

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
CABINET MEMBER**

GETTING THE BEST START PLAN

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To introduce and adopt the Getting the BEST START Plan.
- 1.2 The key points in this report are to explain the purpose and provenance of the Best Start plan and its role in ensuring effective partnership approaches to improving outcomes for children under the Integrated Children's Trust's Shine a Light priority on the Early Years.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1. Under the One Family Approach to enabling children to remain in their homes, their families, and their communities, the Getting the BEST START Plan has been developed across Council teams and with partners from Heath, Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), community and schools and settings and aims to improve outcomes for all children in their early years.
- 2.2 The BEST START Plan seeks to ensure an enabling, accessible universal offer for all children and families in the early years, joining up elements including health visiting and maternity services with Imagination Library and baby massage, universal early education, leisure opportunities and workforce development across the sector. Aligned to this, targeted and specialist support that is coherently planned across services so that the best person or service provides the right support at the right time to ensure all children from conception to five make the Best Start in their lives.
- 2.3 Following a Local Government Association (LGA) peer review of Social Mobility in the Early Years in North Lincolnshire in 2019, partnership working has been further strengthened. Throughout the Covid period, work has continued under the key priorities, which are
 - Improve children's healthy development, including early mental health and emotional well-being
 - Develop parental readiness and resilience
 - Increase children's communication and language skills
 - Improve children's readiness to start school
 - Close the learning gap between the most and least advantaged
 - Improve transitions in their broadest sense

Golden threads running through these priorities are a focus on children's first, critical 1001 days, from conception to age 2 and reach to the most vulnerable children including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

3. **OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 Adopt the BEST START plan and oversee its implementation and impact through the Integrated Children's Trust

4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

- 4.1 Adopt the Getting the BEST START Plan

The Plan is already ensuring strengthened joint working arrangements. During the COVID period, joint working to improve children's outcomes against the key priorities has secured improvements in policy, provision, and practice across a range of areas including:

- early communication, relationships and attachments including assessment of parent/baby relationships at 6 – 8 weeks
- early education and childcare sector support and training to manage expectations in Covid-19, changes in curriculum and improve children's transitions and assessment
- use of children's assessment data at 2 years old, including early identification and support to ensure children's needs are met
- revised jointly commissioned early years speech and language pathway to ensure support at the earliest opportunity.
- workforce development strategy, including a specialist route into early years teaching through North Lincolnshire School Centred Initial Teacher Training (SCITT) Partnership
- Council, Health, and community partners' successful second stage and final stage application under Local Government Association (LGA) /Public Health England (PHE) Shaping Places for Healthier Lives, bid for funding to pilot approaches to reducing inequalities at five

Adopting the plan reaffirms the commitment of partners to ensuring that our youngest children can make the best start in life.

5. **FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)**

5.1 Finance

None, however improved partnership working brought about through the Best Start Leadership Group has enabled a successful initial bid for £17,000 through the Public Health England (PHE) and Local Government Association (LGA) 'Shaping Places for Healthier Lives' project, and a further bid has been submitted for £300,000 to build on local and national research into enabling equalities at age 5.

5.2 Legal and Other resources

None

6. **OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)**

6.1 None

7. **OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

7.1 None

8. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

8.1 Throughout the development of the plan, views of stakeholders across statutory and voluntary sector have been sought, as well as consultation with parent groups, children, schools and settings.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 It is recommended that the Getting the BEST START Plan is adopted so that work to improve outcomes for children in their early years continues with shared understanding, joint ambition, and clarity and pace of action planning and delivery.

DIRECTOR OF LEARNING, SKILLS AND CULTURE

Church Square House
SCUNTHORPE
North Lincolnshire
DN15 6NL
Author: Jemima Flintoff
Date: 26 May 2021