

Foreword

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Hertfordshire  
County of Opportunity  
Hertfordshire County Council's  
**Plan for Children  
& Young People  
2018 - 21**



*A county that works for children, young people and families*



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# Foreword

Hertfordshire's Plan for Children and Young People presents more detail about the priorities for children, young people and their families outlined in Hertfordshire County Council's Corporate Plan.

Part of the vision for Hertfordshire is to give every child, young person and their family the opportunity to live happy and fulfilling lives. This is underpinned by four ambitions which shape the work of the whole County Council, the: Opportunity to Thrive; Opportunity to Prosper; Opportunity to be Healthy and Safe; and Opportunity to Take Part. More specifically, the County Council in its role as a Corporate Parent for those children and young people who are in care or recently left care is committed to ensuring they feel safe, well cared for and supported to achieve their full potential.

These ambitions define the work of Children's Services. The Service is part of the Hertfordshire system working for the benefit of children, young people, their families and communities.

We are supported by other departments within the County Council and partners such as the local district and borough councils, the health service, schools, police and the voluntary and community sector. Partnership working is essential in delivering effective services to all communities across Hertfordshire.

To achieve the Hertfordshire vision and ambitions for children, young people and their families, the County Council will work in a way that:

- Is open, honest and ethical;
- Identifies and addresses issues early;
- Values diversity, addresses inequality and supports the most vulnerable;
- Encourages commercial thinking and embraces digital opportunities to deliver services even more innovatively.

High quality schools and settings in Hertfordshire provide a high level of teaching from an early age which equip our children and young people for the future whatever their aspirations. However, whilst Hertfordshire is indeed a 'county of opportunity' for many, for some families and communities faced with generational issues and special educational needs and disabilities, accessing those opportunities is often hard to achieve.

This three year plan will build on what we are already doing well, it will evolve and develop our policies, procedures and the way that we work, but will target our resources on those children, young people and families that really need our help and guidance. The County Council is committed to ensuring that no child, family or community is left behind. In particular it is committed to meeting its statutory duties to protect children and young people effectively.

Financial pressures across the public sector; an increase in demography; the improvement of health care leading to the survival rate of children with complex medical conditions; an increase in the number of children with recognized complex behavioural difficulties; and an increase in the number of children and young people affected by intergenerational and societal pressures are placing extraordinary demands on Children's Services. As a result, we are continually searching for new and innovative ways to deliver services to our communities to ensure we deliver the best services we can with the funding we have available.

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Prevention is at the heart of all that we do. It is the basis of the Families First approach which focuses on providing support as problems emerge so families become more resilient and the challenges they face do not escalate. By helping families to sustain improvements, demand for more costly support is reduced. Success is dependent on partners and communities working effectively together to deliver early help to families, minimising the impact on the lives of children, the family and the communities around them. Our Family Safeguarding programme has changed the way child protection services are delivered leading to positive changes for families in terms of reducing crime, substance misuse, neglect, and health improvements and increasing attendance at school which in turn will be reflected in reduced demand on public services and a better prepared and skilled workforce across Hertfordshire.

To keep us focused on supporting families in a way that makes a positive difference to their lives, we are continuing to develop mechanisms to ensure we can evidence what works, share the learning across the services and develop and support our workforce to provide effective support to families.

For example, Children's Services has developed a new Outcomes Framework, known as the 'Six Outcome Bees' <http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/outcomebees> to enable us to assess and evidence our impact. This framework has been developed with the involvement of young people and partner organisations to ensure those things which are most important things to young people are identified and our performance against these are measured. The outcomes are inter-linked with all the 'bees' being important for the child or young person. Each outcome area means many different things depending on the individual or family we are working with. This framework enables us to set clear and measurable targets across the six domains that are agreed with service users, their families and our partners.

