



## Children Matter East

East of England Regional Children and Young Peoples  
VCS Forum



# *Building a sectors future*

## Workforce Development

*'Realising the voluntary and community  
sectors potential'*

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## Introduction

The East of England's Children and Young Peoples VCS (CYPVCS) workforce strategy and action plan has been developed to support the growth of the sector, and its role in developing Children's Trusts workforce strategies. Its publication coincides with;

- Children's Trusts establishing their own baseline analysis of workforce development, and
- A higher profile for Workforce Development as Go East and partners respond to Building Brighter Futures: Next Steps for the Children's workforce.

In addition there are national developments which will have an impact on the development of the CYPVCS workforce in the region, including:

1. The drive to create 'One' children's workforce
2. Support from the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) for the sector
3. Impending changes to Children's Trusts arrangements
4. The continuing commitment from government to grow the sector, including the development of a Third Sector Skills Council.
5. The development of new unitary authorities and the continuing impact of local government reorganisation

Every Organisation Matters (July 2008) a major Cabinet Office sponsored study from the University of Hull concluded that;

- The CYPVCS employs a third of the total VCS workforce.
- There are up to four times as many CYPVCS organisations per 1,000, children and young people as there are VCS organisations per 1,000 of the adult population.
- The CYPVCS is increasingly affected by growing levels of public service commissioning and is being adversely affected by huge policy and structural change and consequent uncertainty about its sustainability.

**The strategy and action plan is underpinned and informed by three distinctive studies;**

1. An audit of the CYPVCS' contribution to current workforce plans.
2. Work to understand the needs of regional providers.
3. Activity to establish and map any synergy with adult VCS services.

The plan will support Children Matter East and its partners to deliver opportunity and support for the CYPVCS workforce in the region and to improve outcomes of Children and Young People at a time of growing instability for the sector.

## Section1 - The here and now

### CONTEXT

Workforce reform continues to occupy the thinking of government. Building Brighter Futures - Next steps for the Children's Workforce suggests this means services are delivered by skilled and motivated staff, working for a shared ambition for the success of every child. The document requires Children's Trusts via their Workforce Strategies, to;

- ` Address the needs of the whole of the Children's Workforce -many of whom have very different levels and types of qualification, training, employment arrangements and terms and conditions'

The Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF) have via the revised statutory guidance on Children's Trust reaffirmed their commitment to the sector. The guidance, in its draft format provided a clear direction of travel declaring;

- ` The sector should be closely engaged... and has a great contribution to make'

**How important is the sector?** Further thinking suggests the autumn will see moves to allow budgets to be devolved beyond Local Authority control. This will enable all partners in Children's Trusts including the CYPVCS to pool budgets wherever possible to `shape local services'.

In the region there has been notable progress in Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and now in Thurrock. However the evidence suggests that any increase in the CYPVCS opportunities will need to be backed by a commitment to quality, which can only be delivered via a skilled workforce. So the workforce challenge for the CYPVCS is about;

- a) Developing quality without giving up its independence.
- b) Its inclusion and contribution to Trusts workforce plans, as of right.
- c) Its role in delivering improving outcomes driven by an increasingly skilled and knowledgeable workforce, paid or voluntary.

Not all CYPVCS organisations view themselves as providers or have any paid workforce; organisations may frequently be delivering community based activities and playing an important part of any child or young person's well being. Section Three of this strategy will explore how the sectors diversity can be supported through workforce development.

### ENVIRONMENT

The environment for the sector remains complex and increasingly fluid, there are key themes emerging which have substantive links to a broad workforce agenda for the sector;

- Persistent guidance from DCSF to Trusts to maximise the VCS opportunities to contribute to the design and delivery of services.
- Much more emphasis on the quality of provision and providing world class services focused on the needs of the child or young person.

- A new way of working based on multi agency partnerships which devolves responsibility as close as possible to the point of delivery and focuses on Schools or Children's Centres as 'hubs of activity'.

DCSF has continued to reinforce these themes by driving investment through initiatives whose guidance stipulates 'integrated governance, strategy, processes and most importantly working', including Children Centres, Extended Schools and Integrated Youth services.

#### **What does this mean from a workforce perspective for the CYPVCS?**

- a) It needs increasingly skilled leaders, so the sector can contribute fully and take advantage of the opportunities change creates.
- b) It needs project managers who are familiar with the nuances of Trusts and can help shape local delivery plans and importantly rebalance the narrative around the sector capability to deliver.
- c) It requires practitioners who are skilled in using the tools which support integrated working i.e CAF, Contactpoint,
- d) That all of those working in the sector, including volunteers and trustees are aware of the role other agencies play and are prepared to undertake (or evidence their) learning for the role they are fulfilling.

