



Working together to reach your goals

Children and Young People's Plan Consultation 2009/11

Consultation Findings and Recommendations Report

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1. Introduction

The Partnership Delivery Team (PDT) Children and Young People's Services, Buckinghamshire County Council carried out a consultation during the summer months on behalf of Buckinghamshire Children and Young People's Trust.

The aim of the consultation was to gain the views of children and young people on the proposed priorities for the Children and Young People's Plan to run from 2009 to 2011. It also forms part of a wider consultation on the Children and Young People's Section of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA).

The JSNA identifies the current and future health and wellbeing needs and inequalities of the local population. Its key focus is:

- Understanding the current and future health and wellbeing needs of the population over both the short term (three to five years) to inform Local Area Agreements, and the longer term future (five to ten years) to take into account anticipated change in demography and infrastructure and so inform strategic planning.
- Commissioning services and interventions that will achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce inequalities.

The Children and Young People's Plan 2009/11 consultation took place at various events and locations throughout the county, during August and September 2008.

The work was funded through the Children and Young People's Trust Participation Plan.

2. Project Overview

Children and young people were asked to consider five proposed priorities for Buckinghamshire. These had been identified through a variety of methods including the Tell Us Survey 2007, Buckinghamshire County Council Residents Survey 2007 and service provider input.

Children and young people were asked to consider the below priorities and then asked if they agreed or disagreed with these.

- **Closing the Gap** – working with those children and young people that most need extra support - to improve their learning at school, and their understanding of how to be healthy and where to get help if they need it.
- **Transitions** – children and young people are given extra support at times of change in their lives, such as changing school or moving from primary to secondary school, or when family arrangements change (e.g. parents divorce or a parent dies).

- **Early Intervention and Prevention** – help is provided to children, young people and their families as soon problems begin, to stop things getting worse or out of control.
- **Family Focus** – providing individual help and support to a family to help them provide the best home for their children.
- **Children and young people and decision making** – the opinions and ideas of children and young people are used to make sure the services provided for them are what they really want.

Visits to the following events took place:

- St Pauls Church Hall and Garden, Wooburn Green
Childminders/Children's Centre 'Fun Day'
- Vale Park, Aylesbury - Aylesbury Vale District Council, 'Play Day'
- The Rye, High Wycombe – Children's Centre 'Picnic at the Rye'
- Cricket field, Aylesbury – Youth for Christ, 'Cricket Day'
- Queens Park Centre, Aylesbury – Youth and Community, 'Studio'
- Recreation Ground, Iver - L & Q Housing Trust/South Bucks District Council, 'Fun Day'
- Kingsbury Square, Aylesbury – Aylesbury Vale District Council / Sports Bucks 'Olympic Showcase Event'
- Southcourt, Aylesbury – Youth and Community, young people's event
- Micklefield, High Wycombe – Children's Centres / Home Housing Trust 'Community Fun Day'
- Desborough/Millbrook, High Wycombe – Children's Centres 'Teddy bears Picnic'
- Marlow – Longridge, outdoor activities
- Winslow Youth Centre, Winslow – Youth and Community, young people's event
- Amersham – Chiltern District Council/ Sports Bucks, 'Olympic Showcase Event'
- Bucks County Show
- High Wycombe, Outreach Youth Worker / Youth group
- Aylesbury – 'Aylesbury College Fresher's Fair'
- Burnham – Summer Sports Club

3. **Method**

A variety of consultation methods were used to capture children and young people's views, these included:

- Airspace – a video diary room.
- Web based survey.
- Face to face / Individual interviews with a staff member from PDT.

Airspace

Airspace is a mobile unit, it was used at events to ask children and young people their views. The children and young people were asked questions which were recorded on video and then analysed by the PDT.

Web based survey

The online survey was available through the Buckinghamshire County Council website and promoted to children and young people via the Participation Network and through the multi-agency Trust Participation Group.

