOS works in partnership with the Community Safety Unit to identify those at risk of ASBOs and these young people are offered a range of provision. This work will be enhanced under the YOS preventative strategy with a 'virtual multi-agency' team providing more holistic targeted support.

4.5 [Action is taken to prevent offending and to reduce re-offending](#) by children and young people

Horizons, the Youth Inclusion Support Panel (YISP), has worked with 33 families over the year engaging with 37 children aged 8-13 and has moved to a Family Group Conference focus to solutions. The entry rate of those young people into the criminal justice system is 5.4%; which will be used as a baseline figure. There have been improvements reported by families and by other agencies. Improvements have been achieved year on year around the [prevention of first time entrants](#) into the CJS and all KPI targets have been achieved around prevention. Over the past year, the youth inclusion projects (YIPs) have seen some solid successes, offering 29 new interventions with 7 being accredited, resulting in 29 young people gaining qualifications. 238 young people have engaged with the YIP in the past year including 14 LAC and the average reduction in arrests within the target groups was 67.8%. The average number of young people engaged in suitable ETE for the year was 95.5%. The YIP has strong links with the community and has worked in partnership with NDC conducting regular outreach in targeted areas. Outreach began in October 2005, during the period July-Sept there were 125 calls re youth nuisance. This was reduced to 65 calls (a reduction of 52.5%) in the period following the outreach. DTO sentences have been reduced to 6% and remands to 0%. Mental health support in the YOS is excellent with 100% of assessments on acute cases completed within 5 days.

Oldham YOS, in partnership with GMP and the CSU are aligning organisation resources under the Prolific and Other Priority Offender Strategy to increase the supervision and surveillance of 50 young people from high crime areas to prevent offending.

Oldham has a wide range of early engagement and diversionary programmes. Kickstart provides formal accredited programmes designed to engage young people who are at risk of offending. 435 young people attended this provision in the last year of which 75% either continued within education or found employment. Oldham's PRU works to assist young people who have been permanently excluded or at risk of being excluded in accessing support. The PRU was awarded a Grade 1 (outstanding) for its elements of community partnership work, during its recent OfSTED inspection.

4.6 Children and young people who are looked after are helped to make a positive

contribution

As part of the large consultation, Oldham is working with LAC, children in foster care and care leavers to enable them to talk about their experience of services, what their specific needs are and how services can meet those needs.

All children on the child protection register and LAC have a worker to support them to cope with traumatic events in their lives and engage other services to respond. A dedicated transition conference has been held to enable young people with SEN and disabilities to meet with post-16 workers. There is a well-developed buddying scheme for LAC, ensuring mentoring and support for those young people. This scheme also offers the opportunity to care leavers to enable them to develop their skills and abilities in buddying roles, which offers them experience that will enhance their future career opportunities.

Young people and foster carers sit on the children and young people's Corporate Parenting Panel having direct involvement in the corporate parenting agenda, alongside elected members and senior officers. Children and young people will have direct input via a drama production to the Corporate Parenting Conference planned for the summer.

Specific targeted work is in place to work with LAC around offending. The buddying scheme provides support and information aiming to [reduce numbers of LAC involved in anti-social behaviour and offending](#). The final warning/reprimands and convictions of LAC is 2.5%, which has decreased from 3.2% last year, demonstrating significant progress and placing Oldham in the best performance banding. The YOS monitors the legal status of all young offenders via data received from Children's Services and also undertakes joint analyses around specific areas of interest such as offences occurring in Children's Homes. During October to December 2005, 13% of young offenders were previously identified as children in need and a further 4% as a looked after child. Plans are in place to jointly manage all LAC young people between children's services and the YOS. A proportion of the LPSA pump-priming grant has been utilised to train residential care workers in restorative justice and to provide individual packages of support to those most at risk of offending/re-offending.

There are robust complaints procedures in place and complaints are monitored. Action plans are produced and services are improved as an outcome of learning from complaints. Oldham has an advocacy service provided by an independent organisation and is actively considering opportunities in respect of regional commissioning around this area.

4.7 Children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities are helped to make a positive contribution

Specific work with children with disabilities and SEN has been an integral part of Oldham's consultation work, looking directly at services delivering to this group, and how they think these services can be improved and integrated. This work will inform future service developments and joint commissioning priorities.

The Local Authority operates a multi-agency response to transition, with embedded pathways between children and adult services, ensuring a smooth supported transition for those children with SEN and disabilities.

