



Save the Children

CHILDREN'S COMMUNITIES YEAR ONE REPORT

FEBRUARY 2016 - JANUARY 2017

Prepared for the **Children's Communities
Funders Alliance**

February 2017

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HEADLINES

Dear Children's Communities Funders Alliance,

We are delighted to be able to introduce this Year 1 Children's Community Report.

The Children's Community project is making great progress and is really coming alive. As you will see from the report, both Wallsend and Pembury are developing well with great local buy-in and real momentum building. Our third Children's Community site - Smallshaw-Hurst - is now on board and recruitment for their core local staffing team will start in the next few weeks. We have a superb new national evaluation team from Sheffield Hallam University. The Children's Community national website will "go live" in April 2017.

As you know, local systems change is tremendously important (and potentially impactful) work but it is also complex and challenging. Moving from concept phase to implementation phase for such an ambitious project was never going to be completely straightforward, and so it proved. During our first year, we took some difficult but necessary decisions around our evaluation and faced some funding setbacks. We were disappointed to lose one of our sites. These challenges have certainly led to a slower, more cautious start than originally envisaged but the entire initiative is now really accelerating.

The Children's Community project is exciting, ambitious and necessary. It presents a great opportunity to explore how neighbourhood-level systems integration and coherence can help tackle the cycle of poverty and give children from the poorest backgrounds the high-quality chances and experiences they deserve.

Thank you for being on this journey with us. Your support is hugely appreciated.

Yours,

Save the Children

A Shared Understanding and Vision

- A Children's Community is an innovative local systems change approach to improving children's outcomes and tackling the cycle of poverty. Based on partnership working, a shared vision and a shared area analysis, it aims to catalyse a neighbourhood-wide, integrated support system for children that is both holistic and sustained.
- There are four reasons why Children's Communities are both necessary and exciting. First, children's lives and outcomes are shaped by a very wide-range of complex factors and so a policy solution that covers multiple issues at a variety of levels is in a strong position to make a difference (compared to narrower, single-strand interventions). Solutions must therefore encompass many services and organisations and all parts of the system. Second, to substantially and sustainably change children's outcomes in the poorest neighbourhoods, tackling issues one-at-a-time and in isolation may not be sufficient. System integration and coherence, so that issues are addressed together, is likely to be especially important. Third, different places create different dynamics, pose different challenges and offer different opportunities. A localised and customised approach is an essential part of any effective policy response. Fourth, now more than ever, there is a need to get the maximum value from every last pound invested in local neighbourhoods so that children get what they need.
- The Children's Community model has several core components. It is based on a defined neighbourhood and driven by a shared area analysis and theory of change. Crucially, it aims to create a local integrated and holistic system of support. Moreover, it is aimed at generational change and powered by local voices.
- Through the Children's Community project, we want to help change the odds for the poorest children in our local sites. Also, we want to gather rich learning and evidence about the impact of the project. Ultimately, we want to see this approach scaled to many more neighbourhoods.



Photo: Magda Rakita/Save the Children

Local Communities

- The Wallsend Children's Community has identified three early implementation priorities, where a coordinated approach is considered locally to be particularly needed. These are "Getting things right early", "Being fit for life" and "Supporting young people to realise their aspirations".
- Under "Getting things right early", a wide-range of projects are being established including a parent behaviour change campaign, a best practice pre-school network bringing together local providers and support staff to better deliver high-quality early language interventions and a multi-agency early years transition service. As part of "Being fit for Life", the Children's Community has collectively commissioned an area Health Needs Assessment, run an early intervention mental health programme in primary schools and is planning a school-mental health network in partnership with the local authority's educational psychology and child mental health teams. In terms of "Supporting young people to realise their aspirations", local partners are delivering a coordinated package of out-of-school supports (The Young in Wallsend programme) and intensive and sustained mentoring for vulnerable young people.
- The Pembury Children's Community has specified three workstreams. These are "Early years and primary", "Secondary school and the transition to adulthood", and "Support for Parents".
- A growing body of projects are underway. In the "Early years and primary" workstream, these include the co-location of early years services into the local community centre, outreach work to ensure Pembury residents benefit fully from these services, recruitment of an estate-based early years teacher in partnership with the children's centre and local primary school, and targeted reading and homework activities. Under the "Secondary school and transition to adulthood" workstream, there is a multi-agency skills and employment programme called Pembury Pass. Finally, as part of the "Support for Parents" workstream, there is a dedicated estate-based parent advice service run by Peabody Housing and Hackney Council.

National Developments

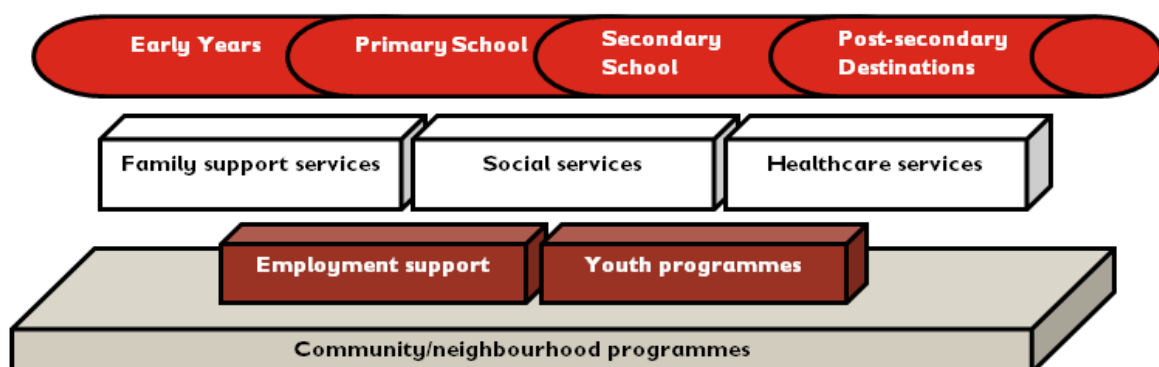
- Smallshaw-Hurst has become our third Children's Community site. The Children's Community partnership comprises a housing association with an extensive portfolio of neighbourhood projects, local schools, and the local authority with particularly strong engagement from public health and early years services. Recruitment for the core local staffing team will start in the next few weeks.
- We selected (in partnership with colleagues from local sites and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation) a multi-disciplinary team from Sheffield Hallam University to carry out the Children's Community national evaluation. The team will be co-led by Sarah Pearson from the Centre for Economic and Social Research (CESR) and Mike Coldwell from the Sheffield Institute of Education (SIOE). They put in a really superb tender proposal (the selection committee was unanimous in their verdict) setting out their approach.
- We have taken steps to give the Children's Community project a sharper focus on data and evidence. First, our new evaluation team is creating customised Data Dashboards for each Children's Community site. Second, we have asked Sheffield Hallam to establish, in partnership with sites, neighbourhood child-level Client Monitoring Systems. This individual child-level data will enable us to acquire a more fine-grained understanding of the impacts associated with coordinated packages of support. Third, we are recruiting Data, Evaluation and Impact Advisers in the Wallsend and the Smallshaw-Hurst Communities (the Pembury team is configured slightly differently but also has a clear and increasing focus on data and evidence).
- We have commissioned a creative agency to develop a shared logo and website for the Children's Community initiative. The website will be launched in early April 2017 and will provide both an improved external profile for the initiative and a collaborative platform, for the sites to share learning and broader information.
- Over the last six months, Save the Children has worked with our Wales country team to conduct a series of discussions with Welsh Government officials about the Children's Communities project. We were delighted to hear, in October 2016, the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children make a statement in the Senedd, the National Assembly for Wales, announcing his intention to introduce Children's Zones to Wales. Modelled on the concept of Children's Communities, Children's Zones will be a new Welsh Government anti-poverty intervention to give children the best possible start and to build resilient communities.

CHILDREN'S COMMUNITIES: A SHARED UNDERSTANDING AND VISION

The effective implementation of Children's Communities depends upon a widely-held shared understanding of the project rationale, core components of the Children's Community model and overall vision. The statements below were developed, discussed and collectively agreed by the Children's Community sites and Save the Children at our February and June 2016 Learning Exchange events. They provide a consistent reference point for our work.

A Children's Community is an innovative place-based local systems change approach to improving children's outcomes and tackling the cycle of generational poverty. Based on a shared vision and a shared area analysis, it aims to catalyse a neighbourhood-wide, integrated support system for children that is both holistic and sustained. There are four reasons why Children's Communities are both necessary and exciting.

