Growing up in Oldham: Needs Assessment 2010

Summary of Findings
Introduction

This Summary of Findings presents key facts and strategic priorities for commissioning emerging from evidence presented in the ‘Growing up in Oldham’ Needs Assessment, 2010.

The “Growing up in Oldham” Needs Assessment 2010 was commissioned by the Oldham Children’s Trust Board; the strategic partnership charged with improving outcomes for children and young people in Oldham. By gathering evidence from a wide range of sources, it has revealed where our aspirations are, and are not, being matched by current reality and has gone some way to describing what it is like to be growing up in Oldham today.

The "Growing up in Oldham" Needs Assessment, when read alongside Oldham’s Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) Refresh 2010 and Oldham’s Local Economic Assessment (LEA) 2010, also serves as Oldham’s interim response to the new child poverty needs assessment duties which came into force for all local areas in 2010. Taken together these documents clearly illustrate the extent of child poverty in Oldham, the key child poverty drivers and associated risk factors.

The evidence contained within this needs assessment has been used by Oldham Children’s Trust Board to inform the selection of priorities for the forthcoming year and determine where collective effort can most effectively and appropriately be focused. Equally it is also now being used to stimulate creative and innovative action and the targeting of resources across children’s services in Oldham at a local neighbourhood level through the development of Children and Young People District Plans.

The following sections focus on identifying where improvements in outcomes are needed across the whole population of children and young people and in order to address inequalities. The concluding section sets out the approach upon which the joint work of Children’s Trust partners over the coming year will be based in order to respond to the challenges identified.
Key Demographic Information

- In 2009, Oldham had about 48,500 children and young people aged 0-15 years:
  - 16,200 were aged 0-4 years
  - 14,600 were aged 5-9 years
  - 14,700 were aged 10-14 years

- More than one in four (25.7%) young people aged 0-15 were estimated to be from non-white BME backgrounds. This proportion is projected to rise to around 37% by 2022.

- Around 7% of households with dependent children have four or more children aged under 16 years. This proportion is higher in Coldhurst (21.7%), St. Mary’s (17.7%) and Werneth (17.5%). Children aged under 16 made up a high proportion (around 30%) of the total population in these wards, which are among the most deprived in England.

- One in three (33%) Oldham households with dependent children are lone parent families. Hollinwood has the highest proportion of lone parent families (50%), followed by Alexandra (43%), St. James’ (42%) and Failsworth West (41%).

- Oldham’s population projections indicate that by 2022 there will be:
  - 600 more children aged 0-4 years (a 3.7% increase over 2008)
  - 2,000 more children aged 5-9 years (a 13.7% increase over 2008)
  - 1,700 more children aged 10-14 years (an 11.5% increase over 2008)
  - 1,000 fewer young people aged 15-19 years (a 12.4% decrease from 2008)
  - 2,000 fewer young people aged 20-24 years (a 14.1% decrease from 2008)

This population growth will be predominantly among the non-white BME population.

Key messages for Policy and Commissioning Leads

- Projected population growth for 0-14 year-olds means there will be more demand for services among this age group, particularly in wards with high proportions of young people (Coldhurst, St. Mary’s and Werneth).
- Commissioners and service planners will need to consider the changing needs of an increasingly ethnically diverse young population, responding to growth within Oldham’s Pakistani and Bangladeshi communities.
- Children and young people living in large families may have different service needs (for example, relating to housing and study space).
- There is likely to be more demand for services for lone parent families in wards where they comprise a larger proportion of households with children.
- In order to enable informed service planning and delivery, there is a need to address the information gap about the experiences and needs of the following groups of children and young people:
  - child refugees and asylum seekers, who may be extremely vulnerable, with complex support needs and experiencing significant levels of deprivation
  - young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people
Family Deprivation

- Almost three in ten (29.3%) dependent children live in poverty. Child poverty rates are highest in Coldhurst (58.5%), St. Mary’s (47.6%). More than four in ten dependent children in Werneth (44%), Alexandra (43%) and Hollinwood (43%) live in poverty.

- The number of children living in poverty increased in recent years. Between August 2008 and August 2010 the proportion of households with dependent children claiming Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Benefit rose from 7.3% to 9.3%. Claimant rates for families with dependent children are highest in Coldhurst (23%), St Mary’s (20.7%) and Werneth (20.1%).

