

BIRMINGHAM CHILDREN'S TRUST NEWSLETTER

December 2021

Issue #2

MERRY AND SAFE CHRISTMAS

A message from Andy Couldrick

Greetings to Councillors and others reading this, the second newsletter of the Children's Trust. Since our first newsletter, we have had a Focused Visit from Ofsted, examining the quality of our services for children in care.

The letter is downloadable using this link:
<https://files.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50173126>

The letter reports positively on the progress we are making, as well as offering us pointers for further improvement.

This adds to the letter we had following the last Focused Visit, in February 2020, when our 'front door' referral and assessment arrangements were looked at. This also provided a positive report on our progress.

We are all of us digesting the terrible events in Solihull surrounding the horrific death of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes.

There is to be a National Review led jointly by the National Safeguarding Panel and Solihull's Safeguarding Children Partnership, and a Joint Targeted Area Inspection will be conducted by Ofsted, HM Inspectors for Police and Probation, and the CQC, examining Solihull's arrangements for safeguarding children.



We will contribute as required to these processes, and will of course want to take on board any learning that emerges.

In this newsletter, as well as updating on all things Corporate Parenting, we are heavily featuring our Early Help offer, delivered locally through ten teams across the city.

These teams are supporting children and families who are not receiving a service from the Trust but who need some extra help, and supporting schools to provide help to their children and young people. I hope the information is helpful.

I hope you all enjoy a Happy Holiday Season later this month.

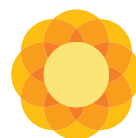
Andy Couldrick

Chief Executive,
Birmingham Children's Trust.



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BIRMINGHAM
CHILDREN'S TRUST

Our senior leadership team welcomes you

Children's Trust Board

Executive management team



Andy Couldrick
Chief Executive



Lee Yale-Helms
Director of Finance and Resources



Jenny Turnross
Director of Practice

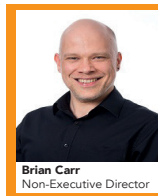


David Stringfellow
Director of Commissioning and Corporate Parenting

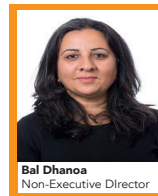
Chair and non-executive directors



Andrew Christie
Chair



Brian Carr
Non-Executive Director



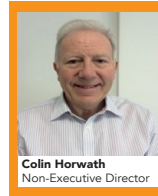
Bal Dhanoa
Non-Executive Director



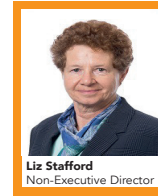
Prof Jon Glasby
Non-Executive Director



Ruth Harker
Non-Executive Director



Colin Horwath
Non-Executive Director



Liz Stafford
Non-Executive Director

Company secretary



Seamus Gaynor
Head of Executive



**BIRMINGHAM
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Contact our Executive management team



Andy Couldrick - Chief Executive

andy.couldrick@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Jenny Turnross - Director of Practice

jenny.turnross@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

Lee Yale-Helms - Director of Finance and Resources

lee.yale-helms@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

David Stringfellow - Director of Commissioning and Corporate Parenting

david.stringfellow@birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk

EARLY HELP WINTER 2021 UPDATE

In 2019 Birmingham partners gave their commitment to completely refresh and re-energise services delivering Early Help in Birmingham.

This took place by working together to build a multi-agency approach to tackling systemic challenges.

During 2019 the voluntary sector stood up during COVID to support families. Then in 2020 Birmingham Children's Trust recruited the first of its ten Early Help teams to help form the localities. There are now Early Help in ten localities.

Since April 2021 the Trust has recruited nine managers and ninety early help workers to work alongside the voluntary services in each of the ten localities:

Locality - Voluntary organisation

- Edgbaston** - Gateway Family Services
- Erdington** - Compass-Support (Pioneer Group)
- Hall Green** - Accord (Green Square Accord)
- Hodge Hill** - Family Action
- Ladywood** - Birmingham Settlement
- Northfield** - Northfield Community Partnership
- Perry Barr** - Spurgeons
- Selly Oak** - Malachi Community Trust
- Sutton Coldfield** - Spurgeons
- Yardley** - Barnardo's

Since April 2021 the Early Help teams have received over 10,000 Family Connect Forms (FCF) requesting help and support.

Some of these have been self-referrals from families requiring help.

In the past 3 months alone over 5,600 families have received support.

Community Connectors have mapped over 5,000 services across Birmingham and delivered hundreds of briefing and training sessions to partners such as GPs and council housing staff.

We have developed a new early help recording system called ECINS that partners are using to record family interaction.

We have a range of partners working with us in early help who support our families to prevent escalation of needs.



These partners include, DWP, Housing, Domestic Abuse workers and Early Help Police Officers.

We've pre-paid for every parent in Birmingham to access a parenting course. There are courses for parents, carers and grandparents of children from bump to 19.