- 1. First, children's lives and outcomes are shaped by a very wide-range of complex factors.** As babies and toddlers, they are heavily influenced by relationships and interactions with caregivers, home environment, broader family circumstances, local services, and the informal support available to their parents from neighbours and friends. When they get older, children spend 190 days per year at school (around seven hours per day) and 175 days in their homes and communities. This suggests there are significant limits to what schools alone can do and that multiple other influences on children are also likely to be important. Equally, a child's physical and mental health, educational achievement, confidence, self-esteem, and future employment prospects are deeply interconnected.
- 2. Second, to substantially and sustainably change children's outcomes in the poorest neighbourhoods, tackling issues one-at-a-time and in isolation may not be sufficient.** Many children in these places face multiple, overlapping social challenges; such that action in any one part of a child's life risks being undermined by problems in another part. Conversely, in better-off areas, children typically benefit from customised care to meet their every need and a dizzying array of learning experiences that occur round-the-clock and 365 days a year. It is little wonder that traditional policy efforts have struggled to narrow outcome gaps between rich and poor. For areas with concentrated social problems, we need a stronger focus on local systems coherence so that services work in conjunction to a shared ambition for children.
- 3. Third, different places create different dynamics, pose different challenges and offer different opportunities.** Top-down initiatives come and go, each with a focus on particular problem areas, but rarely with much understanding of the whole picture, the distinctiveness of local characteristics, or the strength and capacity for self-support that is inherent in most neighbourhoods. There is an urgent need to reframe these deficit narratives, to address local contexts, to harness the power of local assets and networks, and to create locally-led and long-term plans for transforming children's futures.
- 4. Fourth, now more than ever, there is a need to get the maximum value from every last pound invested in local neighbourhoods so that children get what they need.** Big injections of additional funds to help overcome entrenched social problems are not on the horizon. Subsequently, we need to cut-out duplication and join-up and sharpen each area's collective offer to the next generation. It's time to cut through the bureaucracy and align our efforts at a local level.



Children's Community system - pipeline of services in a local neighbourhood

Below, we highlight key components of the Children's Community model:

- **Based on a defined neighbourhood.** Children's Communities are located in disadvantaged places with a history of partnership working for children and a collective commitment to take this to the next level. The focus on a fairly small geographical area enables both work that specifically tackles the drivers of poor children's outcomes in that locality and child-level tracking across their lives and over time.
- **Driven by a shared area analysis and theory of change.** Local services and wider stakeholders together develop and implement a coordinated plan for helping children thrive, based on a shared vision for children and a shared analysis of children's needs. The vision and analysis includes a recognition that children's outcomes and the causal processes that produce them are interrelated and that Children's Communities must, therefore, seek to simultaneously improve multiple outcomes across children's whole lives.
- **Creating a local integrated and holistic system of support.** Children's Communities work across the different parts of children's lives, helping them to transition between family, school and community and into, through, and out of, education. They make sense of the layers of existing interventions and resources that exist in neighbourhoods, introduce new interventions where needed, and aim to focus the entirety of local provision for children and families into an integrated and holistic offer where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.
- **Aimed at generational change.** Children's Communities aim to work over the long-term. This presents an opportunity that is distinct from conventional public service targets rooted in short-term goals, and the inevitable resulting focus on presenting symptoms and tackling problems at source. Alongside work on symptoms, it also enables longer-term action to tackle the causes of poor outcomes for local children (e.g. tackling low educational achievement by improving children's family and community lives whilst also providing additional support in the classroom).
- **Powered by local voices.** Children's Communities are locally-led and owned and resolutely focused on local needs, assets and priorities. They aim to surface community assets and strengths, to harness the power of local networks and relationships, to support communities to find their own solutions and to be self-reliant, and to build capacity in local systems.

Our key aims and ambitions for Children's Communities are as follows:

- **We want to help change the odds for the poorest children.** Growing up in a Children's Community area should be a source of pride, and a widely-understood signal to the outside world that this is a person who has benefited from the best possible start.
- **We want to gather rich learning and evidence about the impact made by the Children's Community project.** Crucially, we want to demonstrate that the approach can work and show how it has made a difference for children and families. Ultimately, we want to see this approach scaled to many more neighbourhoods. As part of this, we want to sustain and expand work in existing project areas and to grow a national movement of Children's Communities.



THE WALLSEND CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Administratively, Wallsend forms part of North Tyneside's local authority, whilst geographically it lies between Newcastle upon Tyne and the coast. Before being swallowed up in the Tyneside conurbation, Wallsend was a distinct town, and it retains a strong identity. For much of its modern history, it made its living from industry. However, as a result of national and global economic changes, the last three decades have seen the decline of local shipbuilding and other heavy engineering and the reconfiguring of labour markets towards low-skilled, low-paid work. These trends have a powerful and continuing influence on the area, and even where new economic opportunities have been created (such as in advanced manufacturing or subsea and offshore engineering), these typically require specialised knowledge and large numbers of local people do not hold the requisite qualifications. Today's Wallsend has high levels of child and family poverty. These social conditions underlie a wide-range of presenting problems for children and young people, including low school readiness at age five; some children not realising their educational potential; poor health; and youth unemployment.

Strategic approach and local projects

In response to the area's challenges, local leaders have set out an ambitious vision to build, over a generation, a Wallsend where children and young people have access to exactly the same high-quality chances as those in more advantaged areas. This is underpinned, first, by a collective mission (held by local services and stakeholders) and, second, by three early implementation priorities.

- The collective mission is to create a fully-fledged Children's Community in Wallsend. This will be comprised of an interconnected network of services for children that (1) cuts across their home, school and community contexts in order to both address multiple problems simultaneously and maximise positive experiences and (2) connects phases of childhood so that no child falls through the gaps between stages or institutions.
- The three early implementation priorities, where a coordinated approach is considered locally to be particularly needed, are "Getting things right early", "Being fit for life" and "Supporting young people to realise their aspirations".



Photo: Maada Rakita/Save the Children

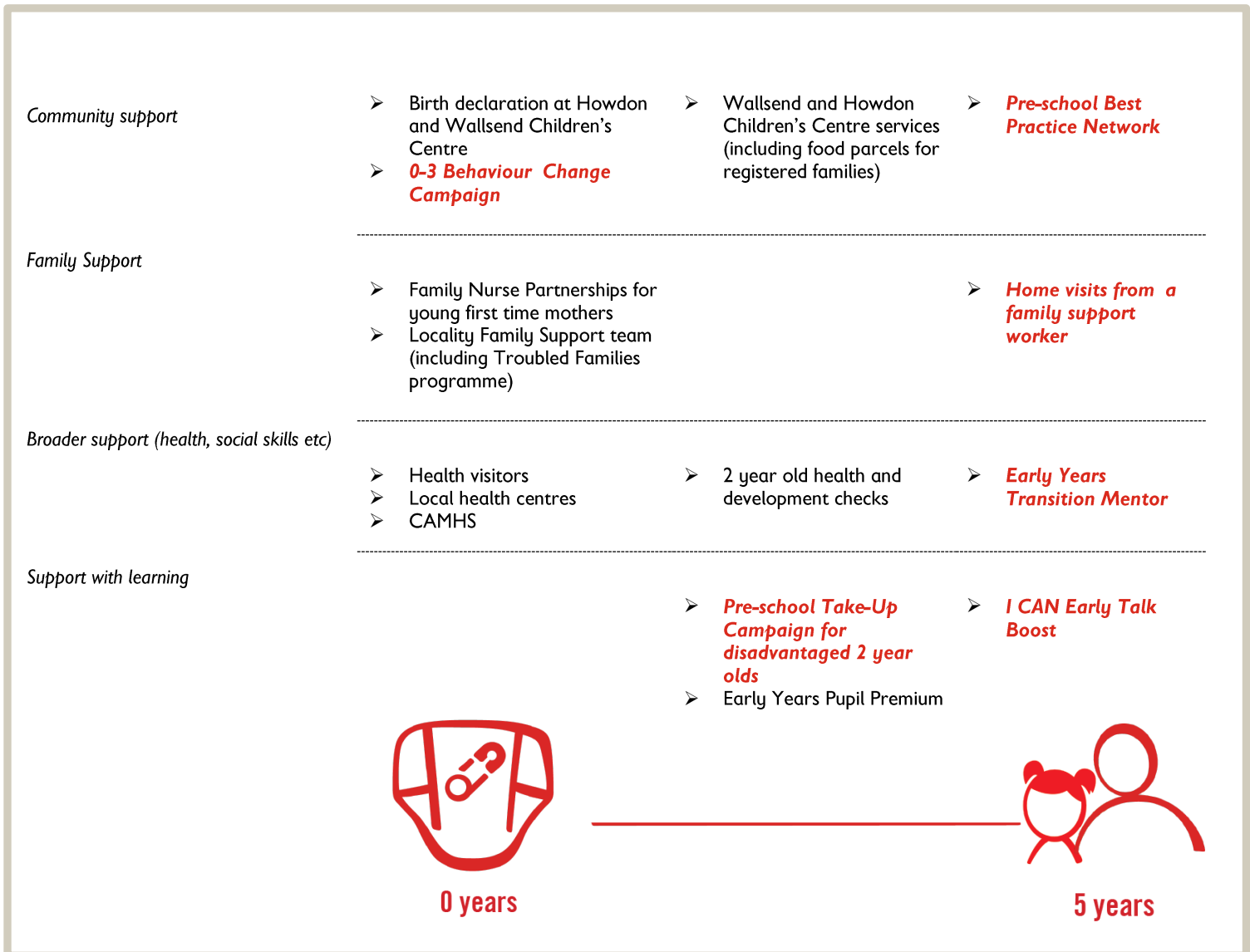
- 1. Getting things right early** - Despite improvements in recent years, too many local children are behind with their learning early in their school careers, including even before they start primary school. This priority incorporates work to support parenting, improve both access to and the quality of pre-school, and give vulnerable children additional help at key transition points and where they are falling behind.
- 2. Being fit for life** - There are persistent local concerns regarding some children's health and the impact this has or may have on their life chances. In particular, there are issues around children's mental health and general fitness and examples of undiagnosed or untreated medical problems (eyesight, hearing etc).
- 3. Supporting young people to realise their aspirations** - There is a strong belief that more needs to be done to help Wallsend's young people realise their aspirations (it is widely-acknowledged that local young people are ambitious, but it is thought these ambitions can sometimes be frustrated by lack of knowledge about how to achieve them).

