



3 April 2008

Children's Plan Implementation

In its Children's Plan, launched last December, the Government set itself the aim of making England the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up. Schools, children's services, the voluntary sector, and government all need to play their part to achieve this aim, working to support children, young people and their families. Many of our closest partners are working with my Department to work through how we will deliver the challenges in the plan and to share our vision to build brighter futures.

I'm writing to let you know that we are publishing a pack of material that should help partners working with children and young people as the commitments set out in the Children's Plan are taken forward. The material includes an updated version of the Every Child Matters outcomes framework, which I know many people found very helpful when we produced the first version. One of the main questions we have been asked since we published the Children's Plan is how it fits with Every Child Matters, with the Public Service Agreements (PSAs) announced in the Comprehensive Spending Review in October and with the National Indicator Set of measures against which local area performance will be assessed.¹ The new outcomes framework answers this question and will, I am sure, like the last framework, be a well used tool for many different partners. The outcomes framework will be available at www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan.

The outcomes framework sets out what we want to achieve but we are also publishing updated versions of our detailed plans, or delivery agreements, for achieving each of our Public Service Agreements. They will help to show how different policies and initiatives contribute to achieving our objectives. The delivery agreements were published originally in draft but have been updated in light of the Children's Plan and are available at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/pbr_csr/psa/pbr_csr07_psaindex.cfm.

The Children's Plan contained many commitments across the full range of services for children and young people, for example to publish more detailed plans and

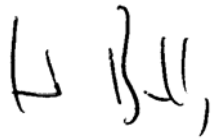
¹ More information about the National Indicator Set and the new performance framework for local areas is available in the local government white paper Strong and Prosperous Communities <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/strongprosperous>

strategies on a range of issues and to offer new funding for a range of important initiatives such as improving children's play. A timeline is now available to show when you can expect to see progress on these commitments and to ensure you know when to look out for major announcements. A copy can be downloaded or ordered by going to www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan.

We are also aware that the Children's Plan will not make the difference we seek without the support and commitment of those who work with children and young people. We have recently published *Building Brighter Futures: next steps for the Children's Workforce*, which establishes an expert group to advise on the future of the children's workforce and makes some specific proposals for improvement in the quality of some key sectors. We have in addition published 'Leading and Managing Children's Services in England', a professional development framework for leaders and managers. And, to underline the importance of the workforce to making a reality of the vision set out in the Children's Plan, we have also published a series of short notes summarising what the Plan means for different sectors of the workforce. These can be downloaded at or ordered by going to www.dcsf.gov.uk/publications/childrensplan.

I hope you find this information helpful as we continue to work with you to deliver our ambitions for children and young people.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ed Balls'.

Ed Balls MP