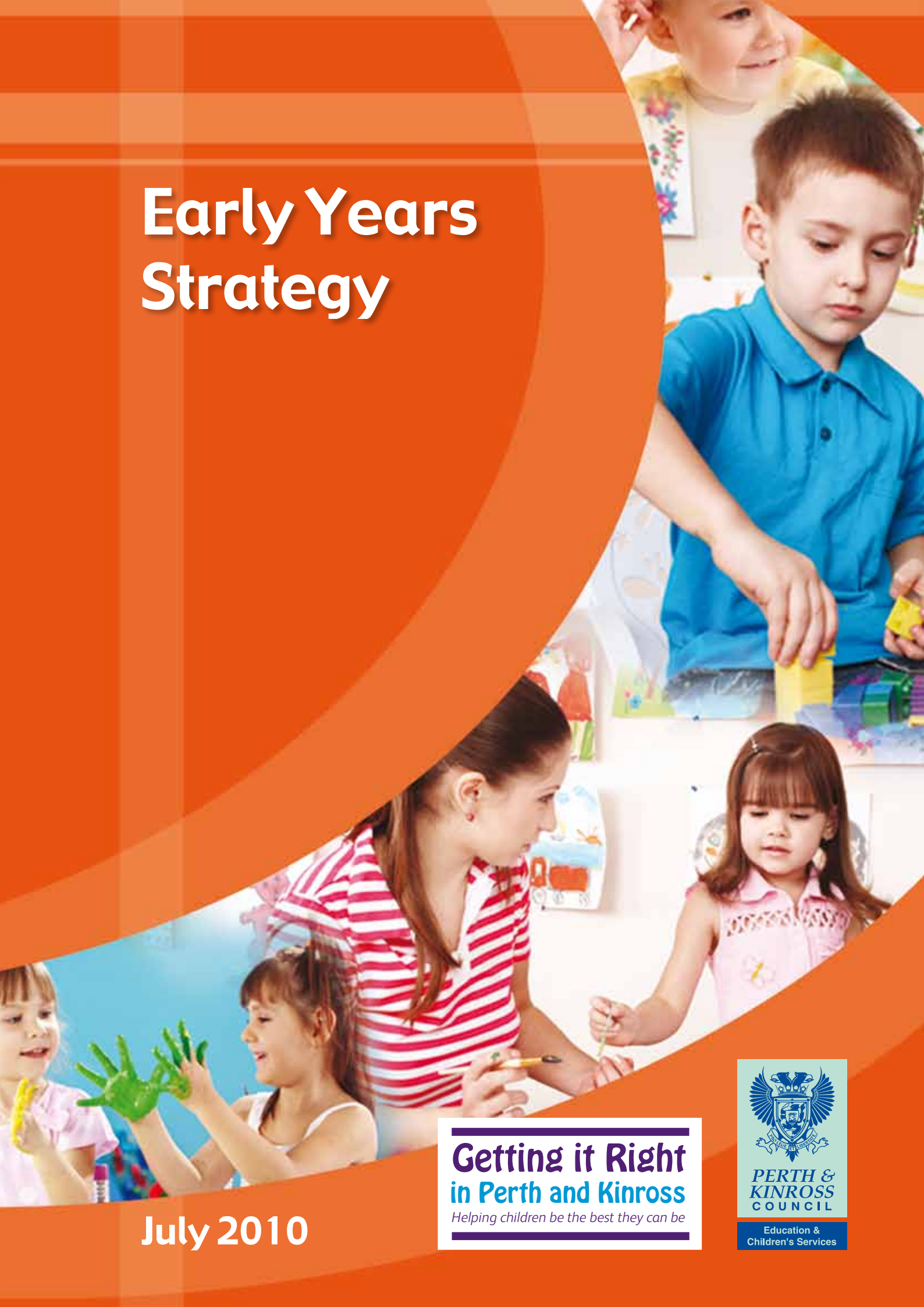


# Early Years Strategy



**Getting it Right  
in Perth and Kinross**

*Helping children be the best they can be*



**PERTH &  
KINROSS  
COUNCIL**

Education &  
Children's Services

**July 2010**

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*Although the Early Years Strategy is an Education & Children's Services strategy it is recognised that further strengthening the collaborative working across community planning partners and with families and communities that already exists will be key to its success.*

# Introduction

*“Young children experience their world as an environment of relationships, and these relationships affect virtually all aspects of their development - intellectual, social, emotional, physical, behavioural and moral. The quality and stability of a child’s human relationships in the early years lay the foundation for a whole range of later developmental outcomes that really matter - self-confidence and sound mental health, motivation to learn, achievement in school and in later life, the ability to control aggressive impulses and resolve conflicts in non-violent ways, knowing the difference between right and wrong, having the capacity to develop and sustain casual friendships and intimate relationships and ultimately to be a successful parent oneself.”*

Young Children Develop in an Environment of Relationships  
National Scientific Council on the Developing Child (USA) 2004

In Perth and Kinross there is recognition that the care experiences and opportunities of our earliest years, including pre-birth, provide a foundation which shapes future adult life. As research continues to identify the connections between our earliest years and a range of social, physical and mental health outcomes, the need to invest in a strategic approach to the planning, development and delivery of high quality services has never been stronger. The Perth and Kinross Early Years Strategy identifies the work which is required to be undertaken across the authority area, and among all the community planning partners, in ensuring the best possible start for our children, one which will ensure they are equipped to face the successes and challenges of adult life.

Within the context of this Strategy, the early years of a child’s life have been defined as the months before birth to age eight. However, there is a clear acknowledgement that the needs of some children will require an early intervention approach to be extended beyond this age, and that services will be flexible in their support of individuals and families.