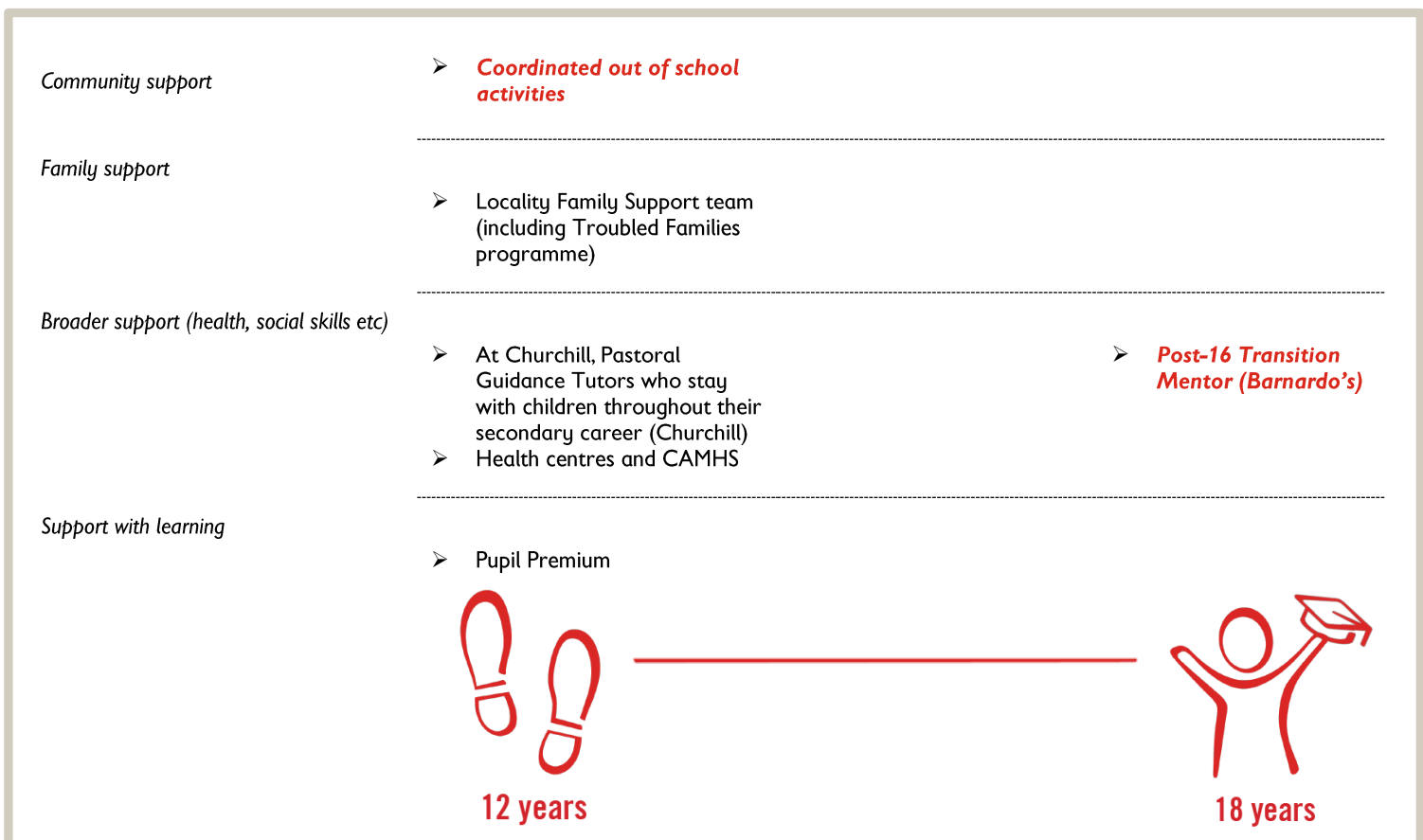
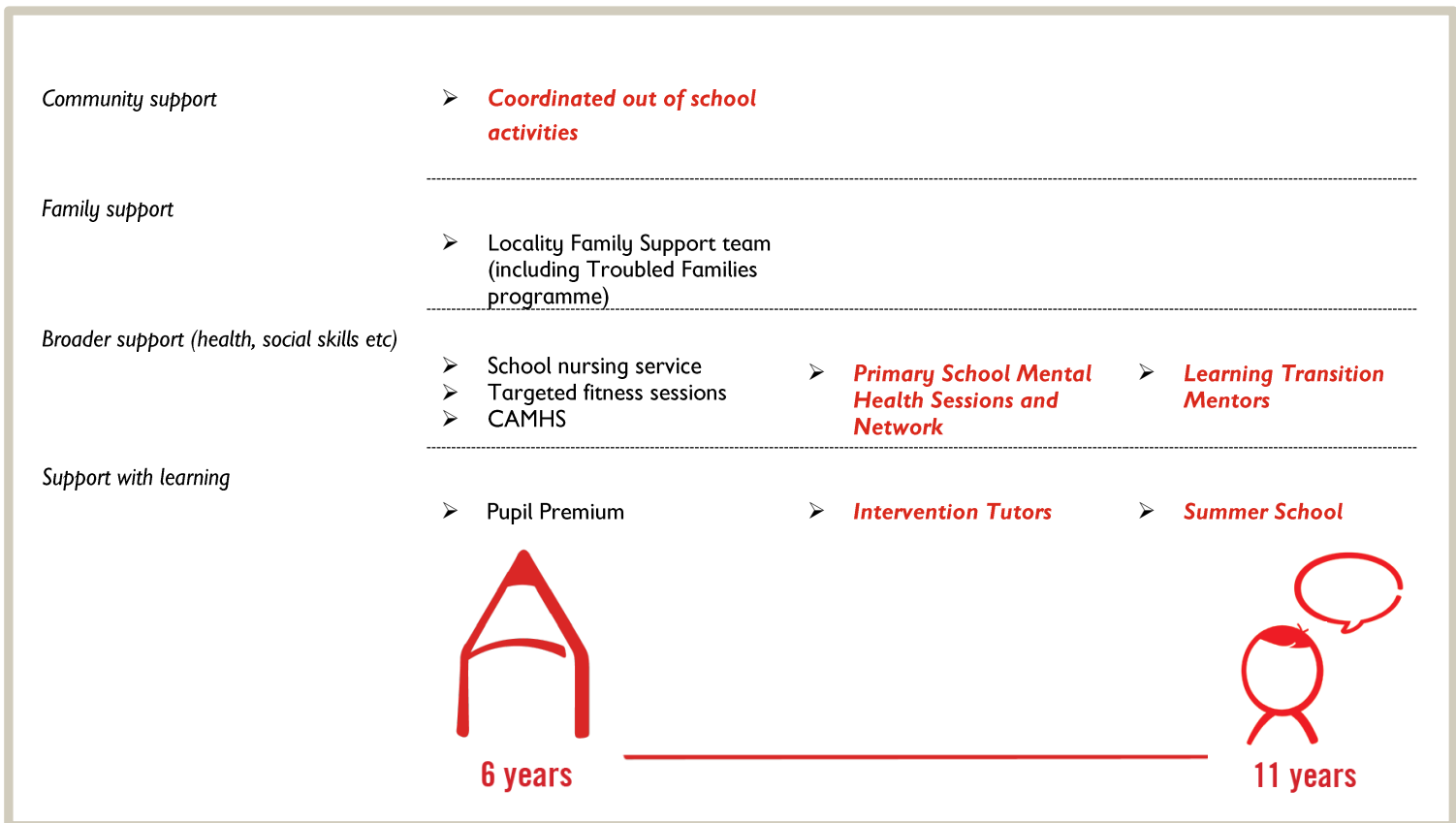
The Children's Community project is still in its early days, but there are already a growing body of projects that sit under these priorities. The table below shows details of these projects, their strategic goals, and the key partners involved in delivering them. After the table, we have included a series of diagrams that start to map Wallsend's services. As the project develops, these diagrams will become fuller and the connections within them will become clearer.