- Lone parent households are more likely than Oldham residents overall to report being unable to afford to do a range of things that affect their wellbeing.

- More than a third (36.9%) of Oldham households with dependent children are in receipt of Working Tax Credits (WTC), which are intended to provide support for low income working households. Almost half of households with dependent children in Werneth, St.Mary’s and Coldhurst are in receipt of WTC. Nationally, most children living in poverty (57%) live in households with at least one working adult.

- In Oldham, almost one in four (23.6%) children aged 0-18 live in out of work households, well above the rate for England (16.7%). Income Support and Incapacity Benefit/Severe Disablement Benefit are the benefit types most frequently received by these households.

- In Oldham, rates of over-crowding are higher for family households and households of Asian and Black origin. Overcrowding rates are also above average in the private rented sector, and in pre-1919 terraced housing, which tend to dominate the housing stock in the more deprived areas of the borough.

### Key messages for Policy and Commissioning Leads

- Mitigating the effects of poverty and deprivation in Oldham would have profound benefits for the life chances of children, young people and families in Oldham, both now and in the future.

- Oldham’s approach to tackling child poverty needs to be tailored to reflect the huge differences in the level and nature of child poverty in different parts of Oldham. Whilst there is a need for services to support, prevent and care for all children and young people across the whole of Oldham, to turn round the big picture of best life chances for all, this will require a more intense focus on those families and communities where current and foreseeable future conditions for well being are less favourable.

- Reducing income inequality by bringing households out of income deprivation should be a priority for Oldham. To be effective, interventions should address income deprivation among both out-of-work and in-work households (i.e. helping jobless families into work, helping those in work to progress and financially supporting those unable to work). This would include the provision of targeted adult and community learning and lifelong education to ‘up skill’ relevant parents/carers and increase their prospects for employment.

- The projected impact of forthcoming and proposed changes to welfare benefits, housing benefit, entitlement to social housing and the impact of public sector cuts needs to be assessed, with a view to identifying ways of limiting the harm done to children and groups of residents who are already vulnerable and disadvantaged.
Education, Skills and Employment

Early Years and Childcare Provision

- Half of all childminders and a third of childcare providers in Oldham have been judged by Ofsted as being no better than satisfactory.
- The quality of inclusive practice is an issue for some childcare settings in Oldham.
- Some wards in Oldham still have outstanding gaps in the type of childcare available (Failsworth requires more full day care places and Thornham St James requires more out of school care). There is also more sporadic availability of childminders in Saddleworth and Lees. Alexandra and Medlock Vale equally appear to have a gap in relation the number of children born and the number of places available.
- There is limited local intelligence to be able to predict the number of families who rely on informal childcare in Oldham, and there is an identified need to further investigate parent requirements for out of school care and holiday clubs.
- The time that childcare is required and the lower number of sessions required could present sustainability problems for childcare providers in the future.

Attainment in the Early Years (0-4 yrs)

- Oldham has lower numbers of children meeting national targets for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) than statistical neighbour and national averages.
- In Oldham, the gap has widened at Early Years Foundation Stage between the lowest achieving 20% and the rest from 36.6% in 2008/09 to 39.2% in 2009/10.
- The 2010 cohort saw an increased level of socio-economic deprivation in the Reception cohort, compared to 2009, with free school meal eligibility increasing from 20% to 24% and an ongoing slight rising trend in the proportion of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- Results for ethnic minority pupils at EYFS remains mixed. Whilst there was progress in the attainment for some ethnic minority pupils (Black pupils and Dual/mixed heritage), there were significant declines in outcomes for Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage boys and Bangladeshi, Black and mixed/dual heritage girls.
- The attainment of boys continues to be a priority for Oldham. Whilst outcomes for boys improved in 9 out of the 13 areas of learning, the percentage of boys achieving the Threshold target fell by 2.6%.
- There were also dips for some specific areas of learning (in particular in writing) and in Emotional Development, Linking Sounds and Letters, Knowledge and Understanding of the World.