Hertfordshire is developing services in co-production with young people, families, carers and partner organisations to provide services which meet the needs of our communities and provide value for money in a time of scarce resources. The voice of children, young people and families spans our work as feedback is gathered about the services they receive and trained young commissioners are involved in the specification of services being commissioned.

Young people involved in 'Take Over Day' in November 2017 were asked what they consider are the two most important things to help them to live a happy and fulfilling life. Whilst these differ according to each young person, friends, family and being supported were commonly recurring themes. Hertfordshire relies on a skilled and dedicated workforce within the County Council, partner organisations and on staff and volunteers within the Voluntary and Community Sector. Together we will continue to work to improve all the outcomes for children, young people and families within Hertfordshire.



Teresa Heritage  
Executive Member for  
Children's Services



Terry Douris  
Executive Member for  
Education, Libraries  
and Localism



Jenny Coles  
Director of  
Children's Services

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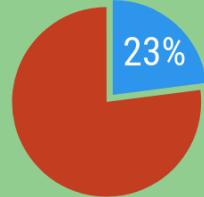
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## Population

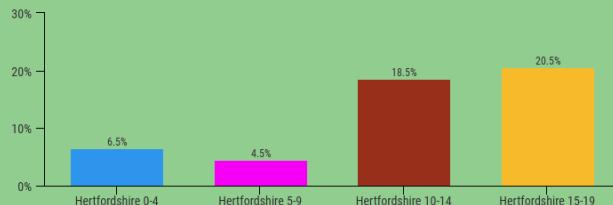


Hertfordshire population  
1,166,000



of Hertfordshire's population are children and young people

% increase in population by age group between 2017 and 2026 based on ONS 2014 population projections



The overall 0-19 projected increase is 11.9% in Hertfordshire and 6.3% in England

# Hertfordshire

## A Place in Which to Grow

### Early Years Foundation Stage

72.2% achieving a good level of development.  
(England average 70.7%)



Inequality gap 31.9%  
(England average 31.7%)



of Hertfordshire's schools rated as good or outstanding as at 31st March 2017  
(England average 88.9%)

## Referrals



6,360

referrals to children's social care received during 2016-17



69.5%  
Families in need reached at any children's centre 2016-17



68.3% Children under 1 reached at any children's centre 2016-17

## Children in Need

Hertfordshire	England
193.1 children in need per 10,000 under 18 population	330.4 children in need per 10,000 under 18 population

Percentage of young people In Hertfordshire who are NEET as at March 2017



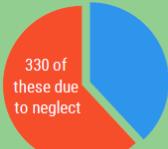
3.26%

Percentage of young people In England who are NEET as at March 2017

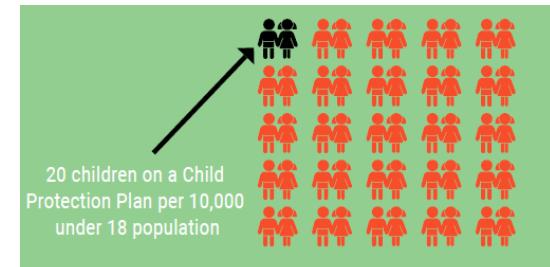
6.2%

## Child Protection

533 children on a Child Protection Plan as at 31/03/2017



701 children became subject to a Child Protection Plan during 2016-17



## Attainment 8 average score per pupil at Key Stage 4 2017



- Hertfordshire: 49.7
- England: 44.6
- Hertfordshire disadvantaged: 35.8
- England disadvantaged: 37.1
- Hertfordshire non-disadvantaged: 52.6
- England non-disadvantaged: 49.9
- Achievement gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils: 16.8

