

The City of London Corporation Children and Young People's Plan (2018– 2021)

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Our vision

We want the City of London to be the best place possible for children and young people to grow up. We will work in partnership to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where all our children and young people, regardless of background and circumstance, feel they belong. We will provide high quality services, world-class education and excellent opportunities that enable them to live healthily, develop resilience, achieve their potential and thrive.

We have 5 priorities that we will deliver to achieve this vision:

1) Safe

Our children and young people are safe and feel safe.

2) Potential

Our children and young people have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and are well prepared to achieve in adulthood.

3) Independence, involvement and choice

Our children and young people are co-producers of cultural and support services and they will have the resources to develop independence and the empowerment to play an active role in their communities and exercise choice over their services.

4) Health and wellbeing

Our children and young people enjoy good health and wellbeing.

5) Community

Our children and young people grow up with a sense of belonging as part of cohesive and resilient communities. They are able to create and participate in the cultural and creative opportunities available in the Square Mile.

In delivering our vision we will support the objectives of the Corporate Plan 2018-23 to contribute to a flourishing society, support a thriving economy and to shape outstanding environments by contributing to a number of the plans outcomes.

Our building blocks for success

The way in which we do things is just as important as what we do. These are the principles and behaviours that guide our decisions and underpin how we deliver services.

Collaborative partnership working

We will deliver our vision by working closely with our partners. This plan will be owned by all stakeholders and we will work across agencies to learn from each other, maximise our resources and create a joined-up system that can be easily navigated. We will work in close partnership with our neighbouring boroughs as many of our children, young people and families attend education and health services outside of the Square Mile.

Outcomes and impact focused

In delivering our objectives we will stay focused on the impact we want to achieve. We will use assessment, evaluation, performance management and evidence to ensure that high quality outcomes are achieved and that the impact of these outcomes is experienced by all.

Children and young people at the heart of everything we do

We will focus on the experience of children, young people and their families and ensure their voices are the first we hear in decision making. We will establish a co-production model of service development.

Our Think Family approach promotes co-ordination with adult and health services and working with whole families to understand their needs while recognising their strengths to deliver tailored solutions.

Open communication

We will provide information that is accessible, meaningful and easy to understand for our children, young people and their support networks. We will encourage feedback from them and be open and honest about what we can and cannot do.

We promote challenging and supportive conversations between all partners.

Skilled and Suitable Workforce

To deliver this vision effectively we need a sufficient, skilled and confident workforce who feel valued and well-supported. We will deliver training and encourage continued professional development opportunities, so our staff are equipped to work with and for whole families and deliver a timely and responsive service based on the Think Family approach.

The City of London

The Square Mile is the historic centre of London and is home to the 'City' – the financial and commercial heart of the UK. The residential base in the City of London is small compared to most other local authorities but has grown in the last 20 years. The latest population estimate for the City is 9,401¹. Children and young people make up a relatively small proportion (13%) of the population, with an estimated 1,215 people under the age of 19 and 1,981 people aged 0-25.

Our children mainly live in dense pockets of housing. Although the Square Mile is one of the least deprived local authorities in the country, significant disparities of wealth exist. There are some areas that experience high levels of deprivation, such as Portsoken which is in the 40% most deprived areas in England while other parts of the Square Mile, such as Barbican, are ranked in the 10% least deprived.

The Square Mile's resident population is estimated to be 78% White British; however our children and young people are more ethnically diverse and approximately 40% are from black or ethnic minority groups compared to 21% nationally. The community of Bangladeshi origin forms the second largest ethnic group in the City.

The City's only maintained school is Sir John Cass's Foundation primary school which is also home to the Square Miles's sole Children's Centre. There are four independent schools and several higher educational institutions within its boundaries. There is a cohort of students who board and travel into the Square Mile to study and the City Corporation has safeguarding responsibilities for these children.

The Square Mile has excellent transport links and is a world-class culture centre. It is home to museums, cultural institutions and heritage sites. There are a number of open and green spaces in the Square Mile but they are generally small in size. As it is a densely populated, urban area it suffers from poor air quality. Levels of nitrogen dioxide and particulate matter are both very high compared to the national average.