Suggested legislation is likely to confirm the importance of Schools and Health in delivering Children's Trusts objectives within strengthened partnership arrangements. The legislation will provide both opportunities and challenge for the sector. Success will be largely dependent on to what extent CYPVC organisations develop (further) their ability to deliver as partners within an integrated environment.

#### **PARTNERSHIPS**

With partnership becoming an ever increasing mode of delivering improvement the sectors inclusion in the key workforce partnerships will be critical. Identifying and examining these partnerships will help the sector to focus on where it can have the most impact.

Locally this means Workforce Strategy subgroups, which should be clearly linked into each area's Children's Trust arrangements, and have an identifiable senior lead manager. The research suggested this was the case and in general found the sector well represented. In many cases it was playing an active role in the development, planning and delivery of local workforce strategies.

The research identified that there are advanced proposals for the creation of a Third Sector Skills Council, the evidence suggests that regional and local CYPVCS will need to interact with these developments at the appropriate level.

However the CYPVCS lacks the capacity to be involved in both generic and specialist workforce support. The situation has developed because traditional 3rd sector workforce investment i.e. Learning and Skills Councils has focused too much on converting skills into relatively low level qualifications and therefore has little relevance to a Children and Young peoples sector seeking graduate led settings.

At the same time there is much to be gained for the CYPVCS from forging alliances around workforce development at a local level right across the full breadth of Trusts activities, this includes for instance; Youth Offending Teams, Museums and Libraries, Early Years, Disabled Children's Teams, Parenting Commissioners.

In the regional arena the nature of these alliances changes as DCSF's national partners replace the component parts of Trusts and exert their own influence on the shape of partnerships, these include; Together for Children (Children's Centres), Training and Development Agency (Schools), CWDC (workforce reform), Skills Active (for Playwork) LLUK (for Youth work). So alongside the direct work with Go East and CWDC on Workforce Development it is imperative that the East of England's CYPVCS support arrangements have the capacity to;

- Knit together the respective 'offers' regional partners can provide for the sector.
- Help to support a consistent approach to the CYPVCS and Workforce Development in each Trust.

## SUPPORT

The arrival of Children's Workforce Development Council (WSPP) investment to support the sector has transformed the environment at a local level. The support has enabled substantially higher levels of partnership working with Trusts; this is partly because the support has in part targeted a known gap between Early Years and Youth Service investment.

However at a regional level the reverse has been true, again with the exception of CWDC and DCSF the sector is seeing a reduction in the levels of generic VCS investment being dedicated into the CYPVCS. Given the widely cited trend toward distinctive arrangements for integrated Children and Young Peoples services' the failure of funders close to the sector to provide effective solutions is worrying.

In summary, alongside the anecdotal evidence collated in the region there is a growing body of harder research, evaluation and guidance that confirms;

- a) The CYPVCS sector is large, diverse and proportionately of greater significance than had been acknowledged
- b) That Workforce Development is persistently identified as key driver by the CYPVCS, and
- c) The environment in which CYPVCS frontline organisations operate is continues to grow in complexity and distance from its adult counterpart

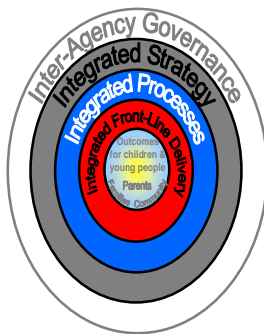
## Actions

- Interim capacity to provide better coordinated support for the sector from Sector Skills Councils
- Resources linked to the development of a Third Sector Skills Council hub in region are ring fenced proportionately for the CYPVCS (1/3)
- The Big Lottery and Capacitybuilders in the region and nationally consider the CYPVCS evidence for dedicated support, and

- Local and regional government consider how they might best support the 'calls for action'

## Section 2 - Getting there

The strategy has acknowledged the contribution CWDC WSPP investment has made in beginning to transform the overall landscape for the sector and its interaction with Children's Trusts partners.



However this is never likely to be sufficient. This section will use the messages from the strategy's evidence base to explore the interdependence of workforce development with many of the sectors priorities.

The evidence base included an assessment of each Trusts progress around workforce development with the sector. The study was based on their responses to the specific workforce question in the VCS Engage Self Assessment tool. The tool enables both the LA and its CYPVCS to identify through a series

of structured questions, based on the 'integrated onion', whether their work with the sector is; a) good practice b) meets minimum standards c) weak and needs to improve.

### INVOLVEMENT

The sector has been included across the region in helping to develop existing Children's Workforce Strategies and has been able to continue participating in their implementation. However this is almost exclusively the result of WSPP secured strategic capacity. Those areas where this has been the first investment in CYPVCS support have yet to translate this into improvement for frontline organisations.