We have developed a team around the school tool for our 400+ education settings, enabling them to build relationships with partners to prevent referrals and hand-offs for families.

We have put dedicated Early Help workers in Housing Front Door and Birmingham Children's Hospital A&E Dept to pick families up very early, preventing needs from escalating and requiring specialist intervention.

What our families say

" I had been trying for months to get help but no one listened or really helped, I had lost confidence in all services, then I was introduced to xxxxx.

We had our first meeting, within a few weeks xxxxx had organised food vouchers for us, had a little fund put in my account for financial support, then had a lovely surprise. Xxxx's bike was old and damaged, four people including a member of West Midlands Police came with a brand new bike! As well as making xxxxx extremely happy there was a little trust built back with the Police."

What our schools say

" I just wanted to say a huge thank you for the excellent service you are providing for our families. I have had very positive feedback from the parents that I have referred.

They were listened to and offered support to meet their needs."

CORPORATE PARENTING UPDATE

'BFF' Exhibition and Volunteer Recruitment



In November we launched a campaign to help recruit and raise awareness of Independent Visitors.

This was opened by the Lord Mayor of Birmingham Muhammad Afzal and presentations were given by the Cabinet Member for Vulnerable Children and Families Councillor Sharon Thompson and the Chief Executive of the Trust, Andy Couldrick.

Over 70 key stakeholders, partners, community leaders and businesses from across the city attended our 'black' carpeted event including the Chief Executive of Birmingham City Council, Deborah Cadman.

We have 29 young people waiting and currently we have 31 applications started. Ten of these have completed as a result of the launch event.

Corporate Parenting Board Meetings

The two most recent Corporate Parenting Boards had the following focused discussions:

September - Focus on Health, which included listening to our care leavers' experiences of mental health services and an update on the perinatal pathway which young people are co-producing.

November - Focus on relationships looking at Independent Visiting Service, Lifelong Links, Practice Model and the Commonwealth Games.

Care Leaver Apprenticeship Programme

All remaining vacancies have been advertised including Music Programme Youth Worker in our Youth Offending Service, Rights and Participation workers, Business Support Officers, Hair Technician and Catering.

An Apprenticeship Launch Event to promote advertised roles was held in November. The event had 49 Care Leavers and 18 staff from the Care Leavers service attend. Feedback was amazing from young people and will be the launchpad for future events.

Phenomenal Winter activities and support

We know how hard the last few years have been for children and families, so we have been delighted to have been given support to deliver some incredible activities, including:

- Free evening out for families at Winter Funland taking place at the NEC, courtesy of a kind offer of 2,000 heavily discounted tickets from Winter Funland themselves.
- A gigantic family event for 400 people supported by Millennium Point and Think Tank, including a free movie screening.
- Unbelievable donations from our Bfriends charity corporate and community partners are being distributed to our homes and to families to bring some Christmas cheer.



CHILDREN FIRST

The Children First project has now closed but that doesn't mean that our work is over.

As part of the project, we have realigned the social work teams to link more closely with their local areas and, in doing so, we have reduced the transition points for children.

We are currently recruiting social workers and family support staff into our new complex and enduring team.

This is a challenging and rewarding area of work, working with children and young people with complex mental health needs. This can be about advocating and planning for children and young people in hospital settings but also working with their families to understand their child's diagnosis and planning for their return home.

We know that we need to do some things better and one of those things is our contributions to Education Health Care Plans.

We will shortly go live with our new team of advice staff who can give social care advice to the plan but also guide other Trust staff through the process and signpost parents to advice and guidance linked to SEND.



We recently hosted a very well received Sendiass webinar, which gave practitioners across the Trust an opportunity to raise questions directly with our Sendiass colleagues.

We hope to repeat this in the New Year and make this a regular event.

Over the next SIX months we will continue with our awareness raising around SEND, Sendiass and wider issues around the Mental Health of children and young people.

WINTER HUB IN ACTION

Our Trust Winter Hub 2021 has started this year on a positive note, and we are very thankful to our kind staff and partners who have supported this year to make sure our children, young people and families get something this Christmas.

We have been gifted presents this December with the volume of donations continuing to grow each day.



If you would like to come down and visit the Winter Hub at Lancaster Circus or arrange any kind of donation delivery please email:

**CorporateParentingEvents@
birminghamchildrenstrust.co.uk**

Please make any donations before Thursday 23 December.

We are grateful for all the support you provide to children, young people and families across Birmingham.

REMINDER: Safeguarding children and supporting families is **everyone's responsibility.**

In your work, should you come across a situation that leads you to worry about the safety or welfare of a child, you must contact the Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS) in the Trust, on:

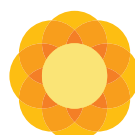
Monday to Thursday: 8:45am to 5:15pm

Friday: 8:45am to 4:15pm

Telephone: 0121 303 1888

Emergency out-of-hours

Telephone: 0121 675 4806 or 0121 464 9001



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