Attainment in school years (5-16 yrs)

- In Oldham, levels of attainment in maths at Key Stage 1 are lower than the national average and statistical neighbours.
- Looked After Children continue to have considerably lower Key Stage 2 attainment in English and Maths than the average attainment of all children in Oldham.
- In Oldham, there is an achievement gap between pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds (eligible for free school meals) and their peers attaining level 4 or above in English and Maths at Key Stage 2. This achievement gap has widened since 2008/09 from 21.8% to 24.3% in 2009/10. This places Oldham slightly higher than the national average (22.3%) and the average of statistical neighbours (21.6%).
- The achievement gap has also widened between pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds (eligible for free school meals) and their peers attaining the desired level at Key Stage 4, from 22.8% in 2008/09 to 27.8%.
- The attainment of children from the main BME groups in Oldham at Key Stage 4 is lower than for White British children, both locally and nationally.
- Over the past five years, the gap for Oldham educated pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) at the end of Key Stage 4 has widened. Although SEN attainment has improved each year, the improvement is still behind those pupils with no SEN.
Post 16 (16-19yrs)

- In Oldham, ‘Staying On’ rates (i.e. young people remaining in full-time education beyond the age of 16) decreased slightly from 85.4% in 2009 to 85.1% in 2010.
- The proportion of Year 11 school leavers in Oldham going into employment (with or without training) decreased by more than a half between 2008 and 2009 (from 3.2% to 1.4%) but increased slightly to 1.6% in 2010.
- In Oldham, the proportion of Oldham Year 11 school leavers who are NEET (i.e. not in employment, education or training) has increased from 4.8% to 5.5%, with those resident in the more deprived wards of Oldham being markedly less likely to continue participation in learning and more likely to be NEET.
- Within Oldham, Alexandra’s youth (16-19) unemployment rate (12.5%) is more than twice the Oldham rate (6.0%). Rates are also well above the Oldham average in Hollinwood (9.3%) and St. James’ (8.8%).

Key messages for Policy and Commissioning Leads

- Commissioners and service planners need to target resources to improve early years and childcare provision in Oldham so that more of it is good or better.
- In line with the childcare sufficiency duty and in light of the rising local birth rate and current economic climate, there is a need to closely monitor the availability of appropriate, accessible and affordable childcare throughout Oldham.
- Target resources to narrow the attainment gaps between the highest and lowest performing groups of children and young people as a fundamental way to tackle the long-term impact of disadvantage, deprivation and vulnerability on children and young people’s life chances in Oldham.
- Review provision on offer at KS4 and post 16 for young learners to further reduce local NEET figures.
Children and Young People’s Health

Healthy start in life
- Oldham has a higher percentage of low birth weight babies compared to both the regional and national average.
- In Oldham, above average rates of mothers smoke during pregnancy.
- Oldham has a significantly lower breast feeding prevalence rate than the national average.
- Oldham still has a higher infant mortality rate than both the North West and England averages, with 30% of child deaths due to consanguinity-related issues.

Physical Health
- Oldham has high rates of emergency hospital admission rates for asthma in children under 15yrs, coming most notably from the more deprived wards of Oldham that have a higher percentage BME population.
- Accidents are the leading cause of injury to children in Oldham and disproportionately affect children from lower socio-economic groups. Ward analysis shows that St Mary’s has significantly higher emergency admission rates for accidents compared to the rest of the borough.
- More than a quarter of all children in Oldham are overweight or obese, and if the current trend continues then two thirds of children will be obese by 2050. Children from most minority ethnic groups have a higher prevalence than White British children in Oldham, although the patterns are different for boys and girls and for different age groups. There is also a strong relationship between deprivation and higher levels of childhood obesity.

Complex Needs and Disability
- It is difficult to ascertain the number of children and young people who have complex needs and disabilities. Local evidence shows:
  - there are 8248 pupils across Oldham schools with Special Educational Needs (SEN), including both primary and secondary needs; with 979 children and young people having a statement in place
  - a total of 3,365 school age children attending Oldham schools had a registered SEN primary need, of which 1338 had some form of Cognitive and Learning need; 914 had Communication and Interaction needs; 663 had behaviour, emotional or social development needs; 204 had a sensory impairment; and 154 had a physical disability
- It is projected that the numbers of young people aged 0-24 with limiting long-term illnesses or disabilities in Oldham will increase by 768 people in 2010; 5,229 people in 2015; and 5,698 people in 2020.
- Across Oldham, there are widely variable hospital admission rates for children with long term conditions and disability, with re-admission rates being equally as high when compared to their peer groups.