## Children Looked After

905

Children looked after by Hertfordshire County Council as at 31/03/2017

75

CLA were Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

100 CLA were adopted during 2016-17



That is 20% of those who left care

# Strategic Focus

- Hertfordshire is striving for continuous improvement to provide the right support in the right place at the right time. Hertfordshire's Plan for Children and Young People over the next three years is driven by a number of key strategies and approaches which are dependent on integrated multi-agency work with partners taking a holistic approach to meet the needs of families and improve outcomes for children and young people, these include:
  - A co-produced **Education, Skills & Training Strategy** will encompass school improvement and SEND priorities within schools and further education settings. The aim of partners in the education sector is to raise aspirations for all children and young people, enhance opportunities into higher education, training and employment by closing the gap in attainment and inspire young people to develop the skills to flourish in the workplace in their future lives.
  - The **Skills Strategy** aims to increase and develop Hertfordshire's workforce to ensure we can support a strong economy within which businesses can thrive, whilst enabling all residents of Hertfordshire to maximise their own individual potential and share in Hertfordshire's prosperity.
- The **Health & Wellbeing Strategy** aims to tackle health inequalities to make life better for everyone living in Hertfordshire with priorities based on the four life stages of Starting Well, Developing Well, Living and Working Well and Ageing Well. The strategy will shape the commissioning of services across the health and care system to develop more detailed action plans to improve the health and wellbeing of people who live and work in Hertfordshire. The importance of Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing for children and young people, their parents and carers is reflected in the development and implementation of the **Mental Health and Wellbeing Transformation Plan** for children and young people in Hertfordshire.
- The focus of the **Families First Strategy** is early help and prevention. The needs of vulnerable children, young people and their families are identified at the earliest opportunity, are well assessed and met by families and agencies working effectively together. Improved and sustainable outcomes are achieved through building a family's resilience to, and increasing their capacity to manage, challenging circumstances.



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- **Keeping young people safe in their community**, or contextual safeguarding, is an increasing priority in Hertfordshire. This means protecting children and young people who are at risk because of factors outside of their family, such as child sexual exploitation, increasing levels of violence or gangs and the threats posed by radicalisation. A key focus for partners working together is to develop resilient communities where children and young people feel safe and part of a supportive community.
- The **0-25 Integrated SEND Commissioning Strategy** brings together SEND commissioning activity across the health and social care partnership to develop a more integrated approach with other services including Integrated Services for Learning, Early Help Services, Early Years Services, Learning and Housing support and Adult Care Services. The strategy reflects Hertfordshire's commitment to transform our support for children and young people with SEND to improve their journey from childhood into adulthood by increasing inclusivity and equity and reducing marginalisation thereby enabling young adults to have more fulfilled lives through better planning and preparation. The focus is to give families access to a wider range of support, self-directed wherever possible and deliver a more joined up response so that families receive a single, personalised, coherent offer of support.



- **Family Safeguarding** is a whole-system approach within Children's Services to improve the quality of work undertaken with families, and thereby outcomes for children and parents. It brings together a partnership including the police, health (including mental health), probation and substance misuse services to tackle issues of domestic abuse, substance misuse and mental health within families.
- When children and young people come into care our **CLA Strategy** outlines our commitment to creating opportunities for our looked after children, young people and care leavers to reach their potential and have created a shared vision to promote positive outcomes. As Corporate Parents we want our looked after children to be given the same positive child hood experiences and opportunities that any parent would wish for their own child.
- These key areas of focus are reflected in Hertfordshire's Outcome Bees framework.



# The Vision

Our Vision

Hertfordshire County of Opportunity:  
*A county that works for children and families*

Hertfordshire gives every child, young person and their family the opportunity to live happy and fulfilling lives

Corporate Ambitions

Opportunity to be  
**HEALTHY & SAFE**

Opportunity to  
**PROSPER**

Opportunity to  
**TAKE PART**

Opportunity to  
**THRIVE**

Children's Services Outcomes

BE HAPPY



[www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/outcomebees](http://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/outcomebees)

Priorities

Developing safe communities  
Providing early help to build resilience  
Protecting vulnerable children and young people

Providing children with a healthy start  
Communities make healthy choices  
Good mental health and emotional well-being

Narrowing the gap for underachieving groups  
Raising aspirations for all children  
Local integrated SEND support

Skills and Jobs for young people  
Housing and accommodation choices  
Employment for vulnerable young people

Empowered children making positive choices  
Self-reliant families able to help themselves  
Resilient children and young people

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# Hertfordshire's Ambition for Be Safe

Our ambition to keep Hertfordshire's children, young people and families safe is everybody's business, not just the responsibility of statutory authorities.