Children's Centres, Extended Schools and Children's Fund have created a pooled budget in order to support accessibility to extended services for specific groups of children and young people, namely children with disabilities, NEET, LAC and those not attending school.

Following a review, an integrated team has been established, led by the PCT, taking forward the development of integrated services for CWD. A working group of parents of children with disabilities has been established and is informing the implementation plan. This team is linked to the Children's assessment team to ensure effective and appropriate response to disability issues identified in mainstream assessments. The team also facilitates specialist respite and short break provision. The multi-agency team has been piloting a programme to improve the practice in the recruitment of BME carers for short breaks for CWD. The toolkit "Process for Change" has had a national launch.

A dedicated tri-partite funded transitions worker facilitates transition to adult services for children and young people with disabilities and also ensures that every student in Year 13 with special needs has a holistic transition plan to adult life. A special event was held with Year 10s with complex needs bringing them together with post-16 providers to allow their views on future needs to be heard. This will enable them to make positive post-16 choices.

Achieving economic well-being**5.1 Action is taken by partners to support families in maximising their economic well-being**

The 6,656 current child care places comprise 1,563 childminders, 2,606 full day care places and 2,487 out of school places, which evidences a steady increase over the past 2 years. A target to [expand provision to 7,018 by 2008](#) is included in the LAA. 32% of Oldham's schools are delivering wraparound childcare from 8am-6pm.

The penetration rate is 27% (1 registered place to 3.7 children aged 0-8 years). Currently 100% of 4 year olds and 97% of 3 year olds access statutory nursery education entitlement. Following the active promotion of the Family Information Service, enquiries increased from 14,567 (2004/5) to 41,045 (2005/6).

A need to ensure access to registered childcare provision by BME communities has been identified and now user representation reflects the ethnic mix with 18% from these communities. The availability of affordable places, particularly to meet the needs of low income families and those children with SEN is actively promoted within Oldham.

There is co-ordinated joint working between Children's Information Service and Job Centre Plus (JC+) covering:

- shared marketing events;
- Children's Information Service actively promote tax credits and signpost to JC+;
- information given at mandatory work focused interviews by JC+ staff;
- JC+ advisers fast track tax credit applications; and
- children and young people have free access to libraries and museums, subsidised access to Oldham Community Leisure.

5.2 Young people 11–19 are helped to prepare for working life

Based on the limited number of OfSTED school inspections, "Enterprise" and "self confidence and self esteem" are below statistical neighbours and the national rate. Steps are being taken to improve these elements through the appointment of an Enterprise Co-ordinator to support schools in developing appropriate enterprise curriculum with the compulsory 'Work-related learning' curriculum. Self-confidence and esteem are key elements of the 'emotional well-being' measure in Healthy Schools Standards, which is targeted for rapid expansion during 2006/7. HSS is a stretch target in the LAA and the Children & Young People's Partnership Executive has agreed that pump priming funding will be used to employ an additional HSS adviser.

100% of Key Stage 4 pupils receive careers education. Provision in Key Stage 3 is still mixed and recent secondary school inspections suggest overall weakness in this area compared to statistical neighbours. Connexions has committed to fund a full-time careers education and work-related curriculum consultant to address this issue. An on-line 14–19 District Opportunity prospectus is under development and On-Line Progress File continue to expand with Oldham leading a regional collaborative, which is on track to be launched in September 2006.

The 16-18 [NEET rate](#) of 7.4% (February 2006) is the second lowest in Greater Manchester, whose average is 9.3%. A LAA stretch target has been agreed to reduce 16-18 NEET rate to 5.8% by 2008-09 with a condition to reduce the ward with the highest NEET rate from 15.5% to 10.5%

89.8% of 16-18 year olds were in EET (December 2005) compared with an average of 88.2% for Greater Manchester. Similarly 79.3% were identified as being 'in learning' compared to a Greater Manchester average of 76.5%.

Outcomes at 16 for 2005 school leavers were particularly promising with staying-on rates increasing by 4.2%. The NEET rate for Year 11 leavers fell by 15.8% to the lowest recorded level in the last 25 years and 66% of students entering further education accessed Level 3 courses. Participation in funded learning and jobs with recognised training reached an all time high at 87.7%.

BME Year 11 leavers achieve higher participation rates than white pupils. There is some evidence of stereotypical choices in further education and under-participating in work-based learning by BME groups, which is being addressed by the local implementation of the Gender Equality-Race Inclusion Project (GERI), a recently EU-funded project led by Oldham.