The Strategy is to be viewed as an overarching approach for everyone working with children in this period of their life, including those involved in Child and Families Services, Childcare and Play Services, Community Learning and Development, Education, Family Support, Health, Housing and the public, private and voluntary sectors.

In essence, implementation of the Strategy will bring about a **refocusing of services** to provide **early intervention** which is **integrated, appropriately staged** and **accessible** for children and families.

**Please note:** *Throughout this Strategy, the term ‘parent’ covers mothers, fathers, carers and other adults with parental responsibility.*

# Vision

*"We will support all our children and young people to be the best they can be."*

Perth and Kinross Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership 2008

There is much to celebrate within the Early Years within Perth and Kinross; the success of pre-school and ante pre-school provision; establishment of a 'Team around the Child' approach for children in their early years with complex needs; innovative approaches in nursery and primary schools; the implementation of the Parenting Strategy; positive HMle primary school inspections and Child Protection Inspection. Strong partnerships exist supported by Education & Children's Services 'Integrated Working Policy', and we have a competent and skilled workforce. However, there is still work to be done, building further on this strong foundation and on both the established and emerging good practice which has been recognised both locally and across Scotland. The Early Years Strategy will support the delivery of this and the national outcomes.

The Perth and Kinross Early Years Strategy sets high expectations for our youngest children, their families and the communities in which they live, and complements the Perth and Kinross Parenting Strategy and Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). The development of new community campuses, local Integrated Children's Services Partnerships, improved access to services through full-time assisted places within some nurseries, and the development of nurturing approaches and strategies to foster resilience in children, will all support the development of more holistic support for young children and their families.

This strategy is informed by the 'Early Years Framework' (Scottish Government 2008) and strengthens the vision for children in their early years, outlining specific objectives and a series of priorities for action. It will guide the development of early years services and early intervention for the long term. (Action Plan - Appendix 1)

Key to the success of the Strategy will be the collaborative working across community planning partners and with families and communities. Consultation will be firmly embedded in the development of services.

The Early Years Strategy is part of an approach across Perth and Kinross which will ensure delivery of the national and local outcomes identified within the Perth and Kinross Single Outcome Agreement.

In addition to improved access to universal services for children and families most in need, our vision for the early years includes a focus on prevention, early intervention and targeted support to the most vulnerable children (including our responsibilities toward 'Looked After' children). Services will be more streamlined, accessible and coherent, ensuring a continuum of support from pregnancy to primary. Children will receive the support and services they require, wherever possible, based in their local community, delivered by a team of professionals using integrated and collaborative approaches to ensure individual and family needs are met and outcomes are improved.

# Context

In any development of Early Years work in Perth and Kinross it is important to take cognisance of the national and local drivers which set the context for this. The overarching themes emerging are:

## National Context

There are seven core national initiatives that are central to the strategic development of an Early Years Strategy in Perth and Kinross:

### 1. Early Years Framework 2008

This Framework sets out an approach which desires to see investment in early years, refocusing services towards prevention and early intervention and embraces the role of parents and communities. It directs local authorities and their partners to implement this framework through the mechanisms of their single outcome agreements and community planning processes and to focus on outcomes.

The main aims are:

- ❑ *refocusing of services to Early Years, particularly antenatal - 3 years;*
- ❑ *integrated working, simplifying and streamlining delivery of services, more effective collaboration;*
- ❑ *developing capacity and skills of services to work with parents;*
- ❑ *adult services to focus more on needs of children;*
- ❑ *improve outcomes for children and families;*
- ❑ *realigning and prioritising resources to offer more effective and accessible support to all families.*

### 2. Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

This programme underlines the need for appropriate, proportionate and timely support for children through integrated multi-agency intervention where necessary, and has begun to develop tools to enable this. The Child Protection Reform programme and Integrated Assessment Framework are encompassed within this.

### 3. Curriculum for Excellence

This aims to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum for children and young people from 3 to 18 years old. It is firmly focused on learners' needs and is designed to enable them to develop the four capacities. Its aim is to ensure that we help develop and educate children and invest in them to become:

- ❑ *successful learners with enthusiasm and motivation for learning;*
- ❑ *confident individuals with physical, mental and emotional wellbeing;*
- ❑ *responsible citizens with respect for others;*
- ❑ *effective contributors with resilience and self-reliance.*

The development of *Curriculum for Excellence* should lead to improved quality of learning and teaching and increased attainment and achievement for all children and young people in Scotland.

#### 4. Birth to Three Principles

This is guidance from the Scottish Government that sets a context for high-quality care and education, and identifies key features that support and promote sensitive and well informed approaches to work for this age group and their parents. The guidance is based on three key features through which effective support and learning opportunities for very young children can be developed:

- ❑ *Relationships*
- ❑ *Responsive Care*
- ❑ *Respect*

#### 5. Achieving Our Potential: A Framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland

The Scottish Government has published *A Framework to tackle poverty and income inequality in Scotland* to work towards the target of increasing the overall income and the proportion of income earned by the lowest 30% of people as a group by 2017. The framework outlines the key actions required by Government and its partners, including the strengthening of income maximisation work, launching a campaign to raise awareness of statutory workers' rights and supporting people who find it hardest to get into jobs or use public services.

#### 6. Equally Well (The Scottish Government, 2008)

*Equally Well* (June 2008) is the joint Scottish Government and COSLA report of the Ministerial Task Force on health inequalities. An Implementation plan was produced in December 2008.

#### 7. Better Health, Better Care: Action Plan (The Scottish Government, 2007)

This Action Plan sets out the Government's programme to deliver a healthier Scotland by helping people to sustain and improve their health, especially in disadvantaged communities, ensuring better, local and faster access to health care. The HEAT targets listed in this document are key drivers for Health Scotland's work.