The responses to the toolkit question on workforce development suggested there was evidence and broad cross sector agreement that from a strategic perspective there was a range of good practice emerging, with;

- a) Multi agency steering groups supporting the work. ,
- b) The WSPP activities being clearly linked to wider workforce reform within Trusts.
- c) Representation for the VCS on key workforce driven subgroups of Trusts main or secondary structures .i.e. LSCB's training subgroups.

Regionally, without ongoing investment, the sector has been included via Children Matter East in or with; The WSPP leads Forum, Local Authority Strategic leads Forum, Go East and their developing contribution.

However the lack of a long term regional equivalent to the WSPP has hampered the support it has been able to offer particularly to medium sized service

providers (those whom DCSF are expecting to form the backbone of a 'provider market') who work across more than one authority. In addition there are further pressures on existing regional CYPVCS support capacity, with the existence of;

- Skills Councils with responsibility for supporting parts of the sector workforce but without the capacity to work locally and existing outside the immediate framework of Children's Trusts.
- A range of CYPVCS organisations who wish to broaden the training or professional development support they offer right across the region.

## Engagement

The findings mirrored those around involvement, the criteria sought to establish whether frontline organisations were actively part of the planning process and if they had the opportunity to benefit from activity.

The study revealed multi agency steering groups for some WSPP', the most active and effective featured membership from frontline organisations of all sizes. Where there were effective steering groups there was a greater understanding of workforce development within the sector. This was because the steering groups were often accountable to the sector through the local CYPVCS forum, benefiting from their ability to cascade information and influence their members

CYPVCS forums have been identified by DCSF in the guidance to support Children's Trusts activity as being important to the success of Trusts partnership arrangements. Most of the regions LA's have CYPVCS Forum's, however and in some cases the sectors own ability to support itself is compromised by lack of capacity and parochialism.

Almost all Trusts and their relevant WSPP had gone to considerable effort to provide opportunities for wider interaction with frontline organisations. All had held well attended events, seminars and workshops. The quality of these activities was universally high, featuring contributions and buy in across the sector and often from the highest levels in Trusts.

Trusts and their WSPP partners had also been proactive in supporting the sectors awareness around specific workforce driven initiatives. These included the development of Common Induction Standards, Common Core and the evolution of Contactpoint, CAF and eCAF, there was also much evidence of activity to support Safeguarding.

Regionally this was not the case, without a Trust based framework both the sectors own support system - Children Matter East and individual organisations that operated regionally and nationally found limited capacity and opportunities to influence partners. There were also concerns that any regional resources were further stretched by;

- The emergence of a 3<sup>rd</sup> sector skills council with regional leadership
- The multiplicity of Sector Skills Councils,

Some organisations who delivered services or activities for Young People found they needed to engage with, Skills for; Justice, Health, Care and CWDC, Asset Skills (if they run homes or buildings), Lifelong Learning UK and Skills Active. The environment is likely to remain fluid and hard to navigate over the period of this plan. It will be important to;

- a) Ensure there is sufficient regional CYPVCS capacity to contribute to the wider shaping of third sector workforce development
- b) Secure resources to help the regional CYPVCS to coordinate support for the sector from the widest range of workforce support bodies.

## NEED

Effective needs analysis underpins effective strategy development and in this respect workforce and the CYPVCS are no different. Most WSPP' and their partners had looked carefully at need and consulted to confirm its detail, reinforcing this by testing the ideas through steering groups.

However the resources did not allow the work to be expansive, the general approach was to try and enable the local authority training resources and investment to be more accessible to the sector. This has been noticeably more successful where the LA has grasped the link between workforce development and effective commissioning for the sector.

The link between workforce development and many other areas of Trust's activities, including commissioning, is vitally important for the CYPVCS. The development of a holistic workforce approach which acknowledges this interdependency would help it the sector to;

- Reduce its relative fragility and cope better with change
- Minimise the destabilizing effects of regular revisions to Trusts.

**How could a holistic workforce model for the sector be defined?** A model that responds to the needs of the sector by recognising its (CYPVCS) needs are interlinked, for instance;

- Having an increasingly skilled workforce led by an acceptance of either full cost recovery and/ or parity of access to professional development with LA based colleagues.
- Having access to leadership training, including commissioning training, adapted to the sector, this would support organisational self reliance and the earlier need for leadership skills in the VCS.
- Ensuring multi agency professional development which focuses on supporting integrated working, for instance; CAF, LP is easily available, without this commissioners may struggle to secure quality assured services from the sector.
- One which recognises the need to provide differentiated support to the sector.