Face to face / Individual interviews

Members of the PDT interviewed children and young people at several events/activity days. It was an alternative option for those children and young people with a preference for direct contact with a staff member.

The breakdown of participants engaged via the above methods is given below:

Method	Number of children and young people
Airspace	369
Web based survey	49
Face to face / Individual interviews	194
Total	612

Incentives

All fully completed surveys were entered into a prize draw. The prizes were:

1 st prize	£25
2 nd prize	£15
3 rd prize	£10

The offering of incentives was very important in encouraging children and young people to take part. The incentive was offered to participants for all three methods of engagement.

4. Key Findings

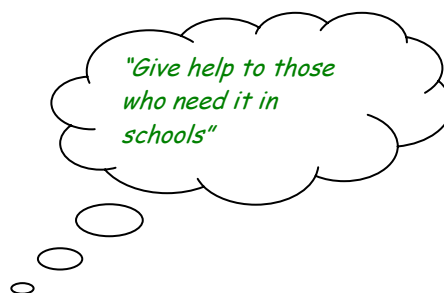
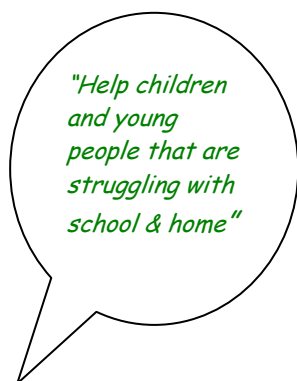
Closing the Gap

Children and young people strongly agreed that extra help to support those who most need it is key. Over 91% of those consulted agreed that this was an important priority.

Some of the key outcomes raised were around the type of support offered in school to benefit children and young people's learning. Children and young people also discussed the importance of a healthy school environment to help them to thrive both in and out of school. They also highlighted how information should be shared in the most appropriate and relevant way.

Education

Achieving at school is important for children and young people; they expressed concern about children and young people who need extra support with their Maths or English are able to access it. They felt that specially trained teachers are needed to support these children and young people who need it most.



With reference to support to teachers specifically, a young person said:

"More teachers and more help to help them learn more"

Children and Young People's Health

Awareness raising about issues such as healthy eating, dangers of eating disorders and information on exercise to combat obesity for early teens was seen as an important part of Personal Social and Health Education (PHSE) lessons.


Children also discussed the school environment; they feel that some schools could do more to improve school buildings. For example, some young people reported that school toilets are in a poor state.

"...our school has really bad bathrooms. Money should be spent on that as well as books and education"

"Improve their school if it is not very nice to look at"

The School Environment

Litter at school was also identified as a problem area in the school environment.



"Schools should have more care for rubbish"



"Make schools and towns litter free"

Children and young people who disagreed with this were generally of the view that it shouldn't just be disabled children that get support in schools.

Quote from boy aged 14

"Because you should help everyone not just people with disabilities"

Quote from girl aged 15yrs

"Minority shouldn't have the most help. Everyone is the same. One good thing would be to see extra rewards"

Sharing appropriate and relevant information

Quote from disabled young person, aged 12

"Give extra help and information to children who need it most"

Quote from boy aged 8 years

"Best help they need, when they want it"

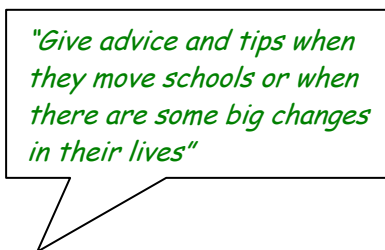
Bullying was raised as an area of concern for children and young people in and out of school. It is covered in the Early Intervention and Prevention Section of this report.

Transitions

91% of children and young people agreed with this priority. The two main reasons for their agreement was around the issue that they face in their lives with the change of moving from primary to secondary school. They also highlighted the importance of a good standard of support for children and young people when family arrangements breakdown.