¹<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates>

Developing this plan

The small size of our resident population, and in particular its population of children and young people, presents challenges to strategic planning. It can be difficult to get useful data about our children and young people and their needs. Due to small sample sizes, our data can be less reliable; many reported figures are not statistically significant and determining trends is often not possible. In addition, small numbers make in-depth analysis difficult so figures from the whole area can mask variations between different parts of the Square Mile. This means it has been vital to use meaningful quantitative data, where possible, combined with qualitative data and local and community intelligence when planning this strategy and determining its priorities.

The Children's Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) pulls together local and national data from a range of sources to describe the needs of our children and young people. The CHNA has collated information from the 0-5 years and 5-19 years needs assessments, the children and young people's mental health needs assessment, disabled children's needs assessment and the child poverty needs' assessment. The findings from the CHNA form the evidence base for this strategy. To identify the priorities, we looked at the impact of different issues on our young people; how widespread they were; our ability to have an impact and improve them; and, how they impacted and interacted with disadvantage and inequality.

In the development of this plan we engaged widely with children and young people who live and learn in the City and the people whose job it is to care and provide for them. We went to youth clubs, schools and meetings and asked our children and young people what they like about living or going to school here, what their main issues are as children and young people in the City; and, what they would change about it if they could. We consulted with our partners and stakeholders at meetings and through a survey. We asked them what they thought the priorities of this plan should be; what should be done to improve the outcomes for children and young people; and, how their organisations could contribute.

Priorities

Safe

Our children and young people are safe and feel safe

Why this is a priority

We are committed to keeping all our children and young people safe and protected from harm and neglect and the damaging effect it has on their wellbeing and development². It is essential to be aware of all potential risks so we do all we can to prevent them occurring and can intervene early if they do. Children and young people exposed to higher vulnerabilities, such as those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), can be at greater risk of abuse and harm and need additional support to guarantee their safety. We need to give our young people the skills to explore their environment and keep themselves safe online and ensure they feel comfortable engaging in normal risk-taking behaviour so they develop resilience and independence. Safe and secure housing has a large impact on wellbeing and all children and young people should be living in well-maintained, suitably sized houses.

Our children and young people have told us that they worry about the threat of terror attacks and that bad lighting makes them feel unsafe in certain areas.

What we will achieve

Children and young people who live, learn and visit in the City will be seen, heard and helped. We will continue to employ a multi-agency approach and implement a culture of challenge, accountability and information sharing. We will ensure our procedures and training offer adapts as needs change and new threats occur. All our vulnerable children will receive tailored support to protect them from additional harm. We will work with our young people to address their safety concerns so they grow up feeling safe and able to enjoy their surroundings, including their virtual wellbeing and safety. Our ambition is to identify all potential issues to prevent problems occurring and offer early help if they do.

We will

- Continuously review our safeguarding policies and procedures to ensure they are robust, relevant and comply with best practice.
- We will support the Community Safety Team to implement the Prevent strategy to protect our communities from the threat posed by violent extremists. We will work with them to respond to concerns and increase reassurance to our children and young people during periods of heightened tensions or following major incidents.
- Work with the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) to maintain a robust training offer.
- Work with the CHSCB and schools to improve our understanding of our young people's digital footprint and the risks they face, including from Child Sexual Exploitation. We will improve cyber safety and develop an offer that enables young people to engage safely in technology and social media and acquire digital skills to benefit their future.
- Renew the Early Help Action Plan to deliver a cohesive Early Help offer that builds protective factors and family resilience.
- Communicate the findings from the neglect linked to affluence research and train staff on how to recognise and respond to neglect in affluent families.

² https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/long_term_consequences.pdf

- Make rigorous checks of all schools that our children with SEND attend to ensure their safeguarding practices are of the highest standards.
- Review and renew our Think Family approach and use it to develop our training, learning and development offer.
- Implement the Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Strategy and develop and deliver interventions for perpetrators of domestic violence to reduce the risk to our children and young people.
- Deliver maintenance, repairs and fire safety visits to homes and extend neighbourhood patrolling to ensure all our homes and estates are safe.
- We will work with the Department of Built Environment to ensure the views of our children, young people and families are represented in the implementation of the City Corporation's Lighting Strategy.

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Potential

Our children and young people have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and are well prepared to achieve in adulthood.

Why this is a priority

Childhood is a critical time. A child's experiences and relationships will have a significant impact on their cognitive and social development and ability to succeed and flourish throughout life³. This is especially true of early childhood as the most rapid development occurs from conception through to 5 years of age. To prepare our children to achieve exceptional results in adulthood and increase social mobility we need to provide top-quality early years services and support and remove the barriers to accessing them. The Square Mile's many cultural and heritage sites offer the opportunity for our children and young people to learn and develop in a fun and informal environment.