The percentage of teenage parents in [EET](#) is currently 46.3% (Greater Manchester average is 35.7%), with an LAA target of 50% by 2008/9.

Oldham has traditionally consistently achieved high ETE rates of 90%+ for young offenders, although recently this has slipped to 86%. The YOS and Connexions are co-located and are working collaboratively to restore the rate to previous high standards.

Students who completed Key Stage 4 vocational provision at The Oldham College in 2005 had learning participation rates of 92% compared with the Borough average of 88% for all Year 11

leavers. Similarly the NEET rate for this cohort was only 3.6% compared with a Borough average of 6.9%. Collaborative curriculum delivers external provision to 500 pupils from across 15 secondary schools and includes FE/ CLC/ school/ WBL provider provision. There has been a major increase in school internal vocational curriculum provision at Level 1 and 2 supported by curriculum deputy/ 14-19 networks.

Entry to Higher Education is below national and regional averages. The NRF-funded Junior University programme and Aimhigher (both targeting potential HE entrants from non-traditional backgrounds) have had a significant impact on progression and retention in post-16 learning. These initiatives alongside the rapid development and expansion of University Centre Oldham will translate into a significant rise in HE entrants from the Borough.

5.3 Action is taken to ensure that 14–19 education and training is planned and delivered in a coordinated way, and to ensure that education and training (16–19) is of good quality*

The Council, LSC and partners meet frequently through the auspices of a well-established and well-regarded Local Learning Partnership (LLP), which has a clear focus on 14-19 learning. 14–19 provision is established in response to an annual audit of all pupil/ school / community needs through a 14-19 collaborative partnership (a sub-group of the LLP), and a target to establish five new diplomas by 2008 has been set. Ofsted data indicates that average points scores for schools with sixth forms are above statistical neighbour and national standards.

A recent inspection of The Oldham College judged teaching, learning and student outcomes outstanding in two curriculum areas, good in five and satisfactory in four. WBL was judged satisfactory and E2E good. Oldham Sixth Form College inspection found the teaching, learning and student outcomes outstanding in four curriculum areas and good in five. For Level 3 courses the retention and pass rate (and [particularly for vocational courses](#)) consistently exceeds national average for sixth form colleges.

Recent ALI inspections of major local work-based learning providers produce findings which are outstanding, good or satisfactory.

5.4 Community regeneration initiatives address the needs of children and young people

Regeneration funding has traditionally tackled priority outcomes for children and young people, including educational improvement at foundation and Key Stages 1-5. There has been considerable investment through NRF and Children's Fund linked to prevention. Other funding streams working to improve outcomes for children and young people include Sure Start, HMR, NDC and SRB6.

Over £5million is targeted at areas of high deprivation with projects covering: Children's Fund support school improvement and the needs analysis work, Junior University and community consultation is funded through NRF and NDC support the Families First Project, children and family learning and a community involvement worker.

The joint commissioning group is examining how we best target regeneration funding to meet Oldham's priorities for children and young people.

5.5 Action is taken to ensure that young people have decent housing

A specific LAA sub-set for housing has been agreed as part of the Safer & Stronger Communities block, including the reduction of vulnerable families living in non-decent private sector homes from a baseline of [60% to 35% in 2008/9](#).

The use of temporary accommodation for families with children and young people is low with only 39 families in 2004/5; again this is a stretch target to reduce by 50% by 2010.

The specific needs of teenage parents for supported accommodation has been recognised leading to the development of a range of services which includes supported housing and floating support. The Young People's Housing Strategy recommends the establishment of additional core provision to meet the specific needs of BME communities.

5.6 Children and young people who are looked after are helped to achieve economic well-being*

95% of LAC over 15 years of age have pathway plans and, as appropriate, transition plans which they have been involved in drawing up, which are regularly reviewed with a commitment to increase this to 100% in 2006/7. Mentoring Project for care leavers awarded Good Practice award by Princes Trust (March 2006)

Employability Officer post established within After Care Team and strong partnership working between After Care Team and Connexions resulted in 66% of care leavers in EET. After care duty

team co-located with Connexions in January 2006. The percentage of LAC of schools age with a personal education plan (PEP), has risen from 60.9% to 65.3% over the course of the year. Following proactive targeting, LAC are currently undertaking work placements within the Council. LAC participated in 'Bring Your Daughters To Work Day' supported by a number of corporate parenting partners.