*Other relevant initiatives and legislation are included in Appendix 2.*

*"Perth and Kinross demonstrates a strong commitment to Best Value and continuous improvement and an appetite for better services for the area"*

Audit Scotland - Best Value Audit highlighted

*"Key strengths - range of projects and activities for young people and adults; community link workers and the community capacity staff"*

HMIe - Community Learning and Development

## Local Context

Integrated working is well established within Education & Children's Services and across partner agencies.

The following set the context which the Early Years Strategy will build on and the challenges that need to be addressed:

1. *Education & Children's Services Policy Framework - Integrated Working*
2. *Single Outcome Agreement and Community Planning Process*
3. *Community Campuses*
4. *Integrated assessment for children in their early years with complex needs*
5. *Perth and Kinross Parenting Strategy*
6. *Integrated Children's Services Plan and Locality Development*
7. *Emotional Health and Wellbeing Initiatives*
8. *Integrated Assessment Framework (IAF)*
9. *Unborn Baby Protocol*
10. *NHS Tayside Health Equity Strategy (2010)*

**More detailed information on these developments is contained in Appendix 3.**

Early Years working comes under a broad range of regulatory frameworks including:

- Her Majesty's Inspector of Education*
- Social Work Inspection Agency*
- Care Commission*
- Scottish Social Services Council*
- General Teaching Council*
- Audit Scotland*

*"Involving service users and other stakeholders in care planning and service planning; systematic recording and reporting of social work risks"*

SWIA - Social Work Inspection Agency

*"Almost all local authority nurseries and partner provider centres received positive evaluations of the curriculum, pupils' learning experience and the quality of provision in meeting children's needs"*

HMIe - Pre-school Inspections

# Demographic Profile

Perth and Kinross is a large area of 5,286 square kilometres and has an estimated population of 142,140 (2007 General Registrar Office for Scotland (GROS)). It is ranked 5th in Scotland in terms of area and 14th in Scotland in terms of population.

It is a diverse area comprising many discrete communities, each with its own distinct challenges and opportunities. Approximately one third of the population live in Perth City. At the other extreme, remote communities like Kinloch Rannoch pose many challenges in terms of access to, and delivery of, essential services.

The biggest challenge in the coming years is to deal effectively with population growth - Perth and Kinross has the highest projected growth rate in Scotland. This will present challenges both in terms of infrastructure and increased demand for services. The 2006 to 2031 projections suggest that there will be approximately 8,000 additional births compared to the trends identified by the 2004 based projections. This equates to an average of 320 additional births per annum. Health services from pre-natal and maternity provision through to early years' health support will require expanding capacity to meet the increasing demand.

Perth and Kinross has the third highest level of migrant workers in Scotland, after Edinburgh and Glasgow.

The percentage of families headed by a single parent is 8.01% and the percentage of households with no adults in employment with dependant children is 2.91%.

66% of new mothers in some areas were still breast-feeding after 6 weeks in 2006. However, the figure is considerably lower in areas experiencing deprivation.

The teenage conception rate in the under 16 age group has fluctuated around the Scottish average over time. Numbers are small and this has partly caused fluctuations in the rates, nevertheless, the overall trend is reducing.

*Further demographic information is contained in Appendix 4.*

# A Staged Approach to Development in Perth and Kinross

The Scottish Government has set a 10 year time frame for the implementation of the Early Years Framework and will look to **improvement in outcomes** for children rather than actions. The Scottish Government sets out 10 elements of transformational change within the model, which they consider to be important factors for success and which are reflected within this Strategy:

- ❑ *a coherent approach;*
- ❑ *helping children, families and communities to secure outcomes for themselves;*
- ❑ *breaking cycles of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through early years;*
- ❑ *a focus on engagement and empowerment of children, families and communities;*
- ❑ *using the strength of universal services to deliver prevention and early interventions;*
- ❑ *putting quality at the heart of service delivery;*
- ❑ *services that meet the needs of children and families;*
- ❑ *improving outcomes and children's quality of life through play;*
- ❑ *simplifying and streamlining delivery;*
- ❑ *more effective collaborations.*

In order to implement the Strategy it is necessary to build upon these elements within individual agencies and services, and across partner organisations to achieve improved outcomes. The improvements sought through the implementation of this strategy will be addressed on a staged basis and clear tasks are identified. However, it will be an organic process; development at each stage will be evaluated and inform the implementation and future agenda. Therefore, to a degree, the elements of change need to be flexible and some may be dependant on financial resources available. This will enable Early Years Services to remain responsive to developing local and national contexts and allow services to ensure the maximum return on emerging opportunities.

Whilst each of the stages identified overleaf set out key development tasks, it is important to be mindful of the ongoing work by early years staff, teams and services across the authority who will continue to work together to deliver core and statutory provision for young children and their families.

## Stage 1: 2010–2012

### Outcomes

- Agreed integrated Early Years approach to support children and their families across all agencies.*
- Simplified and streamlined delivery of services.*
- Increased effective collaborations.*
- Improved access to services in rural areas.*
- Framework for performance measurement will be in place.*