Organisations reported consistent challenges in taking multi agency professional development opportunities. Further work needs to be undertaken to identify possible solutions, for the position to continue will be an anathema to the development of integrated working. Some Trusts were supporting brokerage

activity by developing a singular gateway to opportunities in each LA, however there was then pressure not to do things in isolation. Within a holistic model it does need to be recognised that there are occasions when;

- a) The sector needs to train apart because their role and need differs as they are not, nor will be 'relevant partners'.
- b) That access to a wider range of learning might initially be more comfortable via a sector based solutions.

There is demand emerging, from distinctive groupings, for a regional consortia approach to both the provision and take up of opportunities, including;

- Larger organisations with their own programmes are keen that these are cost effective and the benefits ripple across the sector.
- Organisations who provide training as a secondary activity because it complements their specific specialism i.e. Autism.
- Organisations whose main function is to provide training into very specific niches, such as parenting teenagers.

The hostel and accommodation VCS has operated similar arrangements through Space East, exploring whether such a model would work in the CYPVCS may well be worthwhile.

## **DIVERSITY**

The sectors diversity continues to require full acknowledgement from the agencies driving workforce development. CWDC alone supports the sectors workforce needs. However, only concerted and coordinated action across the skills councils will help to support the diverse nature of the CYPVCS.

The sector remains very unsure of its proximity to the private sector and to organisations spinning off from Local Authorities as they retract to a commissioning/ leadership function. Artificially welding them together distracts from meeting VCS needs and hinders its development.

The growth of tendering /commissioning is also stretching the sector diversity. The changes may lead to the emergence of a **workforce needs gap** between highly professionalised (volunteer or paid) service providers and organisations who deliver closer to their communities. These subsectors can be identified as;

- a) Developed organisations able to tender in their own right or in partnership with others.
- b) Organisations on the cusp, needing additional but limited support to move from grants or SLA's to contracts.
- c) Organisations that have struggled to secure SLA's and are dependent on their own efforts and the occasional small grant/ or limited SLA's.
- d) Organisations that are not part of mainstream VCS activity because they are just too small or who deliberately exclude themselves.

In the future there will be an increasing need to ensure there is effective differentiated workforce support for the sector. This includes smaller but

potentially important VCS contributors, many of whom might work through tighter partnership or consortia arrangements.

In summary, progress is being made - albeit there remain significant challenges;

- a) The sectors needs led diversity is increasing, with the workforce gap between the funded and unfunded around integrated working increasing.
- b) There is demand for sector led solutions to help address some of the gaps in skills
- c) The sector requires more appreciative workforce support, meeting all of its requirements, not just those directly linked to ECM.
- d) The sector cannot have its workforce support bolted to others automatically purely because it has the word 'integrated' in its title.

## ACTIONS

- Regional capacity to address the workforce development support for the following in specific areas , Youth, Youth Justice, BME and Faith
- The expansion and marketing of existing CYPVCS based training, so it is increasingly available to a wider audience.
- The development/hosting of guidance resources for partners, including a detailed holistic workforce development framework for the CYPVCS.

## Section 3 - Development

Part of Children Matter East regional functions include;

- Identifying and promoting the contribution the sector makes to improved outcomes for children and young people.
- Promoting the development of specialist support for the CYPVCS
- Reviewing and developing key themes for the sector

Workforce has been reaffirmed as a development priority by Children matter East; the strategy and its action plan are likely to form part of a wider strategy for the CYPVCS development. In this section the strategy begins to look at the contribution CME could make alongside its partners. It will also visit the specific challenges the sector faces and examine the protective value of quality workforce development for the sector.

### LOCALITIES

The regional arrangements (Children Matter East) cannot operate in isolation; its membership is drawn from the networks and organisations who deliver support or services at an authority level. The challenge is to support local delivery. The research identified four geographical zones of activity - the region has role to play at each, but the role needs to adapt and complement other activity the closer it gets to frontline delivery, the areas are;

1. **Region**, working with strategic partner's regionally based capacity, i.e. with Together for Children - supporting leadership development in Children's Centres lead organisations.
2. **Sub regional**, providing accessible support on 'workforce orientated' change, i.e. supporting the introduction of the Independent Safeguarding Authority alongside Go East, DCSF, NCCVCCO and NCVYS.
3. **Trusts** providing support to WSPP and LA strategy leads.
4. **Clusters** (or equivalents) ensuring that their component parts have sufficient knowledge about the sectors quality and needs.

The continued devolution of decision making and commissioning to a local needs led model based on Extended Schools and services and/ or Children's Centres/ My Place bases will continue to change the workforce dynamic for the sector. The transition will mean;

1. An increased focus on the entire sector having 'the basics' in place.
2. Organisations of all sizes and at all levels will need to know something of the processes which support integrated working.
3. Partnership working skills will require further development as greater expectations of joined up delivery are placed on the sector.