5.7 Children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities are helped to achieve economic well-being*

The PAF CF/E67 indicates that Oldham's performance is acceptable. The only area for improvement for Economic Well-being was identified in the 2005 APA relating to the provision of direct payments for parents of children with disabilities. Oldham is on track to meet its target in relation to numbers of families with CWD accessing direct payments. Welfare benefits support services are proactively working with young people with disabilities at the point of transition to ensure they are taking up their eligibility for benefits.

PART D The management of services for children and young people

6.1 Ambition

a) There are clear and challenging ambitions for the area

The Council and its partners share and lead a clear and ambitious vision for the future delivery of services for children and young people. These ambitions are set out in the Borough's Community Strategy, underpinned by its Children and Young People's Plan (attached) and reinforced through its LAA: ostensibly though not exclusively through the Children and Young People's Block. Children and young people is a theme that runs through each of the Blocks of Oldham's LAA.

b) Ambitions are based on a shared understanding of local needs amongst partner organisations and with the community

Oldham's Community Strategy has been developed with clear outcome targets based on a robust analysis of need, and shared with the people of Oldham through extensive consultation during the award-winning "Oldham Beyond" project. The priorities for children and young people have been driven by the outcomes of the award-winning Needs Analysis described in the 'Making a Positive Contribution Statement'. These findings have been communicated extensively to inform the strategic direction of all partners and to map and focus service delivery.

6.2 Prioritisation

a) There are clear and robust priorities within the ambitions for the area

The Community Strategy has eight priorities to be addressed over the next three to five years. The Council's Corporate Plan had ten priorities for achievement last year. This year there are twelve, three of which are under the theme of realising the potential of children, young people and families. Appropriate 'stretch targets' are made explicit within the LAA, as agreed between the Oldham Partnership (Local Strategic Partnership) and Government Office North West, who have commended Oldham's LAA. 25% of the challenging stretch targets are focused on children & young people.

The emerging priorities from the Needs Analysis will underpin Oldham's joint commissioning strategy and the development of an effective preventative strategy, which will be agreed and owned by Oldham's Children and Young People's Partnership. Community cohesion is the number one priority for the Borough and so this runs through much of our work, as evidenced in Part C of this self-assessment.

b) There is a robust strategy to deliver the priorities

Oldham's Children and Young People's Plan and LAA contain high-level action plans whose delivery will lead to improved outcomes for the Borough's children and young people. These action plans are based on a detailed and robust analysis of need, and contain a current baseline with SMART targets for improvement. The lead partner agencies are specified and clear links are made to other strategic, service delivery or improvement plans. Detailed Service Improvement Plans (SIPs) underpin these high-level plans, setting out specific actions and resource requirements.

Oldham's approach to service delivery and performance improvement is underpinned by its ability to target resources effectively, governed by a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The MTFS is based upon the principle of 'front line first', and ensures that resources are directed towards identified priorities and areas of need. A current example is the re-focussing of resources to support the return

of the most expensive out of Borough placements to within the Borough. This has enabled investment in the quality of local provision and a reduction in unit costs, thereby improving value for money and outcomes for children and young people. In line with the MTFs, each service manager has been allocated a budget for 2006/7 and 2007/8, so that service delivery and development can be planned over a two-year period. This provides managers with the opportunity to allocate resources more flexibly, in line with their SIPs: over/underspends can be planned and spent on a medium-term basis. Oldham has an integrated approach to differentiated challenge and support which ensures maximum impact of school interventions. The resource, evaluation and planning process brings together data and information relating to each school. This enables a targeted approach to school improvement in both secondary and primary schools.

c) Robust action is taken to deliver the strategy

Fieldwork Services provide safe and effective referral, assessment and case planning processes, ensuring that children in need, including children in need of protection, are able to access services as appropriate. The timeliness of placing children for adoption has remained an area of excellent performance because of robust performance management and quality assurance arrangements.

The Council's special educational needs resourcing strategy, through a three-tiered approach, ensures that children's needs are identified at an early stage, leading to early intervention. Consequently, the Authority has a very low statementing rate, leading to improved outcomes for children and increased value for money.

The Children's Complex Cases Panel is a partnership across statutory children's services, which ensures that children and young people with complex needs are considered by multi-agency teams at assessment and planning stages. This enables multi-agency decision-making regarding support services, placements and funding to be made holistically and in a timely manner, ensuring that assessed needs can be met.

