

**// Foundations**

What Works Centre for Children & Families

# **BUILDING EARLY HELP AND FAMILY SUPPORT AROUND PARENTAL RELATIONSHIPS**

National Conference





# **BEN LEWING**

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Foundations – What Works Centre for Children & Families



# **JAMES FULLER**

Head of Policy & Partnerships for Reducing Parental Conflict

Department for Work & Pensions

# Vision for Children, Young People and Families

Flora Wilkie, Programme Manager, Local  
Government Association

## The LGA

- 315 of the 317 councils in England
- Politically-led and cross-party
- The LGA provides a range of practical support, on a free of charge and/or subsidised basis... leadership programmes, events, webinars, action learning, mentoring, peer challenge, LG Inform and programmes tailored to specific service areas such as children's, adults', health, care, financial, culture, tourism, sport and planning services.

**The national voice of local government, working with councils to support, promote and improve**

“Influence and set the political agenda on the issues that matter to councils so they are able to deliver local solutions to national problems”.

# National context

- Mission-led government
  - Break down barriers to opportunity
  - Safer Streets
- Government's Plan for Change
  - Giving children the best start in life, with 75% of 5-year-olds in England ready to learn when they start school.
- Legislative change and reform
  - Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill, National Youth Strategy, Children's social care reform
- Spending Review
- Devolution and local government reform



## **Vision for children, young people and families**

Councils agree with the Government that “every child should believe that success belongs to them”; this LGA vision sets out where we want to go and how councils and the Government can work together as partners to make it happen.

## Every child should have:

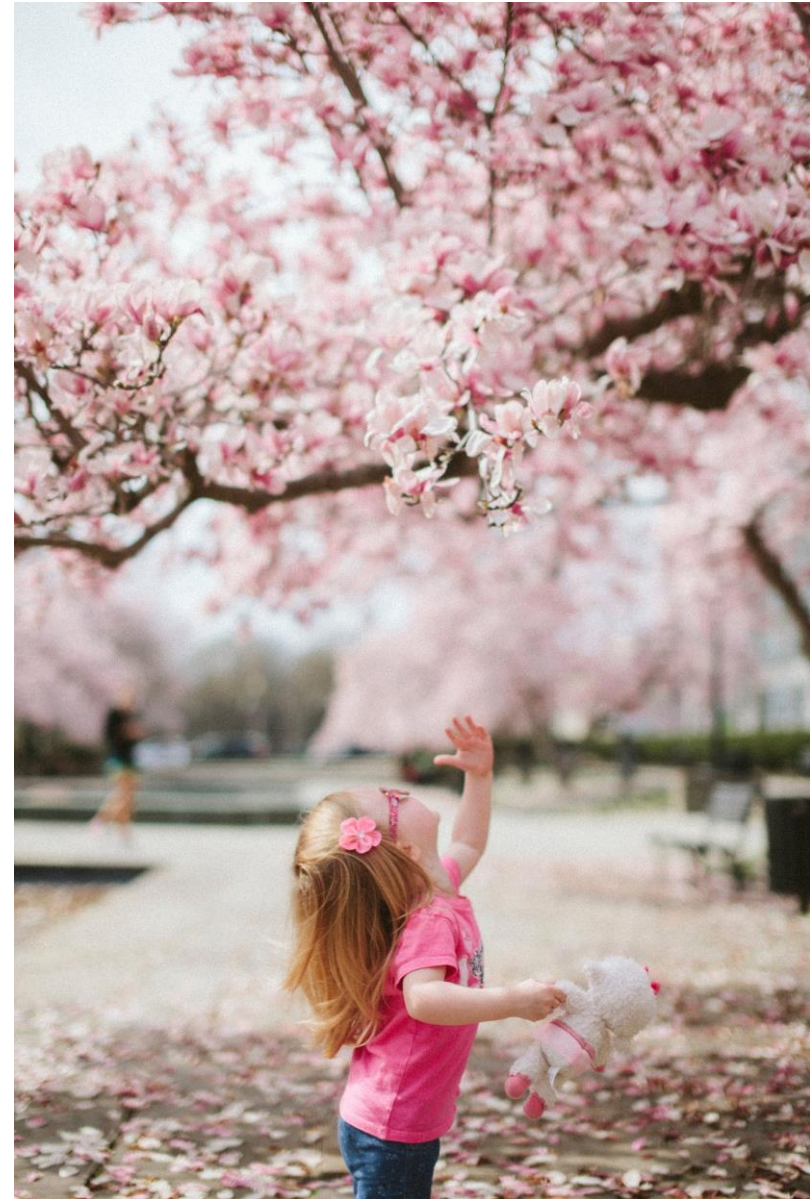
Love

Fun

A chance to learn and grow

Safety

Health





**As local leaders of place, councils  
can help to deliver good outcomes  
for all children.**

**They just need the right levers and  
funding, within a national  
framework that supports children  
and families to thrive.**

**This vision is built on two key values:**

## **Child-centred**

Children and young people, including babies, are at the centre of every ambition and every action. Their best interests are paramount.