**What is meant by integrated working and what skills might it require?** CWDC suggests that it means;

- Integrated working is where everyone supporting children and young people work together effectively.
- Using integrated working, practitioners, including those from sector should be able to: identify needs earlier, deliver a coordinated package of support that is centred on the child or young person, and help to secure better outcomes for them.
- They do this by combining practitioners' professional expertise, knowledge and skills.
- Integrated working is expected to be achieved through collaboration and coordination at all levels, across all services, in both single and multi-agency settings. It requires clear and ongoing leadership and management. At an operational level, it is facilitated by adopting common service delivery models, tools and processes.

In practice this means the sector will require the partnership skills to work with others more closely and the technical skills to establish and maintain its role in those partnerships. For instance this means those working in the sector are aware/ able to use /implement; Common Assessment Framework, Contactpoint, Information sharing, the role of the Lead Professional and Safeguarding.

The skill base will be underpinned by the common understanding of need drawn in large part by either/or; common induction training or ongoing evidencing of a Common Core of knowledge.

**What can the regional arrangements contribute?** Children Matter East needs to be able to continue to successfully influence change and support improved performance (for the sector) from its partners, and ensure this is reflected in the

Offer each Trust can make to its CYPVCS around workforce development. This can mean;

- Translating development, and policy into action and to inform, enable and advocate for the CYPVCS.
- To use specific time limited capacity to enable the development of longer term investment in integrated working support for the CYPVCS.
- Supporting improvement via web based resources and learning.

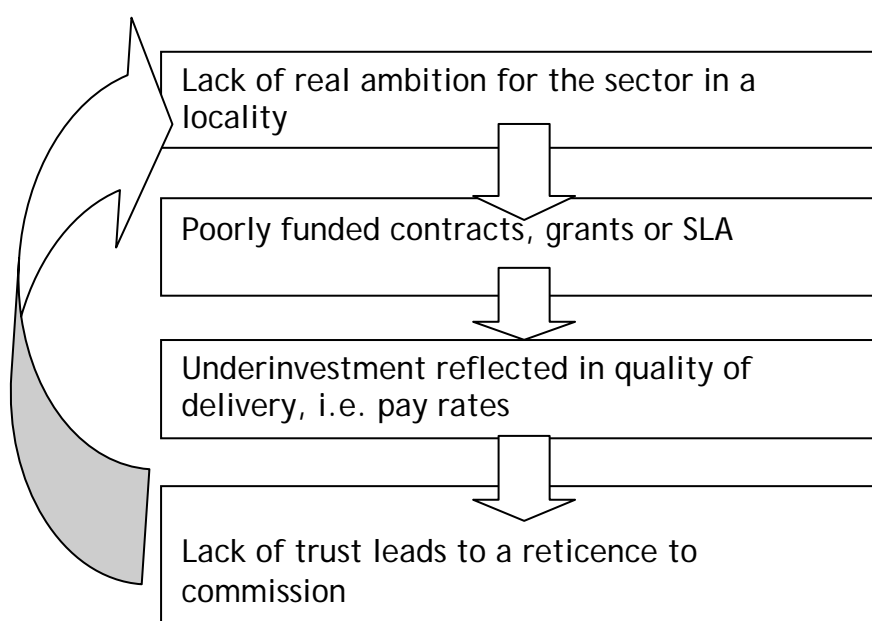
### INTERDEPENDENCY AND QUALITY

The strategy has begun to address some of the workforce issues which are particularly pertinent to the sector, this includes advocating for a holistic joined up approach to the sectors workforce needs. The sectors precise workforce needs fall into two distinctive subsets;

- Gaining the individual skills required for specific roles i.e. playwork.
- Gaining and contributing to the organisational skills development.

In many respects the CYPVCS does not differ from any of the sectors working with Children and Young People. However it has historically employed part of its workforce without formal qualifications and supported them to gain the relevant qualifications, this rationale applies equally to volunteers. As a result the sector, in theory at least, should exhibit substantive demand for skills development.

The research into the links with the adult orientated VCS established there are many ways to develop low level qualifications. The work also suggested that supporting the CYPVCS integrated working needs may well prove difficult without a positive VCS wide approach to higher level skill development. The negative narrative linking workforce quality to commissioning and a valued contribution which could lead to further commissioning is persuasive and underpins the need for a broader model of support.



The imminent strengthening of Children's Trust's arrangements, particularly the inclusions of schools is expected to increase the numbers of potential commissioners and providers, and serve to increase the pressure on the sector's quality. One of the regional capacity's primary tasks is to take a positive proactive approach to developing or providing solutions. The emphasis should focus on;

- Supporting change within the sector and its partners, and
- Exporting best practice around workforce as a continuum of organisational development, including working collaboratively to improve outcomes.