The strategy for delivery of [Children's Centres and Extended schools centres](#) in Oldham is based on the concept of delivery of community centred integrated services to achieve high standards in children's learning embracing family support and health services. The six centres in phase one are clearly focused on the most disadvantaged areas of Oldham. In phase two eight centres will be open taking forward the concept of locally based programmes identified through community needs analysis. The extended school strategy is based on the complementarity of the offer made from schools which is above the core business of teaching the curriculum. To this end extended schools are operating in clusters embracing both targeted and universal provision.

6.3 Capacity

a) There is clear accountability and decision-making to support service delivery and improvement

Oldham's Children and Young People's Partnership, through its [governance structures](#), ensures that all local partners co-operate as defined in the Children Act 2004. These structures are described in Part B of this statement. Through the Children and Young People's Plan and LAA, respective roles and responsibilities are made explicit. Effective performance management arrangements ensure that services are aligned, synergy is achieved and improved outcomes are delivered coherently.

The Executive Director of Services for Children, Young People and Families took up post on 20th March, 2006. Together with the Lead Member, the Executive Director provides the strategic lead for the Council's services; both serve on the Children and Young People's Partnership Executive Board, chaired by the Council's Chief Executive. The Executive Director and Lead Member are clear about their responsibilities and discharge them fully. Since appointment, the Executive Director has reviewed the role of the Children and Young People's Partnership. The governance arrangements will be strengthened further through the establishment of: an Executive Board, with representation at Chief Executive level, to be the body accountable for ensuring that the five outcomes are met; a Stakeholder Group, with representation from all partners and stakeholders, including children, young people, parents, carers, providers and elected Members, to inform strategy and policy; a Joint Leadership Team, with representation from lead operational managers, responsible for the development and implementation of integrated strategy and delivery; and Thematic Working Groups, with cross-service/agency membership and responsibility for delivering the main strands of the Children Act and Every Child Matters agenda. This multi-layered and multi-faceted structure will result in a holistic and integrated approach, ensuring that decisions and actions are well-informed and appropriate, timely, resourced effectively and owned by all partners, leading to more effective outcomes for Oldham's children and young people. Through the continuing development of Oldham's

Children and Young People's Partnership, the Borough has adopted a children's trust approach. The Partnership has a shared vision for localised, integrated and personalised service delivery, set out in a jointly agreed plan.

b) Capacity is used efficiently and effectively and is developed to deliver ambitions, priorities and value for money

Oldham's Children and Young People's Partnership is committed to high quality and value for money services. Through the performance management framework described below, service performance and cost are systematically reviewed and challenged. Benchmarking with statistical neighbours is undertaken; analysis of Oldham's spending pattern shows a mixed but improving picture. Where value for money concerns are identified, action plans are drawn up and their delivery is monitored and evaluated.

A [Children's Integrated Commissioning Group](#) has been established, comprising representatives of the partner agencies. A Joint Commissioning Manager has been appointed and is supporting the development of a joint commissioning strategy, which will be underpinned by the Borough-wide Needs Analysis of children and young people described earlier. On behalf of the Children and Young People's Partnership, the Children's Integrated Commissioning Group has reviewed a range of externally funded projects to ensure that they align with the Children and Young People's Plan. This has led to the re-focusing of resources and activity towards agreed priorities.

The local VCF and independent sectors actively contribute to the Children and Young People's Partnership and have played an integral part in the development of the Children and Young People's Plan and the LAA. A number of services and projects are commissioned from the sectors e.g. Positive Steps Oldham, Brook Advisory Service and Children's Society. Peacemaker, The Children's Society and Street College from the voluntary and community sector worked with Oldham Children's Fund to undertake phase one of Oldham's Needs Analysis.

The benefits of pooling resources with key partners to improve the quality of service and outcomes to children and young people has been recognised locally: a Life Chances Team for LAC has been established, with staff from education, health and social care working together to improve outcomes for LAC; and the CAMHS grant is pooled with the Primary Care Trust and allocated according to need via a joint commissioning group. More recently, the LAA has provided the vehicle for aligning and pooling £15 million to improve outcomes for children and young people.