### We will:

- develop Early Years Hubs and Integrated Services within a core number of rural areas in Perth and Kinross;*
- plan, prepare and implement extended nursery provision (15 hours per week);*
- increase the skills and capacity of the Early Years workforce through appropriate training and by the sharing of local, national and international best practice;*
- build the capacity, knowledge and skills of staff working within all early years provision to meet a broad range of individual needs, with a focus on the importance of communication skills, attachment, resilience and empathy in children;*
- support priorities identified by the Parenting Strategy including involving significant male carers and inclusion of males within the workforce;*
- research and investigate examples of best practice which support innovation of change;*
- with partners, map, research and develop proposals to strengthen services which support children 0-3 years and their families;*
- further develop integrated working in line with 'Getting It Right For Every Child';*
- further develop integrated working and skills to respond to particularly vulnerable children including children affected by substance misuse, domestic abuse, parental learning disabilities or mental health concerns;*
- integrate the inter-agency assessment of very young children with complex health needs (Team Around the Child) within this strategy;*
- launch the Family Information Service and Local Family Information Directories;*
- improve access to Family Learning and Adult Learning opportunities within localities;*
- carry out an audit of Social Care staff qualifications for registration with the Scottish Social Services Council;*
- ensure staff across partner agencies have core skills in evaluating the impact of practice on children and families;*
- gather relevant data to inform evaluation and future planning;*
- establish performance framework;*
- explore local Parenting Sub-Groups developing local timetables of parenting and early years activities.*

## Stage 2: 2012–2015

### Outcomes

- ❑ *Cycles of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through early years are reduced.*
- ❑ *Increased focus on engagement and empowerment of children, families and communities.*
- ❑ *Delivery of prevention and early interventions has maximised the use of universal services.*
- ❑ *Services meet the needs of children and families.*
- ❑ *Improved community and service user engagement in service development and delivery.*
- ❑ *Enhanced delivery and improvement in quality of service.*

### We will:

- ❑ *integrate Early Years planning into wider locality-based planning structures;*
- ❑ *review deployment of Nursery Teachers to ensure access to a teacher for all children;*
- ❑ *establish additional Hubs as identified in Stage 1;*
- ❑ *further develop enhanced support for children aged 0-3 years and their families across Perth and Kinross;*
- ❑ *develop wider opportunities for improved quality play experiences in the early years;*
- ❑ *extend services to support parents, such as support to access employment and further education;*
- ❑ *evaluate and learn from work with parents affected by substance misuse, “Change is a Must” project;*
- ❑ *support access into employment and training through further development of wider access to childcare;*
- ❑ *ensure parents and families are receiving information and support to access appropriate benefits to increase household income and reduce poverty;*
- ❑ *implement and refine the Integrated Assessment Framework and begin to roll out implementation across all partners;*
- ❑ *develop projects with secondary schools which focus on Sexual Health and Parenting and provide opportunities for Skills for Work;*
- ❑ *develop and implement support networks for parents with young children to enable families and communities to help themselves;*
- ❑ *develop a common approach to evaluation against key outcomes across all partners.*

## Stage 3: 2015–2020

- ❑ *Children, families and communities have the capacity to secure outcomes for themselves.*
- ❑ *Almost all Services are evaluated as high quality.*

Consolidation and review of work undertaken at Stages 1 and 2 leading to identification of further key actions.

## Resources

Many of the actions in this strategy need to be achieved, at least in the short and medium term, through changing what we do within existing services. The longer term priorities may involve an element of new capacity.

We need to realign existing resources to begin refocusing of services and moving towards a preventative and early intervention approach. Key to this is ***simplifying and streamlining delivery to ensure a coherent approach*** and ***using the strength of universal services to deliver prevention and early interventions.***

We need to ensure there is greater awareness of existing services and information is co-ordinated and disseminated to both the public and professionals.

Access to existing services needs to be made easier for families. This demands attention to the nature of publicity material, making special provision for certain groups, involving service users and involvement with community capacity building colleagues.

Through a locality model we will begin by providing a greater focus within existing services on the development of parenting skills, broader roles in the workforce and enhancing the role of childcare, pre-school and school in family learning. This will be supported by a variety of services to provide an integrated approach.

Central to refocusing of services will be the development and use of local evidence, and early identification and accurate assessment of needs. This will also inform future planning for new capacity if needed.

# Implementation of the Strategy

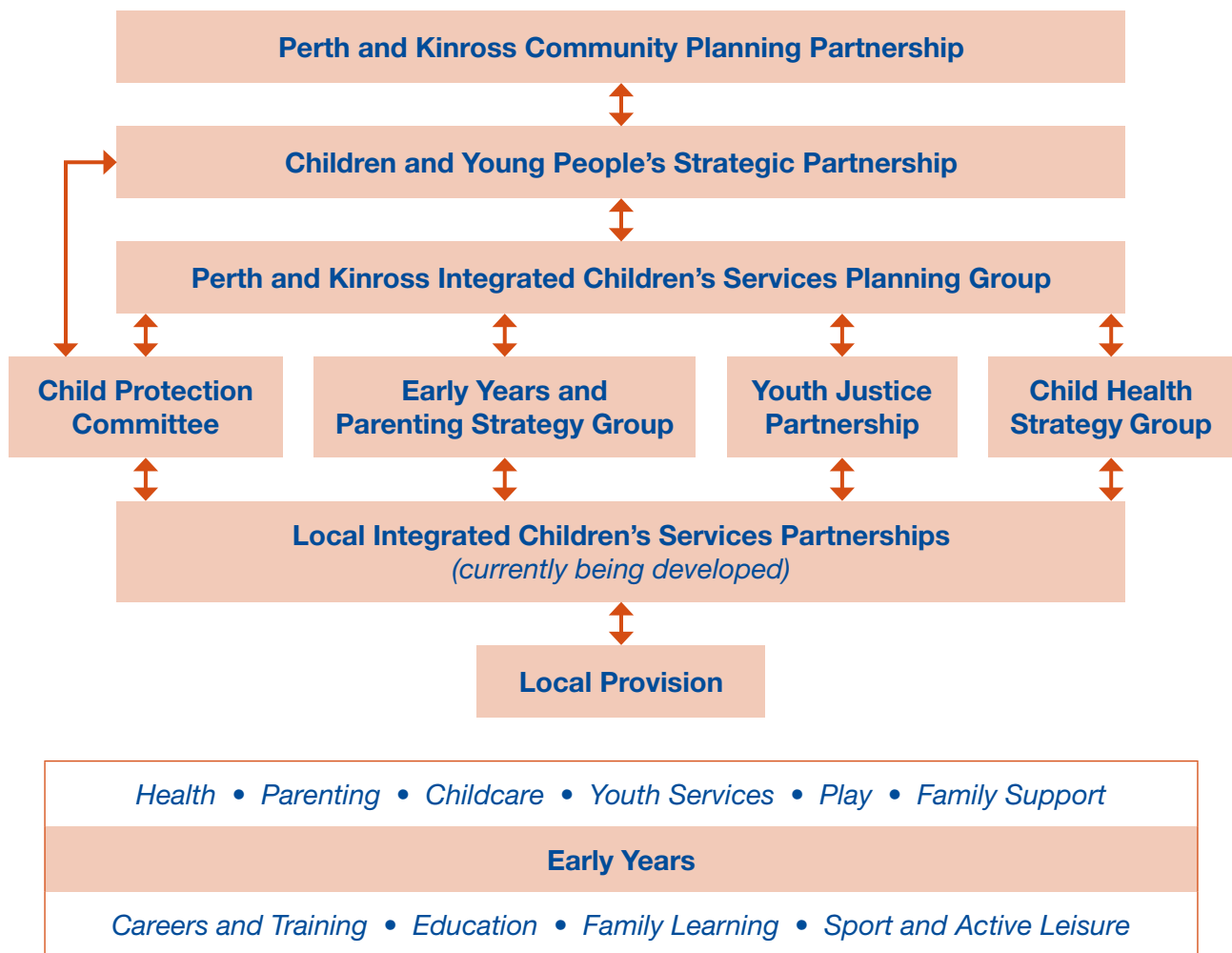
The Action Plan (see Appendix 1), identifies the lead service within a collaborative approach, with responsibility for taking forward the various work streams which will deliver this Strategy.