Mental and Emotional Health
- Information on the level of mental health problems in children and young people is difficult to ascertain. Hospital admissions for mental health conditions can give an indication of morbidity across the borough, however caution must be observed as these do not reflect the true pattern of morbidity across the borough. Overall there were 773 mental health related hospital admissions between 2007 and 2009 for children and young people under 20 years of age in Oldham. The highest proportion of admissions were in the wards of St James’, Hollinwood, Royton North and Alexandra which between them had nearly twice as many admissions as the rest of Oldham.
• The largest contributing mental health condition to hospital admissions for children and young people is self harm, followed by alcohol and drug induced mental health conditions.
• Oldham has seen a 20% increase in referrals to Child and Adolescent Mental Health services (CAMHs) over a 12 month period, however a referral audit has shown that a large proportion of the total numbers of referrals were actually deemed inappropriate.

Sexual Health
• Although great strides have been made in Oldham in respect of the reduction of teenage conceptions, geographical inequalities are still evident. Within Oldham, the wards of Alexandra, Hollinwood and Waterhead have significantly higher teenage conception rates than the Oldham, regional and England average.
• Oldham has a low overall coverage for Chlamydia screening, with a very small proportion of those screened being male.

Alcohol and Substance Misuse
• Oldham has a higher proportion of young people classified as regular binge drinkers than the North West average. The highest proportion of alcohol specific hospital admissions for young people under 19 years are in the wards of Crompton, Royton North and St James’, with Crompton having a significantly higher proportion than the other wards of Oldham.
• The number of young people being admitted to hospital for drug related conditions in Oldham is also too high. The highest proportion of drug related hospital admissions for young people under 19 years were in the wards of Alexandra, Chadderton North, Waterhead and Coldhurst. The most common reason for admission was poisoning due to by-narcotic and hallucinogenic (morphine and ecstasy) drug use.
• Cannabis and/or alcohol dominate as the primary drugs of choice for young people entering treatment, as well as for those already engaged in treatment (NB. Oldham’s Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment also indicates an emerging crack cocaine problem in the 18 – 25 age group of substance using offenders).
• Oldham has shown the most significant (10%) increase in respect of 14 to 17 year olds claiming to smoke. The highest proportion of smokers were aged 17 years and female.

Key messages for Policy and Commissioning Leads
• Targeted action to reduce child health inequalities, starting before birth and following through the life of the child, would represent a significant intervention in terms of ensuring children in Oldham have the best start to lead a healthy life.
• Commissioners and service planners will need to consider the projected population growth in the numbers of young people aged 0-24 with limiting long-term illnesses or disabilities in Oldham, and ensure integrated care pathways are in place.
• There is a need to better understand the level of mental health problems in children and young people, and ensure appropriate referral pathways are in place.
• Commissioner and service planners will need to continue to take a targeted early intervention and prevention approach to minimise risk taking behaviour amongst young people in Oldham (i.e. in respect of young people’s sexual activity and use of alcohol and drugs).
Family Support and Safeguarding

Common Assessment Framework (CAF)
- A significantly higher percentage of CAF’s were completed during 2007-2010 in St Mary’s, Hollinwood and Coldhurst wards compared to other areas in Oldham.
- In the same period, a considerably higher percentage of CAF’s were also completed with the under 5’s age group in comparison to other age groups.
- Early information from CAF assessments indicates:
  - nearly half of all CAF assessments identify child behaviour as the main issue
  - 69% indicate issues associated with poor parenting skills and the inability to cope
  - 14% identify parent specific issues as being the primary factor that hinders good parenting, including family violence, mental health and drug and alcohol misuse

Support for Parents
- Analysis of Parent Support Advisor (PSA) case work shows that in terms of the issues experienced by parents having an impact on the child:
  - In 24% of all referrals there were domestic violence, substance misuse, mental health or a combination of all three problems.
  - 10 % of all cases parent’s had some degree of mental health problem although not within the threshold required for adult services.
  - 8% of all cases involved domestic violence – this was not usually the presenting issue on referral and was often only identified when the PSA had been working with the parent for some time and had developed a trusting relationship.
- Approximately 80% of young carers known to Oldham’s Young Carer Service support a significant other with mental health issues.