Oldham's Children and Young People's Partnership has overseen the production of a [Children's Workforce Strategy](#), aimed at ensuring that the local children's workforce is appropriately skilled to deliver the priorities contained within the Children and Young People's Plan. The Children's Workforce Strategy: contains robust baseline workforce data; outlines future skills needs; and includes a gap analysis, both of current and future skill requirements. The Field Social Work Service and Family Support Services have been reviewed, and are being integrated through a workforce development and career planning structure. This will lead to improved recruitment to posts at all levels, ensuring the availability of staff with the skills, knowledge and confidence to deliver the range of services required, and offering a clear career pathway from unqualified entrants to qualified social workers and managers. This will lead to the recruitment of Oldham's first six trainee social workers in partnership with University College Oldham / Huddersfield University. Through various strategies led by the Workforce Development Service, focussed around the principle of 'grow your own', there has been: a significant reduction in teacher vacancies; and significant numbers of Higher Level Teaching Assistant and Graduate Teacher Programme successes.

c) The needs of individual children, young people and their families are effectively identified, recorded and communicated

The priorities for children and young people have been driven by the outcomes of the award-winning Needs Analysis described in the 'Making a Positive Contribution Statement' – page 14 refers. As described earlier, these findings have been communicated extensively to inform the strategic direction of all partners and to map and focus service delivery. More specifically, family group conferencing has been commissioned through the Children's Fund, putting children, young people and families at the heart of their own decision-making and solution development. A dedicated children's assessment team provides a single point of access for children in need, including children in need of protection, and this service has been judged as safe and effective through the regulatory inspection process. Specialist assessments of children with disabilities are undertaken through the children's disability service which includes both health and social care professionals. Children with complex needs are benefiting from multi agency assessments which inform planning and decision

making for individual children. The 'Outcomes Driving Commissioning' approach to assessment and care planning is currently being piloted and front line staff and managers are being trained in using the tool. Good progress is being made towards implementing [CAF](#). All partner agencies have now identified CAF Change Agents who will lead on implementation at operational and strategic levels within each organisation and the independent and voluntary sectors have been engaged in this process.

Case file recording processes are in place and case file audits are well established. Children and families contribute fully to assessments, care planning and reviews.

6.4 Performance management

a) There is a consistent, rigorous and open approach to performance management

The Oldham Business Planning Process ensures synergy between the planning cycles of the Council and its partners. The performance management framework ensures that there is a 'golden thread' that links individual's actions to their impact on Borough strategies and makes accountability explicit at every level of partner agencies. This ensures shared ownership between partners and supports delivery against the vision for children and young people in Oldham. The priorities contained in the Children and Young People's Plan are reflected in SIPs and appraisal targets are set with each individual. The performance management framework is reinforced through strong political and managerial leadership across health, education and social care, and high levels of accountability, with a named middle manager lead for all key performance indicators.

The role of children and young people in the performance management of services continues to develop. The Needs Analysis underpins the priority setting process and services are measured against the delivery of these priorities. Children and young people have been involved in a number of key appointments, most notably that of the Executive Director of Services for Children, Young People and Families. [Oldham's Active Involvement Strategy](#) has facilitated the training of young people as inspectors of local services, equipping them to conduct a peer inspection of Youth Service provision.

b) Partner organisations know how well they and each other are performing against planned outcomes

Through the shared performance management framework, performance information relevant to the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan is systematically shared, examined and challenged. This facilitates early identification and sharing of issues amongst partners, enabling a collective response and shared ownership of, and accountability for, necessary [corrective action](#).

As a large-scale commissioner and provider of services to children and young people, the quality of services offered must be balanced against the cost, ensuring value for money. Examples of work overseen by the Partnership include: the decision to commission Advanced Childcare, a private sector provider, to provide two six-place residential children's units at a unit cost significantly below the spot purchased price of similar placements, and lower than in-house unit costs; and the negotiation of contracts with our major Independent Foster Associate providers, resulting in reduced fees for long term placements.

c) Knowledge about performance is used to drive improvements in outcomes

As described above, the Partnership adopts a collective approach to monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the contribution that partner agencies make to the delivery of the Children and Young People's Plan. This enables the collective resources to be targeted at areas of need, ensuring timely improvements are achieved.

Close performance monitoring is undertaken within the service and this enables targeted action to be undertaken. In the past quarter for example performance on PAF A1 long-term stability of [LAC](#) has improved as a direct result of interventions, including the introduction of considering the need for long term foster placements at the Adoption and Permanence Panel.

Close monitoring of performance in relation to Direct Payments for disabled children has ensured targets are met month on month, thus enabling families to access timely and flexible support which meets need.