## **Children's voices**

Children and young people's voices influence every ambition. Their wishes and feelings are key.

# How do we get there?

## Stable, loving homes & trusted relationships

- Support for families, including kinship
- Children in care & care leavers
- Immigration

## Play, leisure & friendships

- Playgrounds, green space, leisure facilities
- Time with friends
- Digital connectivity
- Youth services

## Formal & informal learning

- Lifelong education
- SEND & Alternative Provision
- Home education
- Culture
- Skills & careers

## Safe places to live

- Tackling abuse, neglect & exploitation
- Domestic abuse
- Youth justice
- Community safety
- Safety in schools
- Road safety
- Online safety

## Good homes & good health

- Good housing
- Physical & mental health services
- Disability support
- Climate change
- Poverty & welfare

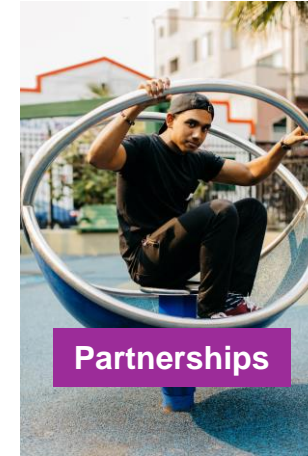
# Cross-cutting themes



**Children's  
rights &  
participation**



**Workforce**



**Partnerships**



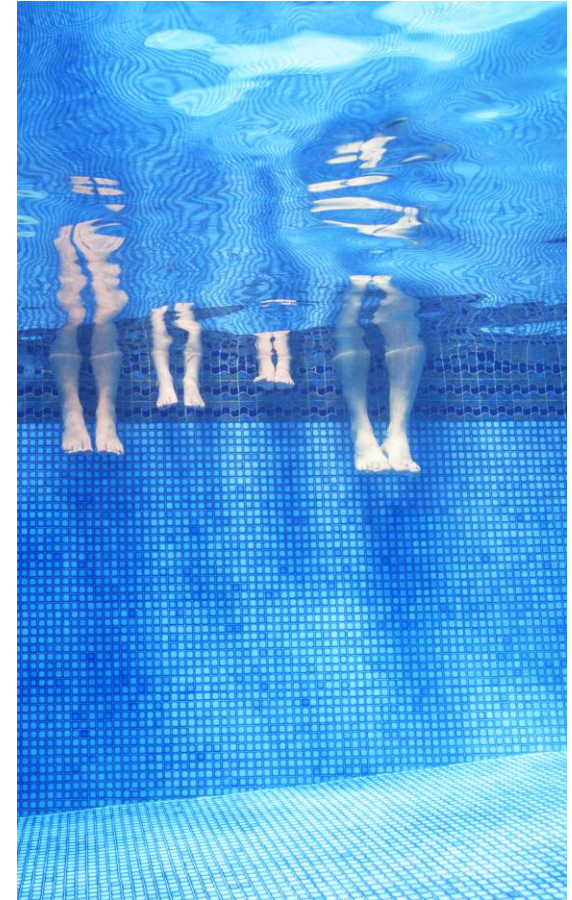
**Equality, diversity & inclusion**



**Funding**

## The importance of family and parental relationships

“Every child deserves to live in a home where they feel loved, where they are close to their friends, family and school, and where they know there are adults around them who can be trusted and relied upon. They deserve to have a space to call their own, and to feel settled”



# **Pillar One: Love**

**Children live in stable, loving homes  
and have strong relationships with  
trusted adults**

## Why it's important

- A sense of safety, belonging and security
- More likely to have better physical & mental health & academic performance
- Improved long-term development