Primary School to Secondary School

Transition from Primary to Secondary school was a cause for concern for many of the children and young people involved in this consultation. They felt that more support and advice is required especially in those first few weeks and months of starting a new school.



"Give advice and tips when they move schools or when there are some big changes in their lives"



"Help them if they feel lonely or left out"

A young person told us that moving from Primary to Secondary school can be quite a 'big jump' and that more support should be provided. The young person added:

"They give an induction day but could do with longer period to help them get used to a new school, new system, new lessons and stuff. We didn't get a chance to make new friends at secondary school. Maybe provide a meeting opportunity to meet people who are going to be in your class before you go to secondary"

Children and young people felt that the type of support should be consistent and available when they are most in need. One young person said:

"Make sure there is continued support for them. They (staff working with schools) should go into schools and get to know everyone and not just someone who turns up once and not appear again"

Family Breakdown

Children and young people also said that offering them support when family arrangements change is something they want. They said that if they are going through a difficult change in their family circumstances then help them to achieve to the best of their ability whilst in school.

"Help young people to the best of their ability when they are going through hard times"

A young girl told us:

"Help families when they break down especially when mums and dads are not very nice"

Finally many children and young people reported that if they need help at key times in their lives then they should know about the types of support on offer and where they go to access it.

"Let children go somewhere if they are really upset or are abused because sometimes they can't get to a phone for Childline"

"Help children and young people in divorces, offer them emotional support"

"If we have problems, make sure we know there is someone to talk to and we can get help"

Early Intervention and Prevention

Children and young people felt this was an important priority. They felt that Early Intervention and Prevention should be considered carefully before professionals get involved in a given situation. This response is evident through the results with over 87% of children and young people in agreement.

Children and young people involved in this consultation expressed how bullying is still a major issue for them growing up, they tell us why they need support.

When children and young people disagreed with early intervention and prevention it was because they felt that some families should be given the time as much as possible to sort it out themselves as a family. They felt that intervening too early with a family means interfering.

Quote from boy, 12 yrs

"Because I think that sometimes families could help their own children. They should be able to do it themselves because that's what parenting is all about"

Quote from girl, aged 12 yrs

"If you don't leave them time, they could sort it out themselves, think they should be given time and then if it doesn't work out help them"

Quote from girl aged 16yrs

"Interferes with tradition of family sorting out problems, but if support is needed then it's a good thing"

Quote from boy aged 14 yrs

"I have never heard of anyone stepping in and providing help so I can't answer this; things that are provided seem to be created on a basis of what the council think children and young people want or should want rather than what they actually want"

Bullying

This was a key topic for many of the children and young people expressing their opinion in this consultation.

They would like to see more support mechanisms and strategies for coping with getting bullied both in and out of school.

"If children and young people are getting bullied, there should be support in schools to help"

"There should be more help for the person being bullied"

The following quote is from a young person who felt they couldn't discuss the problem with their teacher:

"Stop people getting bullied. When I started Year 8 I got bullied. You are encouraged to tell your teacher, I was too scared to tell my teacher. I told my brother and sister to help me instead and stop the bullying"

Family Focus

Almost 90% of children and young people told us they agreed with this priority.

9% of those consulted decided they were unsure. The reason they were unsure or disagreed was because they were unsure about the type of support provided and they felt that some families do not wish to accept help outside the family. They thought that families can act responsibility themselves without help from professionals.



"You can not provide help for everyone who needs it"

When a young person was asked why he disagreed with this particular type of help and support he said:

"...because maybe families wouldn't appreciate 'randomers' interfering in their lives"

Children and Young People and Decision Making

Being involved in decision making was identified as an important priority by children and young people. The results show that 90% agreed with this statement. A small minority disagreed, with almost 10% of the children and young people consulted unsure about this.