Life is more challenging for some children and young people as their home circumstances or physical, emotional or educational needs impact on their ability to achieve. These children require extra provision to ensure they can achieve the same outcomes as their peers. We will focus on the following vulnerable groups:

- Children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Around 300 children and young people who live or go to school in the City receive SEND support.
- Children and young people with social care needs. Most of our children in care and care leavers are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (UASC).
- Children from low income families and/or deprived areas in the City. 10.2% of City children are living in poverty⁴.
- Children and young people who face barriers including language difficulties, mental health issues or difficult home circumstances.

Our Children in Care Council (CiCC) have told us they want more support in their asylum-seeking process and advice on coping with money. Young people with SEND have told us they find it difficult to socialise in the City and want information to be more accessible.

What we will achieve

Our ambition is for every City child to have access to world-class education, creative learning opportunities and valuable work experience which enriches their lives, helps them develop resilience and achieve excellence throughout life. Sir John Cass children's centre and primary school will continue to provide exceptional early years provision, deliver an excellent sporting and arts offer and achieve outstanding outcomes in Maths, English and Science. Vulnerable children and young people will have the same opportunities to flourish and recognise their aspirations as their peers. We will break intergenerational cycles of disadvantage by providing children in difficult circumstances, and their families, with the skills and abilities to overcome the barriers they face. All our children and young people benefit from the City's cultural offer and the developmental opportunities they provide. Our children with additional needs will be identified early and provided with targeted support. We will be the best possible corporate parent to our children in care and care leavers and act as a challenge and a champion on their behalf.

We will

- Deliver an outstanding education offer at all our schools (maintained, sponsored academies and independent schools) for children and young people in the Square Mile

³ Early Child Development from Measurement to Action, Richardson, L and Young, ME, 2007

⁴ Local Health, 2015, Public Health England.

http://www.localhealth.org.uk/GC_preport.php?lang=en&s=155&view=map7&id_rep=r01&sellid0=0&nivgeo=msoa_2011

and across London. We will continue to promote and provide opportunities for collaboration, sharing of best practice, and school-to-school support within the City family of schools to achieve excellence in all our schools.

- Work with schools located outside of the City of London boundary to identify City resident children who are at risk of missing education to ensure that they have access to support services and learning opportunities. This will mean building solid relationships with the schools and local authorities where City children attend school.
- Undertake a review of our Children's Centre services and implement a new Children's Centre commissioning model to ensure services are co-ordinated, relevant and effective.
- Engage with all families who decide to electively home educate to ensure that the children are safe and receiving a suitable level of education.
- Implement the SEND Strategy to improve outcomes and services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Renew our Corporate Parenting Strategy and our pledge to our children and care leavers to ensure it is relevant and continues to reflect their needs, including those of our UASC.
- Use the Children in Care Council (CiCC) to prepare children in care for independence and employment and deliver a regional CiCC on behalf of London.
- Deliver an expanded corporate apprenticeship programme that provides outstanding employability, training and skills opportunities to 100 apprentices. Explore how we can exploit this apprenticeship offer to benefit the City's young people and parents of young people who are distant from the work market.
- Deliver a parental employability programme to reduce the number of children living in poverty and improve outcomes for them and their family.
- Support the Culture Mile Learning team to deliver programmes to develop the skills of disadvantaged young people to enhancing their employability.

Independence, involvement and choice

Our children and young people are co-producers of cultural and support services and they will have the resources to develop independence and the empowerment to play an active role in their communities and exercise choice over their services.

Why this is a priority

Co-production means designing and delivering services in collaboration with the people using those services⁵. Co-production has links to community and individual wellbeing⁶ and can help young people develop self-confidence, self-esteem and the ability to effectively engage with social and work contexts⁷. It also enables us to develop better and more relevant services. In the Square Mile, 40% of children are from black and ethnic minority groups. It is important that children from all ethnic groups and backgrounds feel comfortable engaging with services and empowered to be active citizens to achieve a cohesive and thriving community. There is a risk that young people from vulnerable groups can be over-protected and have their opportunities limited. We must give all our young people the space to acquire life skills and develop independence. It is essential that all our young people, including those with SEND, looked after children and those who don't have English as a first language, are involved in co-production and benefit from its positive outcomes.