## Where we want to be

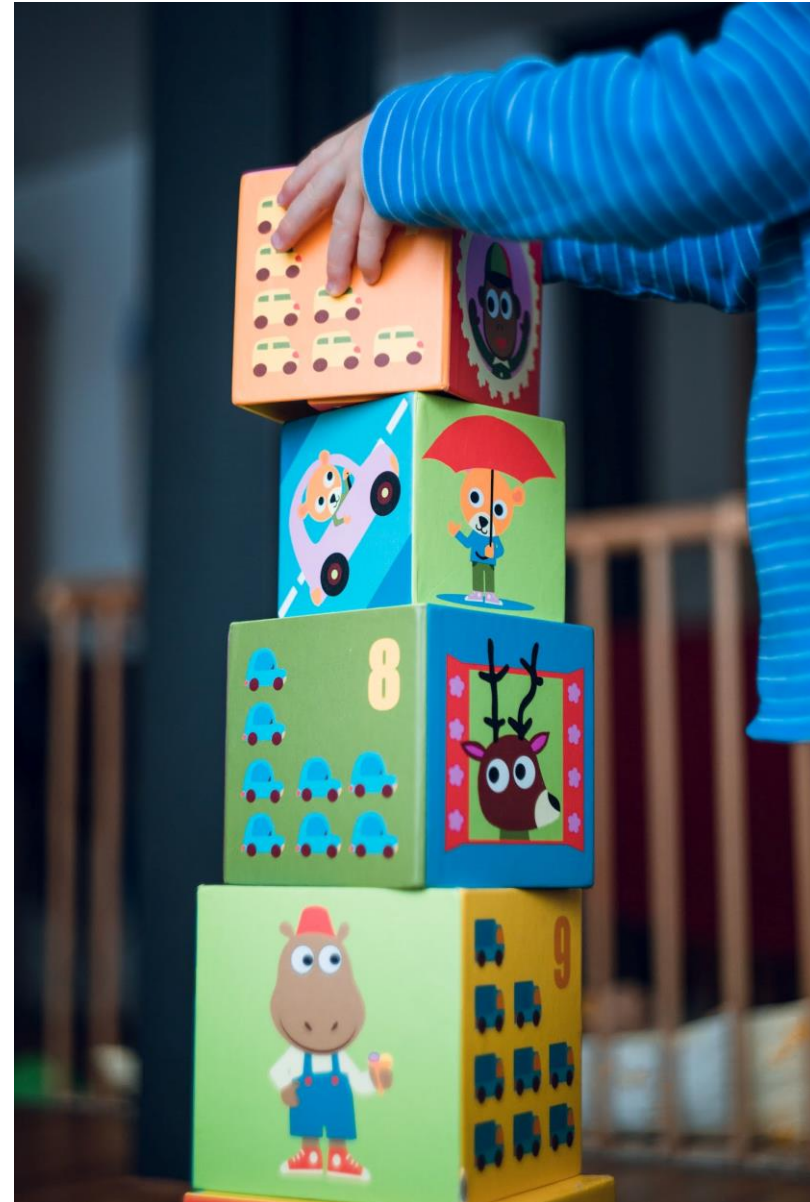
- Every child in a home where they feel loved, close to friends, family & school
- The right help at the right time for all children & families
- Advocacy & stability for children in care
- Reward & recognition for those working with children

# **Pillar Two: Fun**

**Children have access to leisure facilities, outdoor space and places to play with their friends**

## Why it's important

- Building skills, knowledge and risk awareness
- Healthy lifestyles
- Social skills
- Self-identify and protection against isolation



## Where we want to be

- Safe, easily accessible spaces for children & their friends
- Access to nature
- Digital accessibility
- Easily accessible informal support
- Planning & urban design that enhances health & wellbeing

# **Pillar Three: A chance to learn and grow**

**Children have opportunities for formal  
and informal learning that meets their  
needs**

## Why it's important

- Improved long-term outcomes
- Independence
- Confidence and self-esteem
- Social mobility
- Improved mental health



## Where we want to be

- Good home learning environments
- High quality, affordable early education & childcare
- Inclusive schools
- Cultural activities for all children
- Tailored careers advice
- Local skills partnerships

# **Pillar Four: Safety**

**Children are safe in their homes and  
neighbourhoods**



## Why it's important

- Improved long-term relationships, education, behaviour & health
- Independence
- Psychological safety helps children to learn



## Where we want to be

- Children are protected from harm wherever they are, including from risks facilitated by technology
- Training for those working with children
- Swift access to support for children
- A child-first approach to youth justice

# **Pillar Five: Health**

**Children live in good homes, with access to healthy food and appropriate health services**

## Why it's important

- Good health lays the foundation for physical, intellectual and emotional development
- Resilience and ability to take advantage of opportunities
- Improved long-term outcomes



## Where we want to be

- No child living in poverty
- Ensuring protective factors in place for good mental and physical health and wellbeing
- A good quality home for every child
- Children receive health care they need, with focus on prevention
- Action on climate change

# Overarching recommendations

A cross-government strategy for children

Sufficient and sustainable funding

A children's workforce plan

Families are supported to thrive with high-quality local services

Councils are co-leaders of local education systems

Stable, high-quality homes for all children

Education nurtures children and prepares them for independence

Councils have the ingredients they need to create great places to grow up

A clear plan for the most vulnerable children

Timely access to high quality healthcare, including mental healthcare

Partners work together towards shared outcomes

Discrimination is tackled across every service and at the highest level

## What does this all mean?

- Local authorities play a key role as the coordinators of these services, and they are best placed to understand the unique needs of their communities.

The vision:

- Highlights the need for change
- Makes the case to central government
- Establishes the direction of the LGA
- Coalesces the sector around a shared vision.



[www.local.gov.uk/vision-for-children](http://www.local.gov.uk/vision-for-children)



# PANEL DISCUSSION



## What next? Early help, family support and parental relationships

- Florah Shiringo, Director of Families & Children's Services, Wiltshire Council
- James Fuller, Head of Policy & Partnerships for Reducing Parental Conflict, DWP
- Leandra Box, Deputy Chief Executive, Race Equality Foundation
- Monica Hingorani, Deputy Head of Early Years & Prevention, Anna Freud





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**THANK YOU**