A young person expressed their reasons for being unsure about this priority:

Quote from a 13 year old boy

"Young people have their say on minor things that need changing, but sometimes the bigger issues don't get priority"

Children and young people commented on why listening and taking their views into account is important:

"Ask on their views and what they want changed around where they live and things to do" (Girl, 7 yrs)

"Listen to them because quite often you don't get listened to if you are trying to say things. Our opinions count, they should count more than they do" (Boy 15 yrs)

"Listen to young people about stuff they like and maybe they should be able to do more sports and have more facilities for young people like me" (Boy 14 yrs)

"Get more involved at school. Teachers need to listen to them"

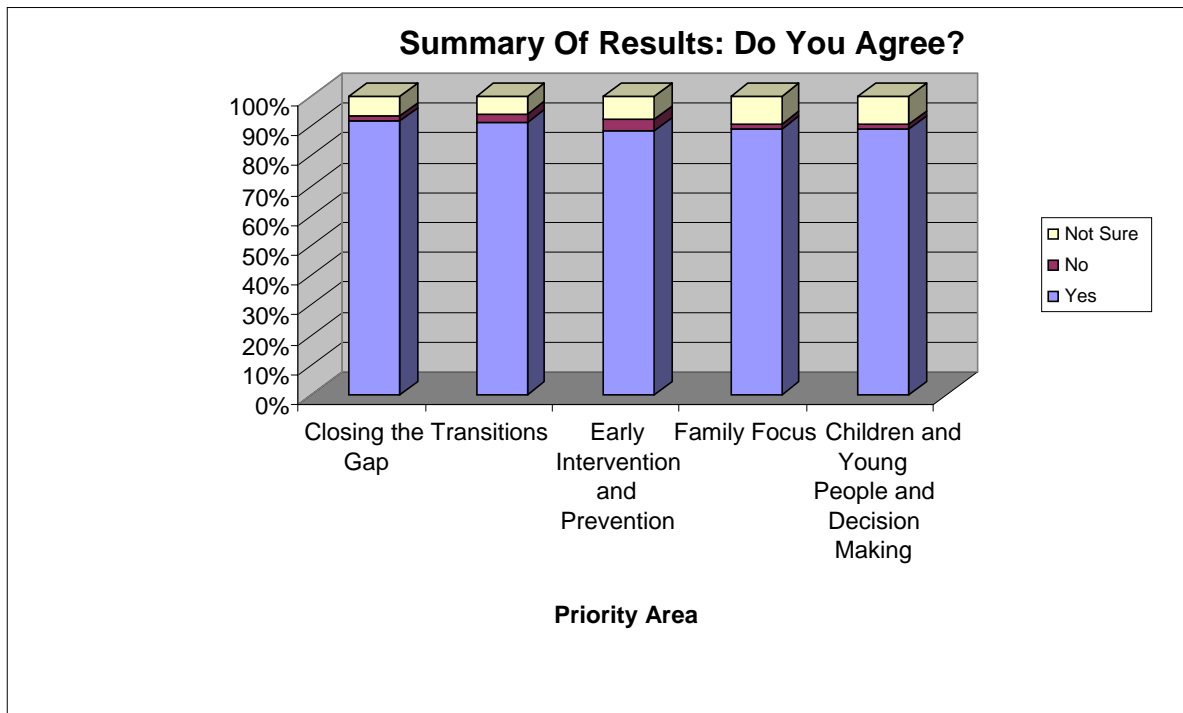
"I am not sure that the views of children with statements or differences are really heard or taken account of" Young Person with Learning Difficulties

Young people also suggested getting more involved in having a say about their community.

"Informative work would be good within the community about the community"

"Giving children and young people the opportunity to get involved in their community is a positive thing"

An overview of the results is given in the chart below:



Other Priorities for children and young people

Children and young people were asked to identify areas or gaps that were not covered in the priorities. We asked them the following question:

'What other things do you think we should do that are important for children and young people?'

It should be noted that some of the children and young people's concerns and issues raised here are already covered in the Children's and Young People's Section of the JSNA.

Below are some of the issues identified by children and young people.