The realignment of structures and services will ensure the progression of, and coherence between, these work streams. Staff leading on the implementation of the Strategy will report directly to the Depute Director (ECS) and also to the Strategy Steering Group comprising:

- ❑ Service Manager, Education Services
- ❑ Service Manager, Cultural & Community Services
- ❑ Service Manager, Children & Families Services
- ❑ Team Leader, SW Early Years
- ❑ Childcare Manager
- ❑ Quality Improvement Officer
- ❑ Staffing Team Leader
- ❑ Housing & Community Care Representative

Overall scrutiny of the implementation of the Strategy rests with the Education & Children’s Services Senior Management Team, but the delivery of the strategy will also be monitored through the Early Years and Parenting Group, which is a sub group of the Integrated Children’s Services Planning Group.

The following diagram identifies the emerging planning structure through which the Early Years Strategy will be implemented. This model will ensure that further planning is streamlined and responsive to local needs and that the Early Years Strategy complements other areas of services development and delivery for children, their families and communities.



# Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring of progress of the Action Plan will be undertaken by the Strategy Steering Group, reporting via Education & Children's Services Senior Management Team to the Perth and Kinross Community Planning Partnership in line with the planning arrangements detailed overleaf.

A range of mechanisms will be used to support evaluation of outcomes against baseline measures, including the participation of Service Users in line with National Standards for Community Engagement, Stakeholder views and performance against relevant measures identified within the Single Outcome Agreement, Integrated Children's Services Plan and Service Business Management Improvement Plans.

The following action plan is a work in progress and will be amended to reflect prevailing circumstances

These actions in broad terms should now be taken forward in action plans by all teams to improve outcomes for young children and their families

## Action Plan – Stage 1 (2010–2012)

Progress as of April 2010

Code: **Red** indicates start still to be made

**Amber** - a start has been made

**Green** - well progressed

Priorities	Key Actions	Outcomes	Timescales	Lead Service
Develop Early Years hubs and Integrated Services within a core number of rural areas in Perth and Kinross.	<p><b>Continue to develop and implement the model for Early Years hubs reflecting the experiences and expectations of services.</b></p> <p><i>well progressed</i></p>	<p>Simplified and streamlined delivery of services.</p> <p>Increased effective collaborations.</p> <p>Improved access to services in rural areas.</p>	August 2009 and ongoing	School Improvement Services
	<p><b>Identify the needs of families within the hubs and plan to meet these by establishing mechanisms for partnership working.</b></p> <p><i>well progressed</i></p>	<p>Development of full time assisted places in local nurseries in each locality.</p>		
	<p><b>Review support for children and families criteria.</b></p> <p><i>well progressed</i></p>	<p>Clarification of roles and remits of supporting services and how they can assist in supporting hubs leads to improved targeting of service provision.</p> <p>Families receive the support they require, when they require it from locally based services where possible.</p>		

Priorities	Key Actions	Outcomes	Timescales	Lead Service
Plan, prepare and implement extended nursery provision (5 hours per week).	<p><b>Support the implementation of the commitment to extend nursery provision from 12½ hours to 15 hours per week in all pre-school education centres both local authority and partner providers.</b></p> <p><i>a start has been made</i></p>	Extension of provision leads to improved learning outcomes for young children.	August 2010 and ongoing	School Improvement Services
<p>Increase the skills and capacity of the Early Years workforce through appropriate training and by the sharing of local, national and international best practice.</p> <p>Build the capacity, knowledge and skills of staff working within all early years provision to meet a broad range of individual needs, with a focus on the importance of attachment, communication skills, resilience, and empathy in children.</p>	<p><b>Identify training needs of staff working in and supporting the Early Years, and plan a multi-agency programme of training to meet these.</b></p> <p><i>a start has been made</i></p>	Improved staff confidence, knowledge and understanding leads to improved quality of services and better outcomes for children and their families.	April 2010 and ongoing	All