Priority	Project	Description
Getting things right early	<i>Parent Behaviour Change</i>	A recurring theme throughout many of these interventions is a concern locally about low levels of school readiness at age five. Evidence suggests that the amount and style of language that parents use when conversing with their children is a predictor of children's early learning. Using some of the latest insights in behavioural sciences and working with Claremont Communications, this project, based on broader Save the Children work, will seek to explore approaches that may stimulate language-enriching behaviours in parents. The project will work with a cohort of parents of 0-3 year olds in 2017.
	<i>Pre-School Network</i>	Five local pre-school settings with high numbers of disadvantaged children (and spanning the statutory, voluntary and private sectors) will sign up to an Early Language Best Practice Network. Staff in the setting will be trained in the "Early Talk Boost" programme and will deliver the intervention to eight children per term (120 children across the five settings per year). Staff from across the settings will also attend regular best practice training days. The strategic purpose here is twofold. First, most local settings are already high-quality, but we want to help them do more to identify and address early language delay. Second, given increasing diversity in the local pre-school market, we want to create a forum for establishing common standards and information sharing.
	<i>Early years transition</i>	Supported by Save the Children's seedcorn fund, the new multi-agency, early years transition service works with children in their final months of nursery, over the summer (including a "Ready for School" holiday club in the local children's centre) and during their first few months of reception. Additionally, where there are particular challenges, a trained family support worker will at the same time work with a child's parents. This service will work with 50 children per year. It reflects local experience that many disadvantaged children in Wallsend find educational transitions difficult.
	<i>Intervention and transition tutors</i>	Funded through pooled resources from the Schools Partnership, the Children's Community team oversees a team of six Intervention and Transition tutors. These tutors work with children falling behind at the end of Key Stage One and those at risk of struggling with the transition from primary to secondary school. The aim is early intervention and prevention. In total, the tutors work with 200 children per year.
Being fit for life	<i>Health Needs Assessment</i>	The Children's Community partnership has collectively commissioned a Health Needs Assessment of the Wallsend area. This is in response to concerns about local children's health and the impact this has on their life chances. The report, once published in February 2017, will provide a detailed overview of child health in Wallsend and will serve as a basis for health projects going forwards.
	<i>Child mental health</i>	In response to concerns from schools about child mental health, school-based early intervention mental health sessions have supported 50 children across the Wallsend area. 15 members of school staff have received training. Going forwards, seven local schools have nominated a mental health champion who will each attend new termly conferences. The council's Educational Psychology and Child Mental Health services will also attend the conferences.

Realising Aspirations	<i>Out-of-school activities</i>	A consortium of local youth groups and churches, led by the Children's Community staffing team, is together designing and delivering a coordinated package of out-of-school activities for Wallsend children. The work is funded through a £350k grant from the Big Lottery Fund. This collaborative project enables core area priorities to drive the development of local activities. It also means that service providers can be held to common standards around quality provision, data collection and evaluation. This 'Young in Wallsend' project reaches around 400 children per year.
	<i>Post-16 mentoring</i>	Wallsend has a low rate of young people not in education, employment or training but local intelligence suggests that a number of young people quickly drop-out of these positive destinations. This project tests the impact of intensive, personalised and sustained mentoring for vulnerable young people. Run by Barnardo's, and overseen by the Children's Community core staffing team, the project will have worked with 30 young people by the end of 2017.

Wallsend Children's Community Map of Services

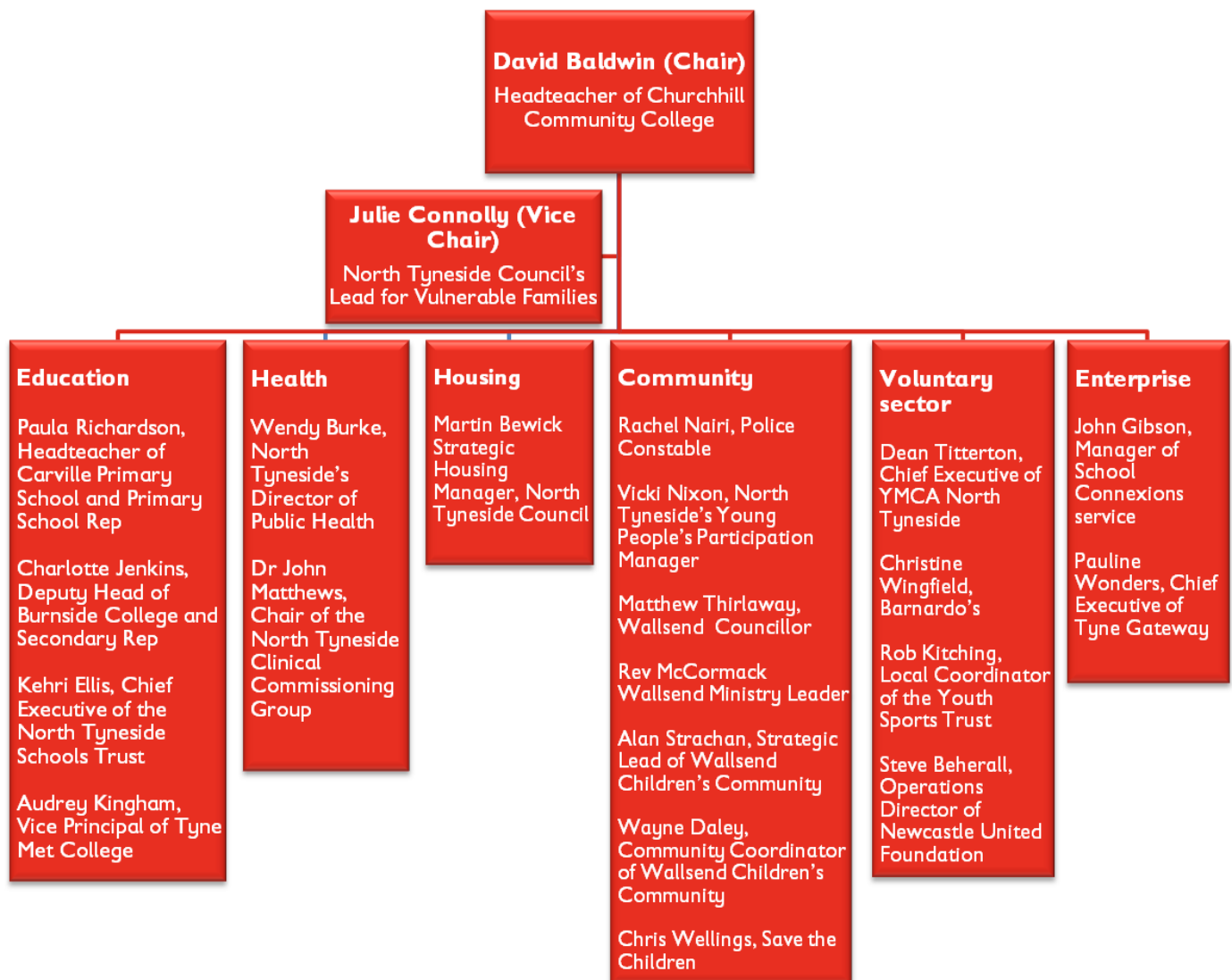




Services Key: Activities in black: Existing local activities and projects connected to the Children's Community
 Activities in red: Activities and projects that sit directly under the Children's Community portfolio

Wallsend Children's Community systems leadership

As part of the Children's Community project, systems leaders from across the locality are coming together to provide the best possible support for children.



Sub-board 1: Wallsend Partnership of Schools

David Baldwin, Headteacher – Churchill Community College
 Charlotte Jenkins – Deputy Head, Burnside Enterprise College
 Paula Richardson, Headteacher – Carville Primary
 Louise Guthrie, Headteacher – Denbigh Community Primary
 Louise Wells, Headteacher – Battle Hill Primary
 Andrew James, Headteacher – Holy Cross RC Primary
 Angi Gibson, Headteacher – Hadrian Park Primary
 Ann Thornton, Headteacher – Wallsend Jubilee Primary
 Claire Jordan, Headteacher – St Columba's RC Primary
 Emma Overton, Headteacher – Stephenson Memorial Primary
 Laura Fallon – Headteacher, St Bernadette's RC Primary
 Joanne Camsell – Headteacher, Wallsend St Peter's Primary
 Justina Terretta – Headteacher, Beacon Hill Primary
 Katherine Hill – Headteacher, Western Community Primary
 Susan Winter – Headteacher, Richardson Dees Primary
 Tracy Flannaghan – Headteacher – Redesdale Primary

Sub-board 2: Wallsend Youth Provision Group

Steve Ramshaw, St Paul's Community Centre
 Carla Franchi, Barnardos
 Dot Ownston, Prometheus Youth Group
 Louise Clark, NE Youth
 Don Irving, YMCA North Tyneside
 Emma Duff, Willington Team Ministry
 Brian Hill, Willington Quay Club
 Dan Convey, Wallsend Boys Club
 Matthew Mahoney, Hot Chocolate Project

THE PEMBURY CHILDREN'S COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY PROFILE

Pembury, home to 1,000 children and young people, is a disadvantaged estate in a thriving borough and global city. The local landscape is rich with high-quality services and economic opportunities but some local children are not fully benefiting from them. The estate has one of the highest rates of child poverty in London, with 46% of children living in low-income households.

Nonetheless, estate population turnover is low and in recent years local investment has contributed to growing community pride (consistently evidenced by resident surveys and consultations). Indeed, professionals working on the estate regularly describe the talent and resourcefulness of residents. Half of the estate's population is made up of first generation migrants. As such, the community is home to a rich tapestry of culture and knowledge but some families are also relatively unfamiliar with local public services and structures.

Strategic approach and local projects

The Pembury Children's Community is a long-term, locally-driven, collective project to give the estate's children opportunities that are equal to those enjoyed by children in better-off areas. Consistent with Children's Community principles (and the body of national and international evidence that informs these principles), this vision is being delivered through an overarching mission to create coordinated and holistic support for children across their home, school and community lives and at critical points throughout childhood.

Below this mission, the Children's Community has identified two early operational priorities.