Children Affected by Parental Substance Misuse
- During 2009/10 743 children had parents attending substance misuse services in Oldham - an average of 1.53 children per client (though it is estimated that the total number of children with substance misusing parents / carers in Oldham is more in the region of 1,450 to 1,550).
- 65% of all referrals into the Family Group Conference service from social care are also for parents experiencing substance misuse.

Children Affected by Domestic Violence
- The numbers of victims referred to Oldham’s Independent Domestic Abuse Advisors (IDAA) during April to December 2010 was 223, of which this included 284 children who lived with them.
- In the same period the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) for domestic abuse dealt with 97 of the above figures as high risk victim referrals where 155 children were directly related.
- Oldham’s specialist service for children and young people affected by abuse worked with a total of 85 children from 1st April – 13th December 2010 and 10 parents were given structured parenting support.

Children Affected by Sexual Exploitation
- During April - December 2010, Greater Manchester Police recorded 334 incidents of missing from home (284 children and young people). 47 of the 284 children and young people were involved with Oldham’s Messenger Partnership, which supports young people at risk of sexual exploitation. All but one of the 47 had been missing on at least one other occasion.
Child Protection
- The number of Child Protection Plan’s increased by 30% from 2007/08 to 2008/09, reducing to under 10% in 2009/10.
- In Oldham, there have been particular increases in the numbers of children from Pakistani, White/Asian, White/Black Caribbean origin subject to a Child Protection Plan.
- The numbers of Child Protection Plans lasting 2 yrs or more in Oldham have increased from 2.8% in 2008/09 to 5.9% in 2009/10.
- Neglect and family dysfunction were the biggest contributing factors identified across all child protection plans during 2009/10.

Looked After Children
- The number of females being looked after in Oldham has increased over the three years. Conversely, the number of males decreased.
- Children from white UK background made up 65% of all looked after children cases in the last three years, compared with 89% from white UK background in the total population. This represents a high BME group in our local Looked After children population.
- Oldham has a higher proportion of looked after children subject to a child protection plan compared to statistical neighbours.
- In Oldham, there are higher numbers of looked after children who are older and deemed ‘harder to place’ are taking longer to be placed for adoption (though more appropriate placements are ultimately sought).

Road Safety
- Road traffic accidents, cause the most serious injuries for children and young people. Chadderton Central, Chadderton South and Shaw accounted for around a quarter of all road traffic accidents involving children between 2007 and 2009.
- Locally, young people have told us they do not feel roads are safe.

Bullying and Discrimination
- Over a three year period, there have been significant increases (54%) in the number of race/ hate incidents reported by Oldham Schools.
- Verbal and racist bullying are the most common forms of bullying in secondary and primary schools in Oldham, with physical bullying and cyber bullying also being relatively high in Oldham’s Secondary schools.
- Locally, young people have told us they want awareness of bullying in and out of schools to be raised.

Homelessness
- Evidence of homeless or potentially homeless young people in Oldham.

Key messages for Policy and Commissioning Leads
- A whole family approach must be adopted to support the individual needs of children and young people as well as meet the needs of the family as a whole. It is vital for children’s services, adult services, health and the voluntary sector to continue to work closely together to achieve this.
- Commissioners and service planners will need to balance the cultures of early and later intervention (both of which are necessary), whilst ensuring all those in local service provision are working together to achieve a culture shift towards early intervention which is cheaper, more effective and brings major long-term savings.
- There is a need to continue to target action to ensure the effective safeguarding of children and appropriately support those who do end up coming into local authority care.
Young People’s Participation in Social and Community Life