Priorities	Key Actions	Outcomes	Timescales	Lead Service
Support priorities identified by the Parenting Strategy including involving significant male carers and inclusion of males within the workforce.	<p><b>Work with Human Resources and Staffing to identify opportunities to promote working within the Early Years to men.</b></p> <p><i>a start has been made</i></p> <p><b>Identify and make links with examples of successful projects supporting the recruitment and retention of men to the Early Years workforce.</b></p> <p><i>a start has been made</i></p> <p><b>Support staff engagement with male carers through the provision of training and the dissemination of best practice examples.</b></p> <p><i>a start still to be made</i></p>	Young children and families benefit from contact with positive male role models.	<p>May 2010 - November 2010</p> <p>September 2010</p>	<p>Support Services</p> <p>Cultural &amp; Community Services</p>
With partners, map, research and develop proposals to strengthen services which support children 0-3 years and their families.	<p><b>Identify working group to undertake an audit of current provision and to identify any gaps and plan to meet these.</b></p> <p><i>a start has been made</i></p>	Better co-ordination and targeting of services to the most vulnerable groups.	September 2010	<p>Children &amp; Families Services</p> <p>Cultural &amp; Community Services</p>
Further develop integrated working in line with 'Getting It Right For Every Child'.	<p><b>Undertake a series of multi-agency events to raise awareness and promote an understanding of GIRFEC and how this impacts on their working practice.</b></p> <p><i>a start has been made</i></p>	Agreed integrated Early Years approach to support children and their families across all agencies.	Ongoing	Children & Families Services

Priorities	Key Actions	Outcomes	Timescales	Lead Service
Launch the Family Information Service and Local Family Information Directories.	<p><b>Undertake a series of launch events within localities to promote access to the Directories.</b></p> <p><b>Re-brand the Childcare Information Service and launch as the Family Information Service to coincide with the service's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.</b></p> <p><i>well progressed</i></p>	Families have improved access to information about services and sources of support at a local and national level leading to increased capacity to achieve better outcomes for themselves.	October 2009 - January 2010	Cultural & Community Services
Improve access to Family Learning and Adult Learning opportunities within localities.	<p><b>Build partnerships with Early Years hubs and Community Crèche services to promote formal and informal learning and development opportunities for parents and carers.</b></p> <p><i>a start has been made</i></p>	<p>Increased confidence and skills of parents impacts on child's learning and achievements.</p> <p>Improved knowledge and skills leads to increased employability supporting families out of poverty.</p>	Ongoing from August 2009	Cultural & Community Services
Carry out an audit of Social Care staff qualifications for registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).	<p><b>Work with staffing to establish qualifications held and any gaps amongst staff which would impact on their ability to register.</b></p> <p><i>a start has been made</i></p>	All staff required to register with SSSC have the skills, knowledge and qualifications to do so leading to improved quality of service delivery.	June 2010	Children & Families Services
Ensure staff across partner agencies have core skills in evaluating the impact of practice on children and families.	<p><b>Offer opportunities to develop core skills in monitoring and evaluation to multi-agency groups of practitioners.</b></p> <p><i>a start has been made</i></p>	Increased evidence of impact of interventions is available to support further service development and delivery.	May 2010	All

Priorities	Key Actions	Outcomes	Timescales	Lead Service
Ensure information on Early Years and parenting activities is available across Perth and Kinross.	<p><b>Link with local 'what's on' guides to ensure use of existing resources is maximised.</b></p> <p><i>a start has been made</i></p>	Increased uptake of activities available in communities.	June 2010	Cultural & Community Services
Ensure that the range of provision within Perth City is realigned to meet the needs of children and families including the most vulnerable.	<p><b>Review the services across the city, with a particular focus on Crieff Road Pre-School Centre, Gowans and Inch View.</b></p> <p><i>a start has been made</i></p>	Enhanced provision for children and their families 0-5 within Perth City.	June 2011	School Improvement Services
Establish additional hubs.	<p><b>Review the identified needs of children and families and map against capacity within existing Nursery and Family Support provision to identify next phase of hub development.</b></p> <p><i>a start still to be made</i></p>	<p>Delivery of prevention and early interventions has maximised the use of universal services.</p> <p>Services meet the needs of children and families.</p> <p>5 further hubs available in rural areas improving access to support and early intervention for vulnerable children and their families.</p>	August 2011	School Improvement Services

## Action Plan – Stage 2 (2012–2015)

Priorities	Key Actions	Outcomes	Timescales	Lead Service
Integrate Early Years planning into wider locality-based planning structures.	<p>Review the current locality-based planning structures and map the agendas of each to identify themes common to children, young people and families.</p> <p>Establish the structures required to oversee the implementation of actions for children, young people and families and the structures required to support any focused areas of work and how these inter-relate.</p>	<p>Improved community and service user engagement in service development and delivery.</p> <p>Services meet the needs of children and families.</p> <p>Increased focus on engagement and empowerment of children, families and communities.</p> <p>Single locality approach to planning and monitoring of the development and delivery of services for children, young people and their families.</p>	2014-2015	All
Review deployment of Nursery Teachers to ensure access to a teacher for all children.	<p>Work with partners in Human Resources, Staffing and union representatives to undertake a review of the deployment of Nursery Teachers.</p> <p>Implement review recommendations.</p>	All children have the support of a Nursery Teacher during their pre-school experience leading to improved learning outcomes.	2012-2013	School Improvement Services