- First, there is a collective ambition to improve the connectivity of local services (strengthening connections between individual services and between services and the estate). This is about changing the methodology of engagement that local public services draw on with regard to Pembury (supporting public service practitioners to think creatively about how they best reach and support residents holistically and in a sustained way, particularly those who might otherwise fall through gaps between services). Practical steps that contribute to this include holding parent-teacher meetings in the estate community centre or building relationships between community nurses and local mums groups.
- Second, there is a shared aim to harness local relationships so that residents can do more to help themselves (thus building a self-supporting, self-sustaining community). This priority focuses on the development of informal networks and community development, linking closely with resident clubs and associations and local faith communities.

All of this work is delivered through three workstreams.

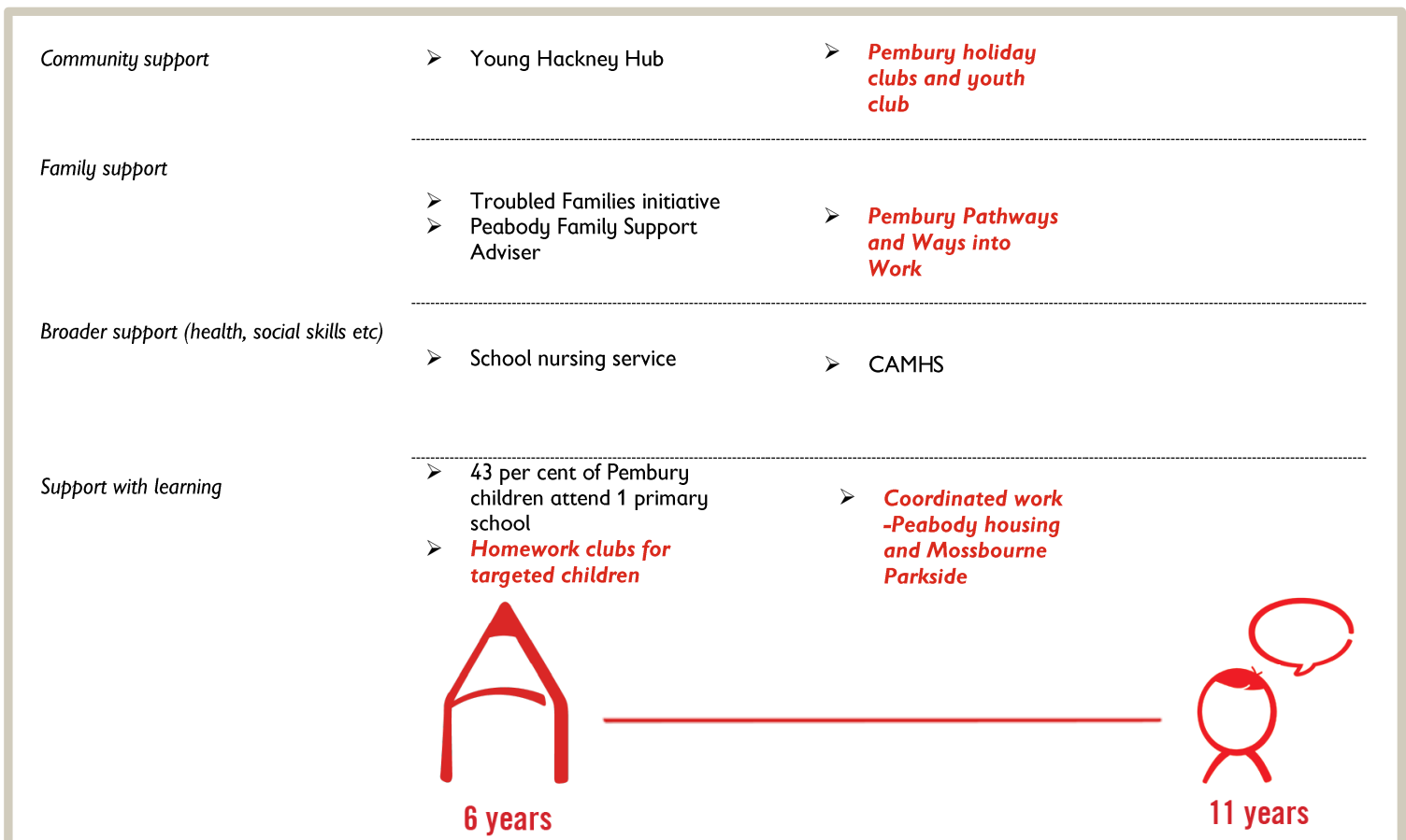
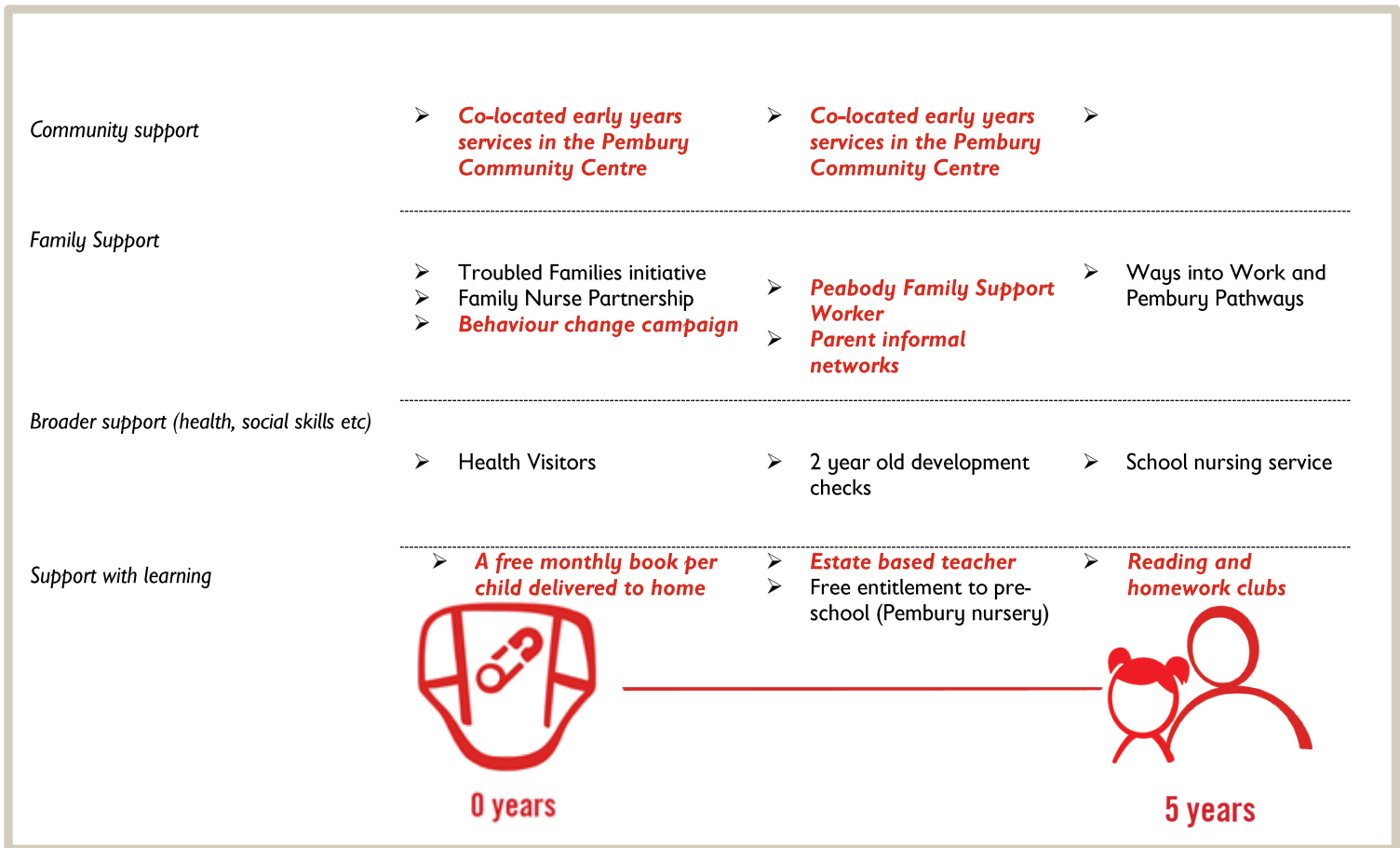
- 1. Early years and primary** given that local children's early learning scores are lower than in neighbouring, more advantaged areas.
- 2. Secondary school and transition to adulthood** because despite some children doing very well at school, others still struggle to access positive pathways.
- 3. Support for parents** as many local mums and dads, particularly those from migrant communities, struggle to gain maximum benefit from mainstream services and local job opportunities.