A broader model which supports organisational development for the workforce would help support the sectors contribution to improved outcomes for Children and Young People.

#### How could such a learning concept be supported regionally?

1. Using web based support to promote organisational workforce development.
2. Producing an annual case study 'book' of best practice.
3. Intensive research exploring in detail how a range of organisations in a given locality are supporting their own workforce development.

#### REACH

Both Children Matter East and the VCS Engage programme have tested limited direct workforce support, whilst the pilots have been universally well received and of high quality, attendance has been poor. However their publications have been used extensively by the sector and by partners. In addition there is frequently a delay in the information being disseminated and an adverse knock on effect in take up of activities on offer. The solution is likely to be;

- The effective use of technology.
- Aligning a limited and high quality training programme with regional brokerage arrangements for exporting existing training provision within the sector.
- Ensuring that when opportunities are provided local partners are potentially part of a sub regional delivery plan.

#### EVIDENCE

One of the consistent themes that emerged was the sector's ability to articulate or evidence its work or quality in a format **which partners will want to understand**. There is a growing body of national research some of which can help to support the sectors workforce needs. Some research has been commissioned locally however there appears little meaningful detail on the relative levels of qualification within the CYPVCS workforce in the region. Audits have been carried out, but these have suffered from being;

- a) Too focused on low level need.
- b) Short on context with no comparable data from other CYP sectors.
- c) Poor responses from a sector which is 'surveyed out' and lacks the appetite or capacity for further detailed audits.

However there is much that can be gained from discreet but focused research work, as CME's Destinations Unknown proved in the autumn of 2007. The regional structure is well placed to lead and commission this, providing the anonymity some members require. Future work which might include elements of workforce development could be;

- Working with Together for Children looking at comparable levels of qualifications between statutory and VCS led Children Centres.
- Looking at the qualifications by salary scale in Projects/ organisations providing Family Support.
- Comparing CPD plans and training support across specific disabilities cohorts. i.e. training available around Downs Syndrome.
- Examining workforce skills and skill base in MY Place programmes.

In summary, the sectors developmental needs continue to deepen and broaden, in large part this can be linked to the pace of development associated with Children's Trusts activities.

- The perception of the sector as being relatively unqualified persists and there is a lack of evidence to suggest otherwise
- Some of this perception could be part of a real 'cycle of inequality'
- There is a substantive contribution that could be made regionally, however there is also the risk of this being negated by poor reach.

## ACTIONS

- Development of a comprehensive web based knowledge centre.
- Further discretionary spending on workforce research linked to a holistic workforce approach to the sector.
- Further investment is required to support the regional platform to become an effective bridge between national resources and local action supporting better quality.

## Section 4 - Solutions: Making it Happen

Since 2006 the CYPVCS has been contributing significantly to a better supported workforce, locally and regionally, Children Matter East functions reflect this and include;

- Developing the sectors dialogue and relationships with national, regional and local partner's .e.g. Go East, TDA, Children's Trust.
- Ensuring that activity reflects the needs and circumstances of frontline Children & Young Peoples VCS organisations.

- Assessing Trusts levels of engagement with the sector, and the quality of the support arrangements in place for the VCS in each locality.

The sector continues to face both opportunity and threat, as Hull's research for Every Organisations Matters revealed. The research for this strategy uncovered many communal themes; one of the strongest was that relative inequity was leaving the sector increasingly susceptible to change.

## LEADERSHIP

Resolving some of these barriers can only be achieved through effective leadership. Such an approach means supporting project managers, senior managers and trustees to develop the skills they will need to implement change, and create the right conditions that will enable the sectors workforce to adapt to new demands.

The sector is not alone in finding itself with this requirement; Children's Centres have developed a leadership training programme for managers of integrated settings which are being adapted into a schools version. More importantly perhaps CWDC have developed Leading and Managing Children's Services in England: A National Professional Development Framework, whose introduction suggests that DCSF wishes to encourage;

Those in the private, voluntary and independent sectors to think about how they can use this framework. There are many possible ways to the top from the frontline.

So there is clear acceptance that more leadership support is required right across the Children's workforce and that the need applies equally 'on all those leading Children's Trust partner organisations'. Whilst it is anticipated that leadership support may become more widely available for the VCS, it will be need to be;

- Adaptive to the sectors distinctive needs, being an addition to statutory partner's programmes will not work.
- **Implemented quickly**, the evidence suggests the sector is increasingly being excluded from service delivery because it does not have the requisite change management skills and capacity.