Hertfordshire's focus is on early intervention and prevention to reduce the need for protection. To achieve this we are working with communities enabling them to take responsibility for their own safety and the safety of those around them.

Our aim is to work in partnership with other organisations to deliver the right services at the right time to prevent problems escalating. Partner agencies throughout Hertfordshire are enabling self-help by sign-posting to information enabling families to access the right support as their needs arise.

## Our Top Priorities

1. Develop safe communities by focusing on prevention.
2. Intervene early to address problems and build resilience.
3. Tackle domestic abuse and violence to protect and empower children, young people and families.



For more details you can visit:

[Families First Portal](#)

[Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board](#)

[Domestic Abuse Strategy](#)

[Preventing Child Sexual Exploitation](#)

## Hertfordshire's Priorities for the Future

- Protecting children from abuse and neglect and supporting their recovery from any resulting trauma.
- Keeping children safe through our multi-disciplinary Family Safeguarding approach working in a holistic and integrated way to meet the needs of families.
- Helping young people and families experiencing mental health, substance misuse issues or domestic abuse to improve their ability to protect themselves and their children.
- Providing young people and families with early help to prevent problems from escalating, such as school attendance.
- Working in partnership to raise awareness of the risks of going missing and child sexual exploitation and help prevent it happening to young people in Hertfordshire
- Working with partners to disrupt and tackle young people involved in violent activity which is closely related to the supply of drugs in Hertfordshire and child criminal or sexual exploitation and support victims.
- Working together with partner agencies and schools to reduce the threat from extremism.
- Using the wider resources of the Council, such as firefighters, to develop and promote community based prevention programmes.
- Targeting Road Safety campaigns to young people and newly qualified drivers between 17 and 25 years of age working towards the aim of zero road deaths in Hertfordshire.



## How will we monitor our performance?

- Number of referrals to Children's Services
- Number of Families First Assessments closed due to needs met
- Number of children subject to a child protection plan
- Number of Children Looked After by the Local Authority
- Number of Children and Young People at risk of CSE being supported
- Number of children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents

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# Hertfordshire's Ambition for Be Healthy

We are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of Hertfordshire's population and reduce the impacts of poor physical and mental health on children and families which can negatively affect educational achievement, income levels and quality of life.

Hertfordshire's focus on early intervention means working with partner organisations and schools to improve public health, key in preventing ill-health and disability saving the cost of future NHS treatment and social care.

Our aim is to ensure all children have a healthy start in life and are equipped with the knowledge and skills at an early age to make healthy and positive choices as they move into adulthood and throughout their lives.

## Our Top Priorities

1. Ensure children have a healthy start and can make healthy choices.
2. Promote healthy lifestyles and healthy relationships so that people are able to participate to, and contribute to their community.
3. Provide information and a range of support for mental health and emotional wellbeing.



For more details you can visit:

[Hertfordshire Health & Wellbeing Board](#)

[Health in Herts](#)

[Transformation Plan for Mental Health and Wellbeing](#)

[Hertfordshire Sustainability and Transformation Plan](#)

## **Hertfordshire's Priorities For The Future**

- Delivering the Healthy Child Programme for 0-19 year olds through Family Centres and nurseries to promote, demonstrate and educate parents and carers about healthy eating so that children are a healthy weight from the earliest years.
- Delivering the National Child Measurement Programme to inform parents and carers about their child's weight and direct them to advice and support to help their children to reach and maintain a healthy weight.
- Schools are encouraging physical activity as part of the normal daily routine to keep children fit, help their mental wellbeing and resilience and help them do better at school.
- Improving early access to a continuum of mental health support and emotional wellbeing services delivered through a range of settings including schools.
- Supporting parents, carers, schools and services working with children and young people to provide good quality education about sex, healthy relationships and good sexual health.
- Commissioning services that provide personalised support and flexible responses that best meet the needs of individuals and families.