Priorities	Key Actions	Outcomes	Timescales	Lead Service
Further develop enhanced support for children aged 0-3 years and their families across Perth and Kinross.	Continue to implement the recommendations of the review of 0-3 provision undertaken in Stage 1.	<p>Delivery of prevention and early interventions has maximised the use of universal services.</p> <p>Increased support which meets the needs of individual children in their earliest years and their families consistently available across the authority area.</p>	Review 2013	Children & Family Services
Develop wider opportunities for improved quality play experiences in the early years.	Play@home and Stay and Play developed across Early Years hubs and within localities.	Improved opportunities for play impact on the physical health and wellbeing of very young children and their families.	Review impact March 2012	Cultural & Community Services
	Training and development opportunities for staff to include a focus on outdoor and active play within the early years.	Enhanced impact in children's social, emotional and cognitive development.	September 2012	
	Increase promotion of and access to Toybox, the toy lending service for parents within localities.		Review impact March 2012	School Improvement Services
	Develop staff awareness and training in research of the link between the development of symbolic play and language development in under 3's.	Enhanced impact on young children's social, emotional and cognitive development.		

Priorities	Key Actions	Outcomes	Timescales	Lead Service
Extend services to support parents such as childcare and support to access employment and further education.	<p>Increase integrated approaches to work by Adult services, Health and Children's services.</p> <p>Develop inter-agency training and integrated approaches to work, particularly in the areas of substance misuse, mental health, criminal justice and learning disabilities.</p>	Cycles of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through early years are reduced.	Review impact April 2012	Cultural & Community Services
Evaluate and learn from work with parents affected by substance misuse, 'Change is a Must' project.	Develop a series of recommendations to support the development of practice following an evaluation of 'Change is a Must.'	The development of working practices is supported by a sound evidence base.	August 2012	Children & Family Services
Ensure parents and families are receiving information and support to access appropriate benefits to increase household income and reduce poverty.	Family Information Service will work with Welfare Rights to produce a series of accessible leaflets and information resources which highlight the benefits parents and carers may be able to access.	<p>Cycles of poverty, inequality and poor outcomes in and through early years are reduced.</p> <p>Increased uptake of available benefits leading to increased household income.</p>	Review impact April 2012	Cultural & Community Services
Implement and refine the Integrated Assessment Framework and begin to roll out implementation across all partners.	Develop, pilot and implement an integrated assessment framework.	<p>Integrated Assessment Framework used across agencies.</p> <p>Clearer approach to referral pathways.</p>	<p>Pilot May - Dec 2010</p> <p>Complete roll out June 2012</p>	Children & Family Services
<p>Develop projects with secondary schools which focus on Sexual Health and Parenting.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for Skills for Work.</p>	Working groups to be convened consisting of School Guidance, Health, Parenting and Social Work staff to develop an action plan to implement a planned programme of learning.	Increased knowledge and understanding amongst pupils supports informed decision making about their own health and relationship choices.	2012-2014	School Improvement Services

Priorities	Key Actions	Outcomes	Timescales	Lead Service
Develop and implement support networks for parents with young children to enable families and communities to help themselves.	Work in partnership with Health, Community, Parenting staff and Home Start to develop and pilot support networks of parents and carers across the continuum of need.	Networks are seen as a route to community support for parents and carers enabling people to secure better outcomes for themselves.	2013	All
Further develop a common approach to evaluation against key outcomes across all partners.	Identify a core evaluative framework which can be applied by all partners delivering Early Years services.	Increased evidence on impact of interventions is available to support further service development and delivery.	2012	All
Establish additional hubs.	Review the identified needs of children and families and map against capacity within existing Nursery and Family Support provision to identify next phase of hub development.	<p>Delivery of prevention and early interventions has maximised the use of universal services.</p> <p>Services meet the needs of children and families.</p> <p>Further hubs available in rural areas improving access to support and early intervention for vulnerable children and their families.</p>	2012-2015	School Improvement Services

### Action Plan – Stage 3 (2015–2020)

Consolidation and review of work undertaken at Stages 1 and 2 leading to identification of further key actions.

## Relevant Initiatives and Legislation

- ❑ *Skills for Scotland*
- ❑ *The Mental Health of Children and Young People: A Framework for Promotion, Prevention and Care (FPPC) in October 2005*
- ❑ *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)*
- ❑ *Delivering for Mental Health (December 2006) and Delivering A Healthy Future (February 2007)*
- ❑ *National Standards for Community Engagement*
- ❑ *Infant Mental Health: A Guide for Practitioners*
- ❑ *Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004*
- ❑ *HALL 4*
- ❑ *Better Health, Better Care*
- ❑ *Children (Scotland) Act 1995*
- ❑ *Improving Health, Improving Learning*
- ❑ *Equally Well*
- ❑ *Achieving Our Potential*
- ❑ *Growing Up In Scotland*
- ❑ *“These are Our Bairns” - Corporate Parenting Responsibilities*

The following set the context which the Early Years Strategy will build on and the challenges that need to be addressed.

### 1. Education & Children's Services Policy Framework – Integrated Working

This policy articulates a continuing commitment within Education & Children's Services to the delivery of services through integrated working, both within the Service and with partners from other agencies and voluntary organisations.

### 2. Single Outcome Agreement and Community Planning Process

These will be the key mechanisms for putting this strategy into practice, feeding into localities as they develop, which will ensure a focus on outcomes.

### 3. Community Campuses

The development of 6 new community campuses as part of the Investment in Learning programme is providing an opportunity to further deliver integrated services, with partner agencies - including statutory and informal education; childcare; a range of cultural and community services and also health support.

### 4. Integrated Assessment for Children in their Early Years with Complex Needs

To further support arrangements for identifying the additional support needs and to co-ordinate multi-disciplinary support to children whose needs are complex and multiple, the Early Years Inter-Agency Panel was re-established in October 2008. Key workers became the first point of contact for families identified by the panel.