Any programme for the sector will need to be reflective of the sectors diversity and take differentiated approaches to; organisational size and maturity, specific needs - such as a module on income generation and be proportionate to the tier of services an organisation provides. So developing a leadership programme that could co exist with developing national, local and statutory activity would clearly have potential benefits, including;

- Improving outcomes for Children and Young People.
- Developing the skills of the Children's Workforce.
- Developing capacity in the sector and helping to recruit/retain staff.

## INTEGRATION

Much has already been written about integration, however for the CYPVCS there is a wider context. The information gathering exercise suggested that within the sector there was great need to;

- a) Develop knowledge and capacity around integrated processes, the sector has not always been enabled to adapt to; CAF, Contactpoint, Lead professional, information sharing, and locality working.
- b) Support the wider *integration* of the subsectors that make up the CYPVCS including in particular Faith and/ or BME which provide significant levels of activity and are often able to reach the most marginalised Children and Young People.
- c) The fuller *integration* of growth areas within the sector, an expanding youth VCS will be at considerable risk without a more cohesive approach to meeting their workforce development needs.

Some of the above needs are expected to be transient but do require investment and support which could be delivered regionally, because;

- Without further change capacity the sector is at risk of compromising both its ability and governance as new expectations are placed around on the CYPVCS
- The existing regional or local support (for very specific workforce reform, i.e. Safeguarding) continues to be insufficient and is often external to the sector.

The way forward might include creating very specialist support roles such as a regional integrated working officer. The post would be time limited and in a leadership capacity. The role would ensure that activity is translated to a local level where it can be most effective in supporting day to day practice and delivery.

*Bradford has taken an innovative approach to engaging, developing and supporting effective safeguarding systems within the children and young people's voluntary and community sector (VCS) across the district. This has been achieved by creating a safeguarding children development worker post, the result of collaborative discussions between the VCS and the Bradford safeguarding children board (BSCB).*

## BROKERAGE

The fieldwork for the strategy has evidenced support for a consortia style of approach to helping organisations, who are de facto training providers, to market their particular product. The detail of the demand came through in section 2, here the consideration moves to actual delivery and the role a regional CYPVCS support system might play in making this happen. There would be a number of benefits;

- A more diverse range of training would be increasingly accessible to all partners in Children's Trusts.
- A social enterprise approach might help ensure mandatory training became more accessible.

- Provider organisations and infrastructure partners could be part of a framework

Initially any consortia would be CYPVCS exclusive, but this should not preclude others from joining at a later date. Inevitably there would be concern about any offer duplicating existing training which is available; however the research suggested a perception that regional accessibility is limited by a lack of coordination and marketing.

Early discussions indicate a web based approach focusing on supporting existing schematics and using –as far as possible, sub regionally based options. The regional role would be to coordinate and agree the delivery ( but not quality) across the region and provide the marketing support including a web based system which could run in tandem with proposals to establish a regional web resource for the CYPVCS.

### A REGIONAL CHOICE

As discussed in section 3, the regional support available for the sector cannot act in isolation – its role is to support its partners and members operating locally. This requires a differentiated approach which supports the sector at all levels, and in respect of workforce development this pattern differs little;

- Providing support for the sector to develop a cohesive arena in which the sector can influence its partners.
- Enabling Children’s Social care providers to get access to resources and support for workforce development.
- Providing initial information on workforce development for the sector
- Supporting local partners to develop knowledge and capacity to support the sectors workforce development.

In summary, developing solutions for the sector will require sustained collaboration across the CYPVCS and its partners, which addresses the needs by focusing on long term development. This should include;

- Ensuring the sector has access to high quality and appropriate leadership development
- Providing highly specialised capacity supporting the implementation of change for the sector
- Supporting the sector to expand its capacity to support itself and others with access to professional development

### ACTIONS

- A more detailed brokerage plan is developed.
- The availability of leadership (workforce support) is modelled and piloted for the CYPVCS.
- The development of a Regional Integrated Working Development post is explored.



## Children Matter East

East of England Regional Children and Young Peoples  
VCS Forum



# East of England's Children and Young Peoples VCS: Workforce Development Action Plan

The action plan represents the conclusions of the research and areas of identified actions grouped under the same headings as the narrative. Those actions have a further subsection discussing what success might look like, the plan is then graded and monitored against this criteria.

At this stage at the beginning of the implementation phase most actions and results are still effectively 'to do's' and are therefore on this iteration graded as Red.

**Context: Here and Now**

The section identifies the current environment for Workforce within the overarching context of the development of Children’s Trusts. It traces the sectors growing importance to government at all levels and the constraints or implications of wider direction to work collaboratively. The section identifies key challenges for the sector and the broad skill set which will be required in the future. The section concludes with a look at the strategic elements of workforce development.