### **How will we monitor our performance?**

- Percentage of children in reception and year 6 who are overweight or obese
- Percentage of immunisations up-to-date for Children Looked After
- Proportion of people with a learning disability receiving an annual health check
- Number of young people accessing sexual health information
- Number of children and young people accessing targeted support through CAMHS

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# Hertfordshire's Ambition for Be Ambitious

Our aim is to provide every child with a good start in life by supporting parents and early years settings to develop the skills and learning to ensure children across Hertfordshire begin school ready to thrive.

Hertfordshire's focus to provide '*A good school for every child in every district*' has positively impacted outcomes at the end of Key Stages 1, 2, 4 and 5 and we wish to see these improve further.

Our aim is to improve outcomes for disadvantaged children who are not doing as well as their peers. Vulnerable children and those with challenging behaviour, those who are excluded from school or otherwise miss elements of formal education need, and will receive, greater support. We wish to see disadvantaged children achieving well in line with their peers, locally and nationally, and aspiring to good future careers, higher and further education.

## Our Top Priorities

1. Narrow the gap between our most vulnerable children and general society by supporting them to overcome adverse childhood experiences and recent trauma.
2. Raise standards, attainment and aspirations for all children.
3. Transform SEND provision by providing more local integrated support.



For more details you can visit:

[All Age Autism Strategy](#)

[Herts for Learning](#)

[Integrated Services for Learning](#)

[SEND Strategy](#)

[SEND Local Offer](#)

[YC Hertfordshire](#)

[DfE Unlocking Talent Report](#)

## **Hertfordshire's Priorities For The Future**

- Bringing services together in Family Centres to provide local support to families.
- Working with our schools as key partners to produce and implement the school improvement strategy to improve the proportion of schools and settings which are Good and Outstanding and raise attainment across the county.
- Providing sufficient school places to meet needs and working with planners and developers to ensure new developments include community resources such as schools and green spaces.
- Inspiring and supporting young people to achieve their potential including progressing to apprenticeships or higher education and helping people with autism in education, transition to adulthood, training and work; developing skills and independence.
- Strengthening relationships with Multi-Academy Trusts, other school partnerships and Further Education colleges with a focus on disadvantage.
- Developing our Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) services to equip families and those that work with them to understand and address the underlying needs that result in behaviour difficulties.
- Supporting vulnerable young people, including young offenders and those who have disengaged, to stay in learning.
- Supporting families, enabling each child and young person to fulfil their potential both in childhood and as they move into adulthood.



## **How will we monitor our performance?**

- Percentage of eligible 2 year olds accessing free early education
- Proportion of schools and settings judge as Good or Outstanding by Ofsted
- The attainment of disadvantaged children and young people at the Early Years Foundation Stage and each subsequent Key Stage
- Percentage of 16-17 year olds in learning
- The number of home educated children



# Hertfordshire's Ambition for Be Independent

Our aim is for all vulnerable young people to move successfully through training into sustainable employment and independent living within our communities.

Hertfordshire's focus is on increasing opportunities, particularly for those who have been in care or are disadvantaged, to access further or higher education, apprenticeships and to develop the skills needed for employment and a life of independence in their own homes.

Our aims are to work with partners to increase the number of young people in education, employment and training. Through partnership working with employers, housing providers and local authorities, to provide people with access to a range of suitable jobs and accommodation options and reduce their risk of homelessness.

## Our Top Priorities

1. Develop the skills of young people to flourish in the workplace.
2. Improve access to a wider choice of accommodation options and reduce homelessness.
3. Work with local economic partners to develop a broader offer of work experience and employment opportunities for our more vulnerable young people, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities.