Lifestyles

Improvements to play, youth and leisure facilities

Children told us that they were upset by negative behaviour in play spaces. For example, graffiti, bullying, swearing.

They thought parks and play spaces could be improved by adults monitoring these spaces.

Quote girl aged 12 yrs

"Less graffiti in parks, upsets you, don't want to play there"

Quote girl aged 10yrs

"Parks need monitoring, graffiti, teenagers in the parks swearing, need park keepers or number can call to get problems sorted out"

Quote from young person

"Can't stand in a group and talk, get moved on for waiting with your friends no trust"

Quote, boy aged 9 yrs

"More parks in the area, more places to go, youth clubs"

Sexual Health

It was felt that some young people are likely to be sexually active at younger ages and that they may not necessarily have the education or appropriate information about keeping safe.

Quote from a young person

"We should get more sex education, many young people are sexually active at a younger age than you get the actual education"

Substance misuse

Quote from girl aged 18 years

"Work with young people who take drugs, this I think will prevent crime, arguments and will stop school being disrupted for them, or other situations to break down"

Vulnerable Groups

Disabled Children

Quote from boy aged 12yrs

"help children with disabilities and children who don't know English, they should get extra help"

Quote boy aged 11 yrs

"Help people who have problems, people like me (disabled)"

Health

Road Traffic Accidents / Environmental issues and safety

Children and young people told us that traffic can be very heavy especially through villages. They said that this has a direct impact on where and when they can go and play.

Children said that people driving through their villages do not slow down to the 30mph speed limit. Young people expressed their concern about children playing out on the streets and in danger of fast traffic.

Quote girl aged 9 yrs

"Slow down cars, little children can't go to the park and that's why I can't"

Quote girl aged 12yrs

"Should be an area in the village where it's safe for them to walk or cycle and areas where they can play but not in big playgrounds because then gangs hang around and stuff. Also there shouldn't be so much traffic when there's lots of children playing"

Other

Information and publicity

Children and young people would like to know that the information that is available to them and their families is accessible and that they are kept informed.

Quote from 13yr old girl

"Always make sure children know what help and information is there, so that if there's something going on they can get involved if they want to. It's good if they know what is there and where to get it from"

Quote from 17 yr old girl

"Support parents to know exactly what services are there and available to them. Need better promoting and advertising"

Quote from 10 yr old boy

"Making information regarding county and district council initiated leisure and sporting activities more openly available to all. I get to do some activities because my Mum looks for leaflets and is emailed about some courses and holiday schemes etc. Other people, who would like to do them, don't get the chance because they don't get the information"

5. Evaluation

The views of 612 children and young people aged from three to 19 years were collected.

Ethnicity	Number participating
White	
White British	417
White Irish	4
Other White Group	17
Mixed Heritage	
White & Black Caribbean	27
White & Black African	3
White & Asian	4
Other Mixed Group	4
Asian or Asian British	
Indian	7
Pakistani	44
Bangladeshi	1
Other Asian Group	6
Black or Black British	
Caribbean	9
African	1
Other Black Group	
Chinese or Other	
Chinese	3
Other	9
not specified	56

Gender

Female	263
Male	324
Unspecified	26

Age range

Number of children/young people	Age
2	3 yrs
8	4 yrs
16	5 yrs
28	6 yrs
29	7 yrs
38	8 yrs
43	9 yrs
58	10 yrs
43	11 yrs
62	12 yrs
34	13 yrs
51	14 yrs
29	15 yrs
74	16 yrs
34	17 yrs
16	18 yrs
2	19 yrs*
2	21 yrs*
1	22 yrs*
Unspecified	42 C/YP

* Young people with specific needs

Disabled children and young people: 51
Non-disabled children and young people: 561

Disabilities declared included:

- ADHD
- Asthma
- Autism
- Downs Syndrome
- Dyspraxia
- Epilepsy
- Hearing Impaired
- Learning Difficulties
- Retinitis Pigmentosa
- Tourette's Syndrome
- Diabetes.

