



**Integrated
Services**
for Children and Young People

Briefing

Integrated Services for Children and Young People
A Framework for Integration

A Framework for Integration – the Briefing

This briefing has been provided for the Integrated Services for Children and Young People Project Board ('Project Board') and the Greater Shankill and West Belfast Local Implementation Action Groups (LIAG's).

In order to help the LIAG's progress their work it is appropriate to set out:

- Why it is important to be clear about what we mean by 'integration';
- The current situation;
- What integration of children and young peoples services would possibly look like; and
- Levels of integration.

The Meaning of Integration

There are many different descriptions and understandings of what integrating services actually means. Most of the time the catch all phrase of 'working better together' serves to define a common purpose. However, as will be made clear later there are a number of possible definitions or approaches towards integration that could be used to define the progress of the Integrated Services Programme.

Establishing a Framework

Given that integration is both a key principle and the key process that will enable the goal of improving children and young people's life chances, it is important to establish a framework, initially for debate and ultimately for overall agreement, that can inform the work not just of the Programme but also the broader children and young people's service environment.

The Current Situation

The number of stakeholder agencies delivering services to children, young people and their families is very broad and diverse. They include the following:

Education:	Education and Skills Authority	- primary and post primary schools - youth services - specialist services
Health/Social Care:	Belfast Health and Social Care Trust	- child/family support including child protection/safeguarding/ Looked After Children (LAC) - specialist Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services - substance abuse/misuse - health visiting - healthy living services
Community/Voluntary:	Various	- Healthy Living Centres - Sure Start - Shankill Women's Centre - Alternatives - Alternative Education Providers - specialist e.g. drugs and alcohol etc
Other:	Department for Employment and Learning Business In The Community Belfast Metropolitan College	- Job Assist Centres - skills and training - employability of young people - enterprise education - further and higher education - links to employers and universities

At ground level, there is some very good work happening with individuals and families. Usually this occurs because of positive working relationships that have been established between front line staff and managers. With families that have complex circumstances who may experience multiple interventions from different agencies, there are some good examples of positive working.

However, it is broadly accepted that, too often, duplication of interventions occur, or co-ordination between these is not as good as we would wish. Families with complex problems do not experience clear co-ordination of multiple interventions or common assessment processes. Single points of access to service are also often lacking or very unclear.

What does Integration really look like?

Based on experience¹ it is possible to identify by means of the Table below what would be the key components of an integrated service delivered geographically by a combination of the agencies set out opposite.

Table: Key Components of an Integrated Service

What would be happening?		Key Feature
Stage 1: Working better together	This is when existing agencies agree that closer working is required – individual staff are encouraged to form close working relationships with their collaborative peers. Everything is managed and financed separately. Some work takes place in common geographical bases	Protocols are agreed and publicised covering existing and new working arrangements
I.	No duplication of services – each local area has a map of what is available locally	Good information is available locally, which children and young people, their families and professionals have easy access to
II.	No duplication of assessments – a common/ single assessment tool is used by all (not just statutory agencies) building on the Understanding the Needs Of Children In NI (UNOCINI) model	All professionals/staff are trained to use the UNOCINI process
III.	There is a single point of access for all services locally	Well publicised with easy access
IV.	Common eligibility criteria exist for access to services across all agencies	These are established, shared and publicised. No one professional team should be allowed to set its own eligibility criteria
Stage 2: Integrated processes but no structural change	In this stage, closer working relationships between and across statutory and voluntary/ community agencies are established. Wherever possible, common bases are set up	Collective teams are in place
V.	Information and data are shared with regulated and approved access	Systems are established to make sharing information possible
VI.	A 'generic' approach exists – local services are as comprehensive as possible and only specialist referrals take place outside the geographical area.	Services to children and family 'feel' seamless. It does not matter to them who is providing what.
VII.	Single 'key worker'. Families know who is responsible.	For all cases, families/individuals experience a single lead co-ordinator or key worker for all interventions. Locally based key workers co-ordinate specialist interventions including mental health
VIII.	Single care plan	For each individual, there is a single care plan to which all agencies have contributed, statutory or voluntary
IX.	At local level, services are accessed/delivered as appropriate, through multi-disciplinary teams.	Teams will have a variety of professionals coming from different specialisms and organisations
X.	Multi-disciplinary teams (MDT's) work to agreed goals, targets and outcomes	These must be established collectively – individual organisations cannot set their own at strategic or local level without consulting and involving others