For more details you can visit:

[Corporate Parenting Strategy](#)

[Hertfordshire Skills Strategy](#)

[SEND Local Offer](#)

## **Hertfordshire's Priorities For The Future**

- Working with partners to deliver the Skills Strategy to support, schools, colleges and other services to provide impartial careers guidance.
- Working with Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, education providers and employers to ensure all young people have the skills and experience to flourish in the workplace and contribute to the local economy.
- Identifying young people at higher risk of not being in education, employment or training and providing opportunities for additional support through volunteer mentors, work experience or employer mentoring to inspire them to achieve.
- Working with local employers to provide a wide range of opportunities for work experience, apprenticeships and workplace training including for young people with additional needs.
- Improving access to a range of accommodation choices for care leavers and young people with additional needs and developing their independent living skills to make the best use of them.
- Helping vulnerable young adults, carers and those with disabilities to develop the confidence and skills to enable them to find work and build careers and be independent.
- Providing low cost courses to improve functional skills such as speaking & listening, reading, writing to courses which can help with gaining employment such as maths, computing and ICT skills or with finance, employment and skills mentoring.
- Providing 30 hours free childcare to support a move into employment for families where adults are not working.



### **How will we monitor our performance?**

- Numbers of children receiving 30 Hours Free Childcare
- The proportion of young people aged 18-25 with a learning disability who are in employment
- Number of 18-25 living in an independent setting
- Percentage of care leavers in suitable accommodation
- Percentage of young people, including care leavers in education, employment & training

**Following member feedback, bullet point on independent travel to be included.**

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# Hertfordshire's Ambition for Be Resilient

Hertfordshire aims to increase self-reliance and peer support for children, young people and their families so they can access the information and support they need as soon as problems arise.

Our focus is on the development of self-help tools and information portals via the internet as an accessible and cost-effective way for us to provide advice and information to as much of Hertfordshire's population as possible. We support children in care and care leavers to establish their own support networks to help them transition to adulthood.

Our aim is to build community resilience enabling our children, young people and families to flourish and cope with the pressures faced in today's world.

## Our Top Priorities

1. Ensure children have the best start in life and are equipped with the skills to make positive life choices.
2. Provide children and young people with the skills and information they need take responsibility for their own decisions.
3. Increase the resilience of families by providing them with the information, tools and services they need to help themselves.



For more details you can visit:

[Community First Strategy](#)

[Families First Portal](#)

[SEND Local Offer](#)

[YC Hertfordshire](#)

## Hertfordshire's Priorities For The Future

- Continually developing the Families First Portal to provide information for families about organisations, services and groups in Hertfordshire where they can find support for themselves to help with problems they face.
- Provide support and solutions through local multi-agency co-ordinated working that involve a range of partner agencies offering different services to meet the needs of each family in a more personalised way.
- Supporting the Community First Approach with the aim of preventing, reducing and/or delaying statutory intervention through community involvement which includes families, friends and community support groups to aid the most vulnerable in our society.
- Providing information to young people through YC Hertfordshire about local services and signposting to useful websites including job vacancies, advice drop in centres, travel services, youth projects, events and opportunities, music, media, games, performing arts and much more.
- Working with partners in the community, to ensure youth work projects and programmes provide information, guidance, work related learning and other positive experiences for young people which increase confidence, promote positive peer networks and build resilience.
- Working with children in care and care leavers to build relationships with family members and establish their own ongoing support networks.



## How will we monitor our performance?

- The number of children aged 3/4 benefitting from the Early Years Pupil Premium (EYPP) in addition to their free early education
- Numbers of children for whom Life Long Link networks have been created
- Sufficient local placements to increase choice for CLA
- Percentage of CLA in foster care who turn 18 in the year and stay put in their placement post 18
- Percentage of couples showing improved parental relationship following mediation or counselling

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