**Key themes**

In summary, alongside the anecdotal evidence collated in the region there is a growing body of harder research, evaluation and guidance that confirms;


- a) The CYPVCS sector is large, diverse and proportionately of greater significance than had been acknowledged
- b) That Workforce Development is persistently identified as key driver by the CYPVCS, and
- c) The environment in which CYPVCS frontline organisations operate is continues to grow in complexity and distance from its adult counterpart

**Areas for Development**

- Interim capacity to provide better coordinated support for the sector from Sector Skills Councils
- Resources linked to the development of a Third Sector Skills Council hub in region are ring fenced proportionately for the CYPVCS (1/3)
- The Big Lottery and Capacitybuilders in the region and nationally consider the CYPVCS evidence for dedicated support, and
- Local and regional government consider how they might best support the ‘calls for action’

**What will success look like :**

Higher levels of support investment for Workforce issues within CYPVCS  
Parity with generic support around workforce development  
Overt support from regional partners

**Context : Getting There**

CWDC' WSPP investment is never likely to be sufficient. The section uses the messages from the strategy's evidence base to explore the interdependence of workforce development with many of the sectors priorities.

The evidence base included an assessment of each Trusts progress around workforce development with the sector. The study was based on their responses to the specific workforce question in the VCS Engage Self Assessment tool. The tool enables both the LA and its CYPVCS to identify through a series of structured questions, based on the `integrated onion', whether their work with the sector is; a) good practice b) meets minimum standards c) weak and needs to improve.

**Key themes**

In summary, progress is being made - albeit there remain significant challenges;

- a) The sectors needs led diversity is increasing, with the workforce gap between the funded and unfunded around integrated working increasing.
- b) There is demand for sector led solutions to help address some of the gaps in skills
- c) The sector requires more appreciative workforce support, meeting all of its requirements, not just those directly linked to ECM.
- d) The sector cannot have its workforce support bolted to others automatically purely because it has the word `integrated' in its title.

**Areas for Development:**

- Regional capacity to address the workforce development support for the following in specific areas , Youth, Youth Justice, BME and Faith
- The expansion and marketing of existing CYPVCS based training, so it is increasingly available to a wider audience.
- The development/hosting of guidance resources for partners, including a detailed holistic workforce development framework for the CYPVC

**What will success look like:**

More support for workforce issues in identified areas  
VCS training providers can make their offer via regional portal  
Development of a regional learning or knowledge hub

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## Context : Development

Workforce has been reaffirmed as a development priority by Children Matter East ; the strategy and its action plan are likely to form part of a wider strategy for the CYPVCS development. The section begins to look at the contribution CME could make alongside its partners. It looks in considerable detail at the specific workforce based challenges the sector faces and examines the protective value of quality workforce development for the sector.

## Key themes

In summary, the sectors developmental needs continue to deepen and broaden, in large part this can be linked to the pace of development associated with Children's Trusts activities.


- The perception of the sector as being relatively unqualified persists and there is a lack of evidence to suggest otherwise
- Some of this perception could be part of a real 'cycle of inequality'
- There is a substantive contribution that could be made regionally, however there is also the risk of this being negated by poor reach.

## Areas for Development

- Development of a comprehensive web based knowledge centre.
- Further discretionary spending on workforce research linked to a holistic workforce approach to the sector.
- Further investment is required to support the regional platform to become an effective bridge between national resources and local action supporting better quality.

## What will success look like

Development of a regional learning or knowledge hub  
Further supporting evidence of workforce need for CYPVCS  
More consistent investment for workforce at a regional level

**Context : Solutions - Making it Happen**

The sector continues to face both opportunity and threat, as Hull’s research for Every Organisations Matters revealed. The research for this strategy uncovered many communal themes; one of the strongest was that relative inequity was leaving the sector increasingly susceptible to change.

However there are actions that can be taken now to help alleviate the sector’s chronic instability, some are local and some are regional and these include Ensuring that activity reflects the needs and circumstances of frontline Children & Young Peoples VCS organisations.

**Key themes**

In summary, developing solutions for the sector will require sustained collaboration across the CYPVCS and its partners, which addresses the needs by focusing on long term development. This should include;

- Ensuring the sector has access to high quality and appropriate leadership development
- Providing highly specialised capacity supporting the implementation of change for the sector
- Supporting the sector to expand its capacity to support itself and others with access to professional development
- 

**Areas for Development**

- A more detailed brokerage plan is developed.
- The availability of leadership (workforce support) is modelled and piloted for the CYPVCS.
- The development of a Regional Integrated Working Development post is explored.

**What will success look like**

Effective range of CYPVCS based training available  
Adapted leadership programmes for the CYPVCS  
Frontline Organisations have access to very specific CYPVCS based support for integrated working

Red	Yellow	Green