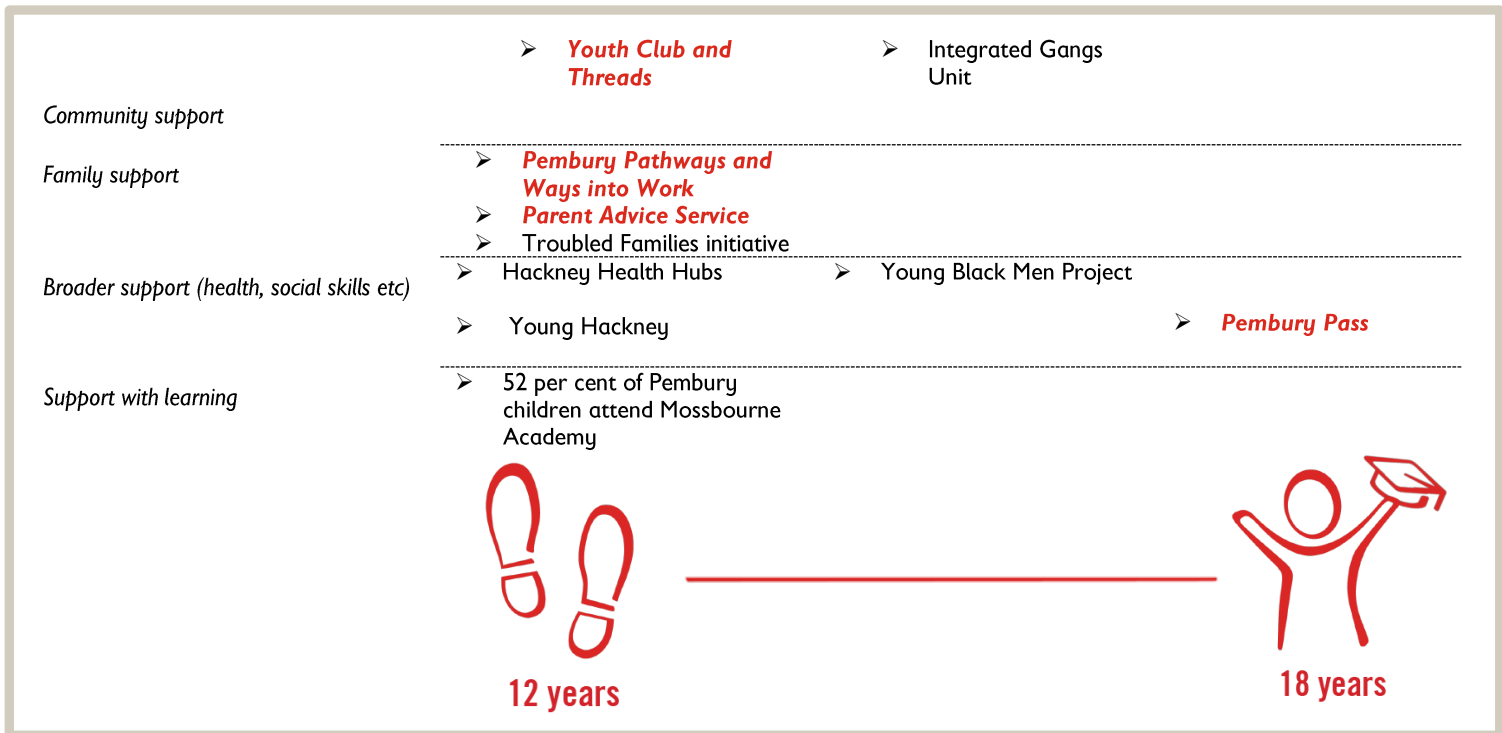


As with Wallsend, the Pembury Children's Community is still very much in its infancy. Nevertheless, there is an expanding set of local projects as described in the table below. Following the table, we have included some diagrams that show an emerging Pembury services map.

Worksteam	Project	Description
Early years and primary	<i>Children's Centre services</i>	This work reflects a local desire to improve children's early experiences and development, and is focused on the new Pembury Community Centre. The Centre is now a base for the co-location of services. It brings together services including Brook Children's Centre, the First Steps Community psychology service and the Community midwives team. Last year, 95 children and their families attended sessions at the centre every week. The Children's Community is now leading a renewed outreach effort to ensure Pembury families are regular attendees.
	<i>Estate-based teacher</i>	Building on the estate's established book-giving scheme (with over 130 children receiving monthly free books delivered to their home over the last six months), the Children's Community - in a partnership between Mossbourne Parkside Primary School, Brook Children's Centre and Peabody Housing - is recruiting an estate-based early years teacher (this project is supported by Save the Children's seedcorn fund). The teacher will work with a cohort of 20 children for a period of one year (those moving into Mossbourne Parkside Primary) through a series of home visits focused on early language development. These children will also benefit from support through Peabody's Family Support Adviser and Brook Children's Centre. We will also ensure a close working relationship between the estate-based teacher and each child's classroom teacher.
	<i>Reading and homework clubs</i>	The Children's Community, through Peabody Housing and Hackney Learning Trust, run weekly "Reading from the Start" sessions. These are for parents of children between two and five years of age (at least 50 children attended with their parents on two or more sessions last year). They are delivered by volunteers who aim to empower parents to support their child's literacy skills. Also, the Children's Community is running a programme of estate-based homework clubs, initially with small numbers (12 children) but with the possibility of expansion. This is a collaboration between Peabody Housing and Mossbourne Parkside, with children in need of additional support being prioritised. This service provides an excellent environment for after-school learning and customised support for a cohort of children who would otherwise be disadvantaged by their home circumstances.
Secondary and post-16	<i>Youth Club and Threads</i>	66 young people attended the Children's Community's youth club three times or more over the last six months. The youth club is run in partnership by Peabody and the local authority's Young Hackney service. Moreover, last year over 40 young women participated in the Threads project, focused on female empowerment and textile and fashion skills. The aim with the youth club and Threads is to give local young people the confidence and support they need to thrive.
	<i>The Pembury Pass</i>	The Pembury Pass is a personalised, multi-agency, mentoring programme to ease young people's transition into adulthood and to give them the support they need to access training and employment opportunities. The programme supported 30 young people last year.
Support for parents	<i>Parent Advice service</i>	The estate's parent advice service, run by Peabody in partnership with Hackney Council, provided employment and skills support to over 30 parents last year. In the last six months, 20 families in arrears have been given advice and benefits support. This support is critical given high local levels of child poverty.

Pembury Children's Community Map of Services





Services Key: Activities in black: Existing local activities and projects connected to the Children’s Community
 Activities in red: Activities and projects that sit directly under the Children’s Community portfolio

Pembury Children’s Community systems leadership

As part of the Children’s Community project, systems leaders are tackling issues collectively.



NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

As the thought leader of the Children's Community project, Save the Children enables the Communities to be part of a national movement for change. We support the project via the following critical functions:

- Bringing Communities together to learn from one another.
- Ensuring each Children's Community has access to the latest high-quality national and international thinking around improving poorer children's life chances.
- Funding and overseeing the evaluation of the initiative
- Overseeing the award of seedcorn grants to catalyse local innovation in Children's Communities.
- Securing dedicated strategic and coordinating capacity for each Community through the Secretariats.
- Building and articulating the case for Children's Communities to national policy-makers and influencers.
- Managing each funding award for Children's Communities effectively and reporting on progress to the Funders Alliance.
- Provide critical challenge, constructive feedback, and independent expertise in our role as a thought leader with oversight of this concept e.g. risk mitigation, learning across Communities to ensure best outcomes, and holding stakeholders to account.



Moving forwards, we will be increasing our national central team capacity including the creation of a Head of Local Systems Change post. This reflects Save the Children's strong commitment to being a thought and practice leader in this area, to making this an absolutely key part of our UK portfolio and to joining the dots between the Children's Community project and our systems change work elsewhere in the UK.

Strengthening the Children's Community initiative

- **Smallshaw-Hurst becomes our third Children's Community site.** This neighbourhood lies in the Tameside local authority area, approximately two miles from Ashton under Lyne town centre and part of the Greater Manchester conurbation. The two Lower Super Output Areas (small areas with an average population of 1,500 people) with the highest levels of child poverty in Tameside are both in Smallshaw-Hurst and these fall within the five per cent most deprived places nationally according to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation.

The Children's Community partnership comprises a housing association with an extensive portfolio of neighbourhood projects, local schools, and the local authority with particularly strong engagement from public health and early years services. It also incorporates the area's voluntary and community sector and police force and local GPs. By acting together, these partners can oversee a more powerful coordinated strategy for improving children's outcomes than would be possible if they operated as separate organisations or services.

In the coming months we will really accelerate progress in the Children's Community. This will start with collective planning (involving local services, wider stakeholders and the local community) based on an assessment of local needs and neighbourhood service mapping. Running in parallel, we will also be recruiting a core local Children's Community staffing team (an Executive Lead, Community Coordinator and Data, Evaluation and Impact Advisor). This team will give partners the dedicated, day-to-day capacity they need to start creating a more interconnected and coherent system of supports for Smallshaw-Hurst's children.