Our young people have told us they feel they are not updated following consultation and do not know if and how their issues are being addressed. They said they want the City Corporation to trust young people and involve them in the decisions that impact them.

What we will achieve

Our ambition is for all our children and young people, regardless of background and circumstance, to feel valued and an integral part of the City community. We will shift our focus to view children and young people as assets and an invaluable resource in shaping services. We will enhance our advocacy and complaints processes, so that we are more accountable to them and they are empowered to bring about change. We will involve children, young people and their families in decisions that impact them and, wherever possible, give them the ability to exercise choice over their services. We will develop communication methods for our vulnerable groups that are tailored to meet their needs. Our aim is for our services to be culturally appropriate for all and for inclusion and diversity to be championed in everything we do.

We will

- Review and streamline our consultation and feedback process with children and young people.
- Improve our communication channels to our young people so they are aware of what is available to them and make it easier to contribute to consultations. We will focus on the needs of our vulnerable groups and develop innovative ways to communicate with them, such as using more visual methods, to ensure their voices are heard.
- Work with the SPICE team to consider if we can use time credits to encourage participation and create an asset-based approach to co-production.
- Work with our children with SEND and their families to give them the skills and knowledge to access services independently, make a contribution, and challenge our thinking.

⁵ http://centerforborgerdialog.dk/sites/default/files/CFB_images/bannere/The_Challenge_of_Co-production.pdf

⁶ Prilleltensky, I & O (2006) *Promoting Well Being* Hoboken, Wiley.

⁷ <http://shura.shu.ac.uk/16975/3/Gornall%20CoProduction.pdf>

- Improve the reach, relevance and quality of services through the new Youth Service and the Youth Programme Board so they cater to young people from all backgrounds and enable them to contribute to their community.
- Review the requirements of our hard to reach groups and monitor the take-up of services to ensure they reach all sections of the communities we serve.
- Increase understanding of the complaints procedure among our children and young people, and particularly to vulnerable groups, to ensure it is accessible and easy to understand.

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Health and wellbeing

Our children and young people enjoy good health and wellbeing

Why this is a priority

Health and wellbeing in the first years of a person's life, particularly from conception until 5 years of age, has a significant impact into adolescence and adulthood⁸. Giving every child the best start in life is endorsed as the most important recommendation for reducing health inequalities in the Marmot Review as it can break the links between early disadvantage and poor outcomes later in life⁹.

The data we have, together with local intelligence, indicate that babies in the Square Mile generally have a good start in life. There are low numbers of mothers who are smoking at time of birth, low numbers of underweight babies, and good breastfeeding uptake. However, there are still issues that need addressing. Child poverty is persistent in parts of the Square Mile and these children are at greater risk of many health issues. The Square Mile suffers from poor air quality and our population-attributable mortality is higher than the London average. Most City babies are born outside of City and Hackney so it is difficult to signpost them to our maternity and early years services. The Square Mile has a network of gardens, churchyards and plazas but they are often small and are intensely used. A lack of green space has come up repeatedly as a health and wellbeing issue from residents in the City. It has been demonstrated that access to green infrastructure can have positive effects on both mental and physical health. Poor mental health is one of the biggest health challenges facing our society. It is difficult to obtain reliable local data on young people and mental health but we know that nationally one in ten children suffers from mental health issues and most of adult mental health issues begin before the age of 18. Upstream investment to prevent health issues arising and intervening early when they do will keep children healthy and have far reaching positive consequences for their physical and mental health and wellbeing.

Public Health in the City of London Corporation has a strong relationship with the London Borough of Hackney as we share a Director of Public Health and a Clinical Commissioning Group. A number of public health services are also commissioned in partnership with the London Borough of Hackney. We have built relationships with Tower Hamlets CCG to ensure that the needs of City of London residents who are registered with a Tower Hamlets GP are recognised and met and that service pathways are clear

Our young people and their families have told us that they want access to better outdoor spaces including football pitches and playgrounds and cheaper access to gyms and swimming pools.

What we will achieve

We will work in partnership to improve physical and mental health and wellbeing from conception, to birth and throughout life and for every child to be prepared to be self-sufficient and have the support that enables them to live happy and healthy lives. Our ambition is that every City baby is healthy at birth, receives good nutrition and maintains a healthy weight. They will have access to open space, exposure to green infrastructure and they will engage in activities that promote mental wellbeing and integrate healthy behaviours into everyday routines. Any child or young person that develops a health issue will receive the highest quality care and be supported to make a swift recovery.