### 5. Perth and Kinross Parenting Strategy

The Perth and Kinross Parenting Strategy provides a clear framework within which information, services and support for parents and carers can be developed. The framework will be supported by a range of guidance materials for professionals to assist them in implementing evidenced, quality interventions which improve outcomes for children and families.

The Parenting Strategy will be rolled out in 6 localities through the development of local area parenting plans. These plans will address the priorities identified through an audit of parenting services (undertaken in 2008) and the Single Outcome Agreement. The strategy will also respond to identified individual and community needs in order to improve access to services in rural areas, and ensure that across Perth and Kinross, ***“our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed”***.

### 6. Integrated Children's Services Planning in Localities

In order to deliver the Integrated Children's Services Plan at a local level, Integrated Children's Services Partnerships have been set up in 6 localities across Perth and Kinross: Highland Perthshire; Strathearn; Eastern Perthshire; Kinross; South Perth and North Perth. The partnerships have representation from primary and secondary schools, Social Work,

Community Learning and Development, the Voluntary Sector, Careers, Housing, Childcare, Psychological Services, Police and Health. Their purpose is to ensure Better Outcomes for children and families in their locality and each partnership is developing a plan based on identified local needs. Each partnership is at a different stage in its development and agendas vary. This can be attributed in some way to issues such as rurality and previous opportunities which have been available to take forward integrated working around specific issues and funding.

## **7. Emotional Health and Wellbeing Initiatives**

A range of initiatives is being introduced into Perth and Kinross primary schools as well as through Health and Social Work services. Within primary schools these include nurture groups for children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties stemming from attachment issues, and a resilience programme, Bounce Back, which helps schools create an environment which fosters resilience in pupils. Health provides Baby Bumps and Beyond Baby Bumps, groups for young, vulnerable parents which provide health and social support. The Early Years Resource Team has developed a group for children with social and behavioural difficulties, Inside Out, which aims to improve emotional health and wellbeing.

## **8. Integrated Assessment Framework (IAF)**

Integrated and collaborative working are well established and supported by a number of inter-agency structures but will be developed further through an Integrated Assessment Framework. The Framework will be based on tiered levels of intervention and will provide a common framework for all services to work together as equal partners with a shared responsibility for children in need, as promoted by GIRFEC. The Framework will promote the systematic early identification of concerns around a child by all agencies from pregnancy onwards, and will build incrementally, as appropriate, to ensure that the child and family receive the support and services needed. This Framework will also ensure there are clearer referral pathways for all agencies. The Early Years Strategy will be a vehicle to pilot the Integrated Assessment Framework.

The IAF will be supported by the Information Sharing Protocol launched in December 2008 and which will be implemented more widely.

## **9. Unborn Baby Protocol**

Arrangements have been developed in partnership with health services to ensure the early identification of vulnerable antenatal clients where that vulnerability may result in their baby being considered a child in need. The protocol establishes an inter-agency pathway for referral and further assessment.

## **10. NHS Tayside Health Equity Strategy**

This NHS Tayside strategy is to promote health as much as it cares for ill health. It is about making a cultural change that is already starting to happen consistent throughout NHS Tayside and its partners, so that through a joined up effort communities can be helped to become stronger and healthier. This needs to happen jointly between NHS and traditional partners such as local authorities but also with parts of the voluntary sector.

Within Perth and Kinross there are 10 areas which are within the 20% most deprived in Scotland. The most deprived zones are found within the geographical areas of Fairfield (Perth City); Muirton (Perth City); Letham/Hillyland/Tulloch (Perth City); Perth City Centre and Rattray (Blairgowrie).

It should be noted that there are local pockets of deprivation within some of the rural communities which can be masked by general statistics. Whilst many of the issues are similar in each area, the solutions available in urban settings are not so readily applicable in more remote or rural settings and require more innovative approaches.

Placing requests for primary school places, where English is not the first language, have risen from 118 in 2006 to 350 in 2007.

The latest estimate of unemployment in Perth and Kinross is 5%.

The percentage of children under 18 is 21.62%.

## Children's Population

- ❑ 580 children under 16 living within Perth and Kinross had a sufficiently severe disability to qualify for a Disability Living Allowance in August 2006.
- ❑ There were 193 Looked After Children in Perth and Kinross in 2007-2008 (111 were looked after away from home).
- ❑ A total of 67 children were placed on the child protection register in 2008-2009. Out of 97 subject to a child protection case conference, 54% of these were children under the age of 5 years.

*Age of children subject to a child protection case conference:*

Age	Number
Unborn	6
0-12 months	10
1-5 years	33
6-11 years	20
12-16+	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>

- ❑ Between 1 April 2008 and 31 March 2009 a total of 2,285 child care concerns were recorded, representing an increase of 20% on the previous year.
- ❑ The latest GROS projections (2006-2031) indicated that Perth and Kinross has the highest projected growth rate in Scotland (22.2%).
- ❑ Perth and Kinross has a projected growth of 15.4% in the primary school age population between 2006 and 2031, compared with a national increase of only 4.51% over the same period.

- ❑ *The most common household characteristic affecting the children and young people who attend Initial Case Conferences is parental substance misuse. Poverty, social isolation, domestic abuse and housing instability/inadequacy are also significant factors.*
- ❑ *Parental substance misuse is the main reason for accommodating children.*
- ❑ *In some schools the levels of qualifications gained by boys is considerably lower than girls.*
- ❑ *In the most deprived areas of Perth and Kinross 27% of first-time mothers are aged 19 years or under, up to 42.9% of women are still smoking at the time of their first antenatal booking and as few as 23.8% of mothers continue to breast-feed 6-8 weeks after giving birth.*

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