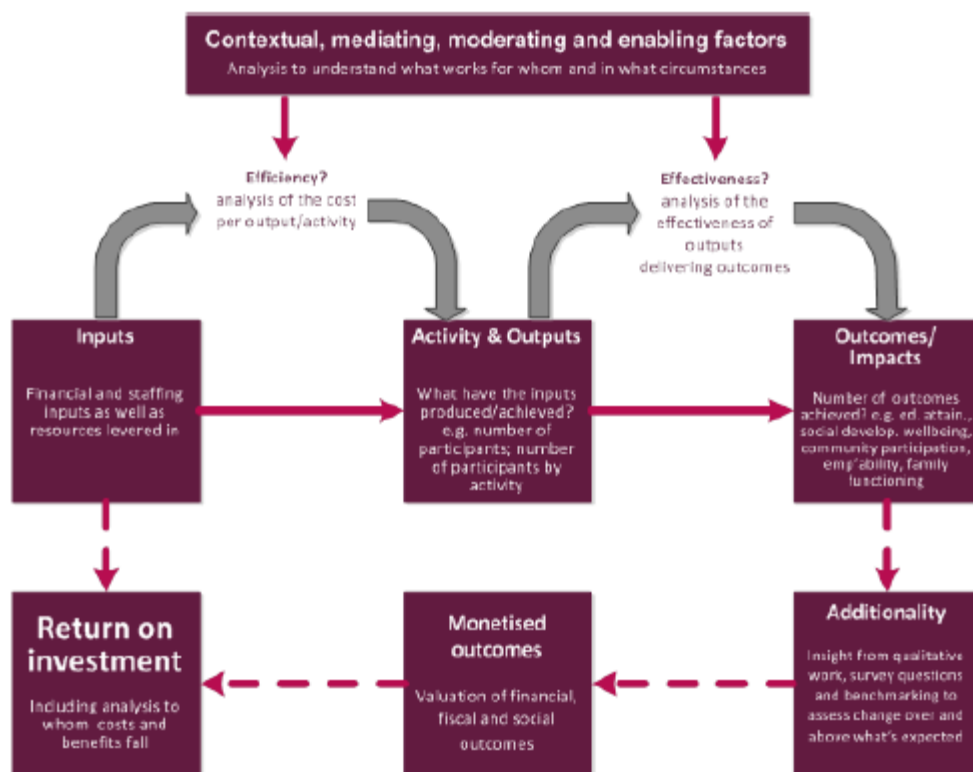
- **The national evaluation gets underway.** After a very competitive tender process, we selected (in partnership with colleagues from local sites and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation) a multi-disciplinary team from Sheffield Hallam University to carry out the Children's Community national evaluation. The team will be co-led by Sarah Pearson from the Centre for Regional Economic and Social Research (CRESR) and Mike Coldwell from the Sheffield Institute of Education (SIOE) and will also draw on the expertise of six further senior specialists from the University.

CRESR is one of the leading policy research and evaluation centres in the United Kingdom with work encompassing public services, the voluntary and community sectors, labour markets, housing, regeneration, and urban and regional policy. They have a particular focus on working in disadvantaged places. SIOE brings extensive research and evaluation expertise around early years, children and young people, families, education, learning, and the wider aspects of children and young people's lives.

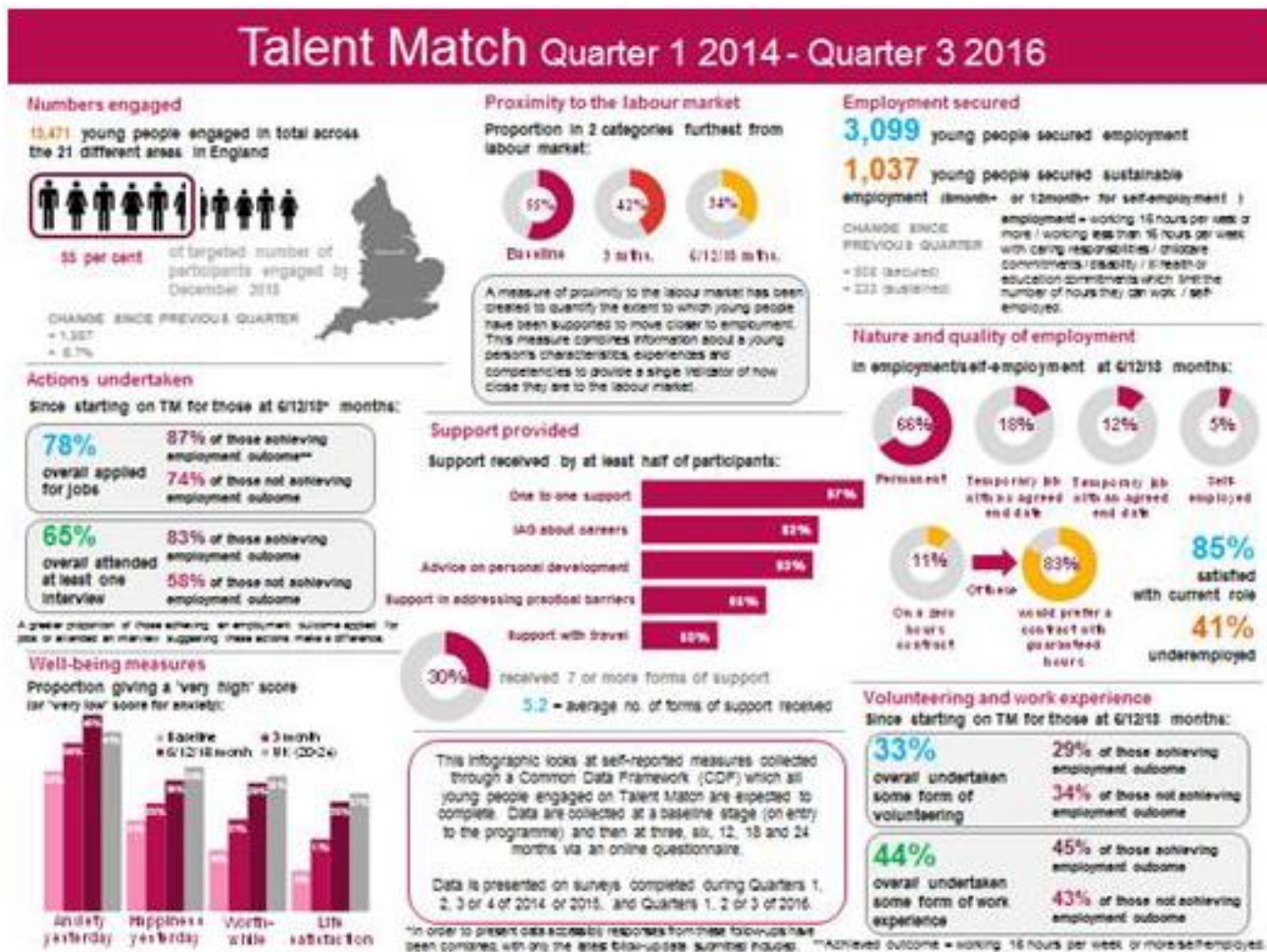
Figure 1 below maps how the process and impact components of the evaluation will address our evaluation questions around model fidelity, long-term change, leadership and governance, theories of change, and impact.

	IMPACT	PROCESS		
		Area-level	Organisation level	Beneficiary level
How and to what extent are Communities embodying the key Principles of the Children's Communities model?		✓	✓	
Is there evidence of Children's Communities working toward long term systems change?	✓	✓	✓	
How effective are leadership and governance arrangements?		✓	✓	
How are the Communities progressing with developing and operationalising the local strategic vision and theory of change?		✓	✓	
What evidence is there of impacts within services and systems?	✓	✓	✓	
What evidence is there of impacts for children and young people and families?	✓		✓	✓

Figure 2 below sets out the framework for assessing Children's Community impacts and their value for money.



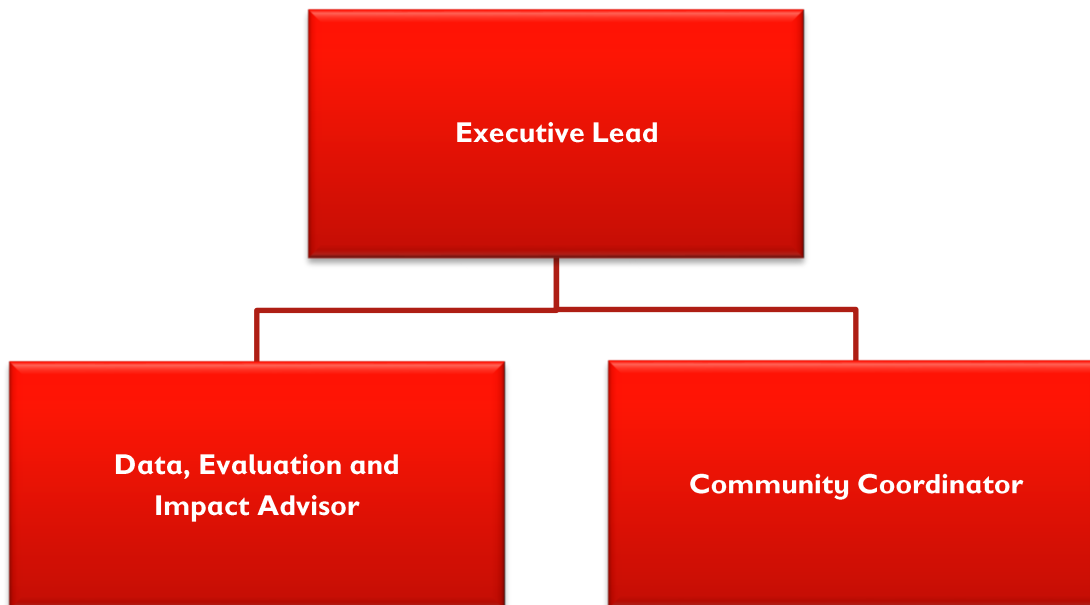
- **Sharpening our focus on data and evidence.** Our new evaluation team will, as an early priority, be creating customised Data Dashboards for each Children's Community site. Many partners in each neighbourhood are individually data rich but it is not always straightforward to track collective progress towards shared goals across service silos. The new Data Dashboards will play a vital role in helping to guide strategic planning and decision-making at the level of the neighbourhood system. **Figure 3** below gives an example of a Data Dashboard that Sheffield Hallam previously built for a local employment initiative.