We will

- Train front line staff in Making Every Contact Count so they can identify the health needs of our children, promote healthy behaviours and signpost them to appropriate services.

⁸https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/evidence_base_for_a_healthy_early_years_programme_in_london_jan_2016.pdf

⁹ <https://www.local.gov.uk/marmot-review-report-fair-society-healthy-lives>

- Improve our knowledge of the mental health needs of our children and young people to develop our provision of mental health and wellbeing services, with a focus on those who are at greater risk of mental health issues such as LGBTQ+ young people.
- Tackle unhealthy environments by delivering improved infrastructure for safe active travel, sport and exercise and providing easy access to healthy and affordable food in the local area.
- Improve our early health data to better understand the health needs of our 0-5 population.
- Review the pathway for new mothers to access maternity and early years services and develop an integrated health promotion offer for children and families through the integrated commissioning transformation.
- Work with City and Hackney and Tower Hamlets CCGs and Public Health teams to promote City resident needs and ensure access to any emerging integrated service models for City residents.
- Co-design new health services with our children and young people so they are acceptable, accessible and relevant for the users.
- Work with Open Spaces to review and enhance the outdoor provision available for our children and young people, including those with SEND, and help residents make better use of outdoor resources both in and outside of the Square Mile. We will support open spaces' ambition to develop a greener city to improve physical and mental health.
- Explore options to increase the number of voluntary smoke-free green spaces in the City.
- Support the implementation of low emission neighbourhoods and activities to improve air quality, particularly around schools.

Community

Our children and young people grow up with a sense of belonging as part of cohesive and resilient communities. They are able to create and participate in the cultural and creative opportunities available in the Square Mile.

Why this is a priority

We want our children and young people to be active members of cohesive, resilient and thriving communities where they are supported by strong networks. High social and cultural capital is associated with better health, greater educational attainment, better employment levels and lower crime rates. This not only improves the area for everyone but provides children and young people with the foundation for a happy and successful life. Community spaces provide a place for people to come together, take part in activities and form relationships. They are integral to creating cohesive societies. We want to ensure that children and young people have access to sufficient and high-quality community spaces.

The Square Mile is a unique place to grow up with many arts, cultural and heritage activities on your doorstep. These activities are crucial to the development of imagination, self-expression and creativity and enable children and young people to gain cultural capital which can have a profound impact on life chances. Children and young people from poorer backgrounds are less likely to engage in cultural and extra-curricular activities¹⁰. We must ensure this does not happen in the Square Mile and that our wealth of cultural opportunities provide a means of increasing social mobility and reducing inequalities. Children and young people need to not only visit and participate in culture, but also to be active producers of culture through opportunities to create, exhibit, share and perform

Our young people and their families have told us they want better youth club facilities and they would like more opportunities to visit the Square Mile attractions, including better opening hours on weekends.

What we will achieve

Our ambition is for all children and young people to feel engaged with and able to shape their local communities. We will improve our community spaces and youth clubs so our young people have access to facilities they want to use. All our children, regardless of background and circumstance, are aware of, able to and feel comfortable taking advantage of the cultural activities available in the Square Mile. We will use our unique position in the heart of Capital as a vehicle to improving the life chances of all our children and reducing the gap in outcomes for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

We will

- Improve the facilities at Green Box and other spaces used to run youth activities.
- Maintain and increase green and open spaces in the Square Mile.
- Protect, curate and promote world-class heritage assets, cultural experiences and events for enrichment, inspiration and learning that is accessible for all our children and young people through Culture Mile and Culture Mile Learning. We will work with the Culture Mile Learning teams to ensure uptake of cultural activities from our children and young people and develop programmes of work to target and improve participation from disadvantaged groups.
- Provide opportunities for children and young people to develop the skills and confidence as art and culture creators.

¹⁰ <https://www.anewdirection.org.uk/research/cultural-capital>

- Enhance our libraries and the other community facilities on our estates to provide for community programmes and activities with partners.
- Explore options for developing more multi-purpose spaces in the Square Mile that can be used by families as well as workers.
- Reach out to children and young people at risk to provide and facilitate activities that support social wellbeing and cohesion.
- We will raise awareness of our young population and their needs across the whole City community to increase understanding and positive perceptions of this group.