Postcode information

Participants were asked to provide their post code or the village/estate/area they lived in if they did not know this. As can be seen by the events list on page 4 a wide geographic area was covered.

This information has been used to map in detail specific areas where the participants are from and relate this to other relevant data such as ACORN (A Classification of Regional Neighbourhoods).

Respondents breakdown by ACORN Category

ACORN Category (Name)	Respondents	%
Wealthy Achievers	139	23%
Urban Prosperity	14	2%
Comfortably Off	141	23%
Moderate Means	64	10%
Hard Pressed	117	19%
Not matched / Classified	109	18%
Unknown	28	5%
Total	612	100%

ACORN profile of respondents compared to Bucks ACORN profile

ACORN Category (Name)	Respondent Profile	Bucks Profile	Profile Difference Ratio
	%	%	100 = Average
Wealthy Achievers	29%	46%	64
Urban Prosperity	3%	7%	42
Comfortably Off	30%	30%	99
Moderate Means	13%	8%	168
Hard Pressed	25%	9%	274
Total	100%	100%	100

Respondent profile based on 475 children. Not Matched / Classified and Unknown groups excluded.

Bucks profile based on all households in the county.

The difference ratio compares the proportion of respondents from each ACORN category to the actual proportion of households in each ACORN category. A ratio of 100 shows an equal proportion of respondents and households in the ACORN category, a ratio of 50 show that there are half the proportion of respondents than in the county, and a ratio of 200 shows that there are twice the proportion of respondents than in the county.

6. Recommendations

- The children and young people supported the five proposed priorities and therefore these should be progressed.
- The additional issues they contributed under the Other Priorities section in this report should be cross referenced with the children and young people's section of the JSNA to ensure they are addressed.
- The outcomes from this consultation should be fed back to children and young people.
- Information and feedback should be presented to the Children and Young People's Trust Board, the Children and Young People's Trust Delivery Group, and the Children and Young People's Trust Participation Group.

7. Conclusion

The consultation was a valuable opportunity for children and young people to express their opinions and concerns on the priorities within the Children and Young People's Plan 2009/11.

They confirmed the proposed priorities and suggested ways in which other improvements can be made.

These views will have real impact and influence on what is provided for them across Buckinghamshire through informing the development of the Children and Young People's Plan 2009/11.

8. For further information

Please contact Theresa Carlyle, Participation Worker, Partnership Delivery Team, Commissioning & Business Improvement, Children and Young People's Services, Buckinghamshire County Council.

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The Children and Young People's Trust would like to thank all those children and young people that took part in this valuable consultation.

9. Definition of Terms

Consultation

'The process of seeking the views of a range children in order to inform and improve decision making.' (*Children as Partners in Planning – Save the Children*)

Participation

'Participation is a term increasingly used by those working with children and young people to mean children and young people thinking for themselves, expressing their views effectively, and interacting in a positive way with other people; it means involving children in the decisions which affect their lives, the lives of their community and the larger society in which they live.'

(*Introduction to Policy on Children's Participation – Save the Children*)

Disability

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) defines a person with a disability as someone who has 'a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.'

Physical or mental impairment includes sensory impairments and also hidden impairments. In the DDA 'substantial' means 'more than minor or trivial'. 'Long-term' means has lasted or is likely to last more than 12 months.

Children and Young People's Trust Board

Led by local authorities, in Buckinghamshire the County Council (BCC), their function is to commission, plan, fund and deliver a significant number of children and young people's services. Underpinning their role should be a joint commissioning function which is expected to enhance integration in service delivery and thereby provide better services for children, young people and their families.

Children and Young People's Plan

This is the main delivery mechanism for most multi-agency children and young people's projects. The outcomes are grouped by key priority and have leads from across a number of organisations. They report to the Children and Young People's Trust Board.