Also, we have asked Sheffield Hallam to establish, in partnership with sites, neighbourhood child-level Client Monitoring Systems. This individual child-level data will enable us to acquire a more fine-grained understanding of the impacts associated with coordinated packages of support.

Additionally, to help build local cultures of data and evidence-informed decision making, we are recruiting Data, Evaluation and Impact Advisers in the Wallsend and the Smallshaw-Hurst Children's Communities (the Pembury team is configured slightly differently but it also has a clear and increasing focus on data and evidence). These new posts will be local leads for both the Data Dashboards and Client Monitoring Systems and for internal evaluations of individual programmes that form part of the local Children's Community.

Figure 4 below shows the composition of our core Children's Community staffing teams in both Wallsend and Smallshaw-Hurst.



➤ **A Children’s Community logo and shared website will be ready to launch by April 2017.** We have commissioned a creative agency to develop these key communications tools. The logo and website will:

- Promote Children’s Communities and raise awareness of the project
- Provide a shared website that each Community has ownership over (a shared vehicle for the Children’s Community movement including establishing an intranet to share internal information between sites)
- Establish a common brand to unite the three Children’s Community sites
- Share information and learnings about place-based work
- Provide a go-to place for funders and partners, and help to attract more support for the initiative
- Consolidate all information and useful links to external organisations.

Making a wider impact

The Welsh Government announce they are going to set up Children’s Zones. Over the last six months, Save the Children has worked with our Wales country team to conduct a series of discussions with Welsh Government officials about the Children’s Communities project. As part of these discussions, we hosted visits to the Pembury Children’s Community and the Wallsend Children’s Community.



Photo: Louis Leeson/ Save the Children

In October 2016, the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children made a statement in the Senedd, the National Assembly for Wales, announcing his intention to introduce Children’s Zones to Wales. Modelled on the concept of Children’s Communities, Children’s Zones will be a new Welsh Government anti-poverty intervention to give children the best possible start and to build resilient communities. Expressions of interest have since been invited from local partnerships. This is a very exciting opportunity to see the principles underpinning Children’s Communities applied more widely. It also shows the influence and reach of the Children’s Community model. We are now having very regular discussions with the Welsh Government to help establish this work in a number of initial localities.

SOME UPCOMING MILESTONES

Output	Timing	Description
Recruitment commences for the Smallshaw-Hurst core Children's Community staffing team	February 2017	Recruitment goes "live" for a Smallshaw-Hurst Children's Community Executive Lead; Data, Evaluation and Impact Advisor; and a Community Coordinator.
Funder Event at the Wallsend Children's Community	2 March 2017	A day at the Wallsend Children's Community including discussion with local system leaders, a local tour, a presentation from our evaluation team, and the opportunity to meet with those leading systems change projects in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
Logo and website launch	April 2017	The launch of the national Children's Community logo and a shared Children's Community website. The website will include sections on the national model, local site profiles, our learning and evaluation, and links to broader similar initiatives.
Theory of Change Reports (Wallsend and Pembury)	April 2017	Wallsend and Pembury will publish short theory of change narrative reports. These reports will set out each area's local theory of change, the strategic judgements that underpin them, and the local data they have drawn on.
Theory of Change Report (Smallshaw-Hurst)	May 2017	Smallshaw-Hurst will publish a short theory of change narrative report. This report will set out their local theory of change, the strategic judgements that underpin it, and the local data they have drawn on.
Local Data Dashboard work	June 2017	Sheffield Hallam start work with sites to establish local Data Dashboards (to guide collective strategic planning and decision making across the neighbourhood system).
Evaluation Interim Report	August 2017	Our first Evaluation Report from the team at Sheffield Hallam University



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THE LINK BETWEEN SOCIAL DISADVANTAGE AND CHILDREN'S
POOR LIFE CHANCES



APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Financial Report 2016

Overview of 2016 Expenditure

Following the delay in securing the programme's evaluation partner, and given delays relating to start-up, (recruitment time etc) expenditure in Year 1 of the programme was significantly lower than originally budgeted for. Below we have the programme's expenditure compared to the revised budget, which takes into account this delay.

Area/Activity	Year 1 Budget (£)	Year 1 Expenditure (£)	Variance (£)
Community Costs			
Wallsend Running Costs	61,000	58,313	- 2,687
Wallsend seedcorn	25,000	25,000	-
Pembury seedcorn	25,000	25,000	-
Evaluation Costs (all communities)	20,000	10,000	- 10,000
Total Community costs	131,000	118,313	- 12,687
Central and Support Costs			
National Team Running Costs	77,000	69,379	- 7,621
Total central and support costs	77,000	69,379	- 7,621
Sub Total	208,000	187,692	- 20,308
Organisational support and technical expertise	20,273	18,264	- 2,009
Total	228,273	205,956	- 22,317

The variances between budget and actual expenditure above are due to: changes in the staff team in Wallsend, our evaluation work commencing in December rather than November and less-than-expected travel, marketing and website expenditure.

Overview of 2016 Expenditure by Funder – core expenditure

Funder	Year 1 Funding (£)	Year 1 Expenditure (£)	Variance (£)
Ballinger Charitable Trust	83,333	49,780	- 33,553
Lankelly Chase Foundation	50,000	29,868	- 20,132
Oak Foundation*	105,810	63,207	- 42,603
Save the Children UK	100,000	52,400	- 47,600
Total	339,143	195,256	- 143,887

*excludes \$5,000 contribution to fact-finding trip to the US

As demonstrated in the updated Children's Communities pilot budget on the following page, our anticipated average cost of running the programme after Year 1 is c. £572,000 per year, which takes into account operating across three communities with a full-year of evaluation expenditure. Given this, our plan is to reallocate the full Year 1 underspend across Years 2 and 3 of the programme.

Overview of 2016 Expenditure by Funder – programme evaluation

Funder	Year 1 Funding (£)	Year 1 Expenditure (£)	Variance (£)
Fidelity UK Foundation	60,000	5,000	- 55,000
Joseph Rowntree Foundation	60,000	5,700	- 54,300
Total	120,000	10,700	- 109,300

Planned total expenditure on the programme's evaluation remains in-line with the original plan. The evaluation timescales have been delayed by c. 11 months, causing the difference between Year 1 funding and Year 1 expenditure shown above.

Updated Children's Communities Pilot Budget

	2016	2017	2018	2019
Area/Activity	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Community Costs				
Wallsend Running Costs ¹	61,000	107,800	107,800	107,800
Wallsend seedcorn	25,000	-	-	-
Pembury seedcorn	25,000	-	-	-
Smallshaw-Hurst Running Costs ²	-	128,000	128,000	128,000
Evaluation Costs (all communities)	20,000	120,000	120,000	100,000
Total Community costs	131,000	355,800	355,800	335,800
Central and Support Costs				
National Team Running Costs ³	77,000	100,000	97,000	97,000
Website, branding and marketing costs ⁴	-	25,000	25,000	25,000
Contingency		50,000	50,000	50,000
Total central and support costs	77,000	175,000	172,000	172,000
Sub Total	208,000	530,800	527,800	507,800
Organisational support and technical expertise	20,273	51,488	51,197	49,257
Total	228,273	582,288	578,997	557,057

¹ In Year 1 the Wallsend team was not fully staffed for the entire year. Our plans are to have a full complement of staff from Year 2, causing the year-on-year increase shown above.

² Following Smallshaw-Hurst joining as the third community on the programme, we will be recruiting core local staffing team in Year 2

³ Expenditure on National Team increases in 2017 due to increase in our central capacity (including new Head of Local Systems Change) and planned investment in website & theory of change commission.

⁴ Expenditure on the website, branding and marketing of the Children's Communities is due to take place from Year 2 onwards, building the programme's ability to influence the sector and disseminate best practice.

Appendix 2: Children's Communities Event Calendar 2017

Date	Milestone
FEBRUARY 2017	<i>Wallsend Children's Community Governance Meeting (sub-group meetings take place the month before)</i>
2 MARCH 2017	<i>Funder Event in Wallsend</i>
APRIL 2017	<i>Governance Meeting and Learning Exchange in London</i>
APRIL 2017	<i>Evaluation Advisory Group Meeting</i>
APRIL 2017	<i>Pembury Children's Community Governance Meeting (Operational Group Meetings take place the month before)</i>
MAY 2017	<i>Wallsend Children's Community Governance Meeting (sub-group meetings take place the month before)</i>
JULY 2017	<i>Governance Meeting and Learning Exchange in Manchester</i>
SEPTEMBER 2017	<i>Wallsend Children's Community Governance Meeting (sub-group meetings take place the month before)</i>
SEPTEMBER 2017	<i>Evaluation Advisory Group Meeting</i>
OCTOBER 2017	<i>Pembury Children's Community Governance Meeting (Operational Group meetings take place the month before)</i>
NOVEMBER 2017	<i>Governance Meeting and Learning Exchange in Newcastle</i>