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Delivering this vision

Implementation

This is an overarching plan that provides a summary of intentions and the strategic framework to guide thinking and decision-making for all services affecting children and young people over the next three years. We have kept this plan simple and focused, concentrating on five priorities and setting out manageable actions and objectives for each one. This plan will be supported by a detailed delivery plan with clear and measurable actions and indicators for each priority.

There are a number of strategies and policy documents that sit underneath this strategy, as shown in diagram below. These inform service level planning, driving activity that is overseen by different teams within the Children and Young People Service, and will contribute to the delivery of this plan.

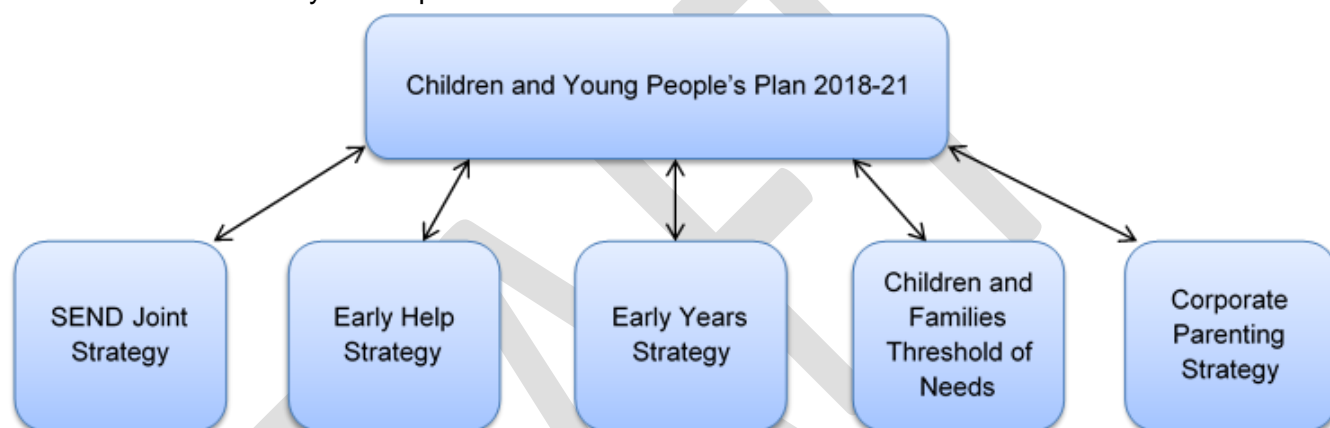


Figure 1. Strategies and documents that sit under the CYPP

Governance

This plan will be governed by the Children's Executive Board (CEB) who will receive regular update reports to monitor its progress and assess the plan's impact against its objectives. The CEB will champion the vision and priorities of the plan, provide action focused leadership, hold partners to account and provide challenge to work being delivered across the system. Membership of the CEB currently includes:

- CoL Children Social Care team
- CoL Early Years and Education team
- CoL Public Health team
- CoL commissioning team
- CHSCB
- City of London Police
- City and Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group
- Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group
- Health service providers
- The City of London Multi-Academy Trust
- Partnership for Young London
- City Schools Representation

Supporting our Corporate and Divisional aims

This strategy has been shaped by the Corporate Plan 2018-23 and the Department of Community and Children Services (DCCS) business plan 2017-22. This plan directly impacts a number of the Corporate Plan's outcomes:

Outcome 1: People are safe and feel safe.

Outcome 2: People enjoy good health and wellbeing.

Outcome 3: People have equal opportunities to enrich their lives and reach their full potential.

Outcome 4: Communities are cohesive and have the facilities they need.

This plan will also contribute to the delivery of other corporate strategies and Corporate Plan outcomes as follows:

Outcome 8: We have access to the skills and talent. This plan will help deliver a skills pipeline for the City, London and UK.

Outcome 10: We inspire enterprise, excellence, creativity and collaboration. Through this plan we aim to inspire more children and young people to greater things by involving them in the design of the City's inspiring places and activities.

The CYPP 2018-21 sits below the DCCS business plan and contributes to its delivery by mirroring its five priorities and applying them to the specific needs of our children and young people population.

This plan also supports and is supported by the delivery of other DCCS strategic priorities:

Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy

-All children have the best start in life

Education Strategy

-Develop excellent employment opportunities and pathways

Mental Health Strategy

-Improve the mental health of people in the City and keep people well