Crime, anti-social behaviour and offending
- Oldham’s rate of first time entrants to the youth justice system aged 10-17 remains a challenge, with white young people continuing to be over-represented compared to other ethnic groups. Comparatively, Oldham has higher rates than both statistical neighbours and the national average. First time entrant rates are also noticeably higher across the more deprived wards of Oldham.
- Oldham currently has slightly higher numbers of 10 -17yr olds who receive a reprimand, final warning with or without an intervention, or a court disposal than statistical neighbours and national figures.
- Over a 12 month period, 47.2% of detected crime in Oldham was linked to an offender under 24 years old. Over half (57.6%) of all the offences committed by 13 – 24 year olds were Assault with Less Serious Injury (27%); Supplies / Passes Drugs (11.3%); Criminal Damage (10.9%); or Shoplifting (8.4%) offences.
- Children living in the most deprived areas of the borough are affected by the highest rates of crime.
- During 2009/10, 39.5% of victims of violent crime in Oldham were under 24 years old.
- Young people have expressed a fear of crime, and feeling unsafe on streets and in parks when unaccompanied.

Extra Curricular and Community Positive Activities
- Children and young people in Oldham feel there should be more facilities and activities for them in the community and the promotion of such activities needs to be improved.
- There is a continued need to provide short break activities for children with disabilities in Oldham
- The take up of the Extended Services Subsidy Grant was very high across Oldham in 2010-11, reflecting local need with 88,300 hours of positive activities being accessed by 10,732 vulnerable and disadvantaged students of school age.
- Young people have also told us they want more opportunities to volunteer that are well publicised. In 2009/10 164 young people were brokered into volunteering opportunities, with substantially more females than males taking up the opportunity as well as young people aged 16-17 compared to people aged 18+.

Young Carers
- Oldham has a higher proportion of young carers than both the regional and national average. Young carers in Oldham appear to be very much concentrated geographically, particularly in more urban and more deprived areas of the borough.
- Oldham has seen a significant increase in the number of referrals and young carers taking advantage of its local Young Carers Service.

Key messages for Policy and Commissioning Leads
- The neighbourhood level provides the mechanism to effectively target interventions to the geographical areas of the town most affected by youth crime and offending behaviour.
- An evidence base needs to be developed as to ‘what works’ in terms of cost-effectiveness and what provides best value for money in respect of people's participation in positive activities and the social return on investment that participation may bring.
- Continue to deliver personalised and integrated support for families with care needs that ensures protection from harm and improved outcomes for young carers.
Conclusion and next steps

Targeted interventions at key stages are clearly needed to improve the future opportunities and life chances of children and young people who grow up in Oldham.

Against a backdrop of shrinking budgets and scarcer resources, it will be even more important that partners from across the public and third sector in Oldham use their collective efforts to meet needs earlier, provide additional targeted support to the most vulnerable and disadvantaged families and prevent any difficulties within families escalating, many of which are transmitted from generation to generation. Intervening early and targeting disadvantage will be crucial to breaking the cycle of poor outcomes for those children and young people who grow up in challenging circumstances, with profound benefits for their long-term life chances.

Over the next 12 months, Oldham Children’s Trust partners will strive to respond to challenges identified through the ‘Growing up in Oldham’ needs assessment by looking at smarter and more creative ways to work better together, using the reduced resources at their disposal. Activity will be coalesced around targeted action to:

1. Strengthen families – adopting a whole family approach
2. Improve the participation, learning, attainment and progression of all children and young people
3. Protect and safeguard children and young people
4. Promote and improve children and young people’s health and well being
5. Keep children and young people on the right track and provide them with access to meaningful opportunities, culture and activities

Equally there will be a clear focus on:

- **Integrated commissioning** – ensuring we have the right services in the right place at the right time, through a commitment to jointly identify, analyse and prioritise needs; pool and align budgets; allocate resources to what works and encourage a mixed economy of provision
- **Integrated neighbourhood working** - providing high quality local public services which are economically efficient, have the impact expected on children, young people and families and are better coordinated and delivered at a neighbourhood level
- **Integrated workforce development** - developing a flexible and skilled workforce that serves the needs of local children, young people and families and is empowered to take the lead and pool and share expertise

In order to ensure progress, lead officers have been identified to take forward the next phase of activity which relates to identifying the key actions for 2011/12, that will underpin each of these priority themes. These action plans will set out where collective effort can most effectively and appropriately be focused over the next 12 months, against a backdrop of shrinking budgets, scarcer resources and changing policy direction.