What would be happening?		Key Feature
Stage 3: Integrated processes are common – some structural change	There are collective teams under single leadership operating at local level.	Integration at this stage is the overriding common practice. Schools do not operate independently, but are part of, and subject to, the overall framework
XI.	Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs), with a combination of different professional inputs, have single team managers	There would be a single locality 'board' of management. Team managers would be 'locality' managers. They may come from any profession represented on the team. Team managers will manage. Professional 'supervision' would be made available separately as necessary.
XII.	Schools are accepted as being part of the local multi-disciplinary framework.	Schools have dedicated staff members who are either full-time or part time members of the local MDT.
XIII.	Schools' services would be part of the locally integrated service framework/environment	Additional, extended or 'full' services provided in schools would be regarded as part of the overall package of services available in the locality to children, young people and their families.
XIV.	Local people are involved in the design and management of local services	They would be part of the locality board of management
XV.	Responsibility for management and the application of resources is beginning to be delegated by statutory agencies to the lowest, most local level	Locality budgets are established – possibly 'notional', 'shadow' or 'virtual'

Stage 4: Single Agency style management	All services for children and young people are managed collectively at both strategic and local levels	This would be the equivalent of a Children's Trust in England or alternatively a comprehensive Children's Services Authority for NI
XVI.	All services for children and young people are delivered via common, shared or pooled budgets	Legislation is passed to make this possible.
XVII.	New or additional services are included within the local geographical service bases/framework and are not established separately by agencies	There is a single children's services plan for Belfast made up of a strategic framework and locality implementation plans
XVIII.	A single Children's and Young People's Services Board is set up for Belfast	The Board is multi-agency, multi- professional, has political and non professional representation

The Integrated Services Programme

It is important to remember that the pressure for integration in England to achieve "Stage 4" arose not just out of a willingness to work together as effectively as possible but because of the Climbié case and Every Child Matters. There is a strong imperative to achieve "Stage 4" in England although there is little evidence so far that structural change (for its own sake) can address the major problems of professional and organisational silos being maintained (See 'Baby Peter'² and the updated Laming Report³).

Through the Integrated Services Programme both the LIAG's and the Project Board have the opportunity to develop towards integration without the same degree of external pressure. This could mean that as long as the objectives are shared and the long term strategy is agreed that "Stage 4" might ultimately be possible. However during the lifetime of the Integrated Services Programme it is more likely that being able to demonstrate real progress towards "Stage 2" integration would be regarded as success. Further progress towards "Stage 3" – which is certainly achievable – would be very positive.

Improving the Life Chances of Children and Young People

The Belfast Health Action Zone is working through the Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme (the Integrated Services Programme) to improve the life chances of children and young people, demonstrated by increased achievement levels, a commitment to 'life long learning' and an increase in employability.

This will lead to the taking up of new lifetime opportunities and the possibility that a long-standing cycle of disadvantage can be broken.

The purpose of the Integrated Services Programme is to develop effective integration across the full range of children's and young people's services in North and West Belfast.

The Integrated Services for Children and Young People Programme is led by the Belfast Education and Library Board on behalf of the Health Action Zone.

The Programme is designed and delivered through Greater Shankill Partnership and West Belfast Partnership with funding secured as a result of the West Belfast and Greater Shankill Task Forces.

By 2011 the Integrated Services Programme will have created a legacy of a comprehensive and integrated approach to all aspects of the lives of children and young people, and those within and beyond their families who have influence on them.

The five key principles of the Integrated Services Programme are:

Integration

- working together

Achievability

- getting realistic results

Sustainability

- maintaining progress

Innovation and added value

- doing new things that make a difference

Prevention

- ensuring the patterns of the past are not repeated

¹ www.allchildrenni.gov.uk; www.everychildmatters.gov.uk; www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/projects/integrated-working.htm

² Quality Care Commission (2009) Review of the Involvement and Action taken by Health Bodies in Relation to the Case of Baby P.

³ Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009) The Protection of Children in England: A Project Report

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