

Friday, 08 May 2026

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
SUB-BOARD**

A meeting of **Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board**
will be held on

Monday, 18 May 2026

commencing at **3.00 pm**

The meeting will be held in the Banking Hall, Castle Circus entrance on the left
corner of the Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

Members of the Board

Councillor Law (Chairwoman)

Councillor Fellows (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Nicolaou

Councillor Tolchard
Councillor Twelves

Co-opted Members of the Board

Jo Hunter, Church of England Diocese

Ndubisi Obasi, Primary Academy Parent Governor

A Healthy, Happy and Prosperous Torbay

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Governance Support, Town Hall, Castle Circus, Torquay, TQ1 3DR

Email: governance.support@torbay.gov.uk - www.torbay.gov.uk

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SUB-BOARD AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
To receive apologies for absence, including notifications of any changes to the membership of the Board.
2. **Minutes** (Pages 5 - 12)
To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board held on 16 March 2026.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
 - a) To receive declarations of non pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda

For reference: Having declared their non pecuniary interest members may remain in the meeting and speak and, vote on the matter in question. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.
 - b) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests in respect of items on this agenda

For reference: Where a Member has a disclosable pecuniary interest he/she must leave the meeting during consideration of the item. However, the Member may remain in the meeting to make representations, answer questions or give evidence if the public have a right to do so, but having done so the Member must then immediately leave the meeting, may not vote and must not improperly seek to influence the outcome of the matter. A completed disclosure of interests form should be returned to the Clerk before the conclusion of the meeting.

(Please Note: If Members and Officers wish to seek advice on any potential interests they may have, they should contact Governance Support or Legal Services prior to the meeting.)
4. **Urgent Items**
To consider any other items that the Chair decides are urgent.
5. **Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service** (Pages 13 - 18)
To receive an update on the Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service.
6. **Torbay Youth Justice Plan 2026-27** (Pages 19 - 24)
To consider the draft Torbay Youth Justice Plan for 2026-2027 and make recommendations to Cabinet (report to follow).

To receive an update on the Youth Service.

- 7. Early Years Sufficiency Update** (Pages 25 - 28)
To receive and update on Early Years Sufficiency.
- 8. Child Friendly Programme Update**
To receive a verbal update from the Corporate Parenting Lead on the Child Friendly Programme.
- 9. Draft Work Programme Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board 2026/2027** (Pages 29 - 40)
To approve the initial Work Programme for the Sub-Board for 2026/2027.
- 10. Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board Action Tracker** (Pages 41 - 42)
To receive an update on the implementation of the actions of the Sub-Board and consider any further actions required (as set out in the submitted action tracker).

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**Minutes of the Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny
Sub-Board**

16 March 2026

-: Present :-

Councillor Law (Chairwoman)

Councillors Fellows (Vice-Chair), Tolchard and Twelves

Co-opted Members

Jo Hunter, Church of England Diocese
Ndubisi Obasi, Primary Academy Parent Governor

Non-voting Co-opted Member

James Stock, Devon and Cornwall Police

(Also in attendance: Councillors Bye, Chris Lewis and David Thomas)

44. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Nicolaou, Nigel Yelland (Non-voting Co-opted Member who was represented by James Stock), and Mike Cook and Jim Funnell (Non-voting Co-opted Members).

45. Minutes

The minutes of the spotlight meeting of the Sub-Board held on 9 February 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

46. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

47. Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Performance

The Cabinet Member for Children’s Services - Councillor Bye, Director of Children’s Services - Nancy Meehan and the Divisional Director Education (Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Services) - Hannah Baker provided an overview of the submitted report regarding progress since the publication of the SEND inspection outcomes in June 2025 and responded to questions. Key points included:

- Ongoing work through the SEND Local Area Improvement Partnership (SLAIP) Board, Chaired independently, with Councillor Law as a Member.

- A March 2026 stocktake was underway ahead of future monitoring visits.
- Feedback against the five priority areas of improvement.
- A new SEND Reform Plan required by the Government by 19 June 2026, following national guidance issued on 24 February 2026.
- Pressures resulting from increased requests for Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) following publication of the Government's SEND White Paper and concerns from families.

Members asked questions in respect of the following:

- What specific impact had the SEND White Paper had on the volume of EHCP requests received since February?
- Was the Council seeing increased delays in the assessment pathway, and what mitigation was being put in place to manage the surge?
- How was the Council prioritising cases where delays may significantly disadvantage a child?
- What steps were being taken to counter misinformation circulating among parents about the future of EHCP eligibility?
- How was the SLAIP Board strengthening communication, given concerns that its outputs were not well-known?
- What discussions have taken place with health partners to address 3-year waiting lists for autism assessments?
- Was there a plan for early-intervention options for families awaiting diagnosis?
- How frequently was the Data and Quality Assurance Sub-Board monitoring timeliness, and how was improvement measured?
- What additional capacity was required to produce the new SEND Reform Plan by June?
- How will the Plan interface with Safety Valve requirements ending 31 March 2026?
- How were schools being selected for the Support and Intervention Grant?
- What evaluation will be used to track improvements in teacher confidence following training?

The following responses were received:

- Since publication of the Government's White Paper, the Council has have seen a doubling of EHCP requests, which aligns with a pattern being observed across the South West. Families were anxious about the proposed reforms and believe future entitlement may be restricted. This has placed significant pressure on our assessment Teams. The Council continues to manage this by prioritising children with the most urgent or complex needs and through the Data and Quality Assurance Sub-Board, which now regularly reviews timeliness in detail. Capacity remains challenging, but improvement work was ongoing.
- A large proportion of the anxiety the Council was seeing stems from misinformation, particularly from online forums. The SLAIP Board acknowledged communication was an area that needs strengthening. They have flagged this with their senior partners, and both the Cabinet Member and Director of Children's Services have asked for a comprehensive

communication plan. Their intention was to ensure families receive clear, consistent explanations of what the White Paper was and was not proposing.

- Autism assessment delays were significant. It was recognised waiting times could be up to three years, and this was a key focus of Priority 4 of the Improvement Plan. The Council was working closely with NHS partners to expand early support options, including the introduction of named speech and language therapists in schools and building capacity within the Locality Model to support children while awaiting a diagnostic assessment. (A copy of the neurodiversity support map would be shared with Members, and a summary of the Core Group stocktake would come back to the Sub-Board after it has been completed in June 2026).
- The Data and Quality Assurance Sub-Board meets monthly and looks in depth at assessment timeliness, case audit outcomes and compliance. This creates a closed loop across performance, quality assurance and frontline practice. The dashboard submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) was live (a copy of the most recent data and quality assurance dashboard would be circulated to the Sub-Board).
- The latest guidance SEND Reform Plan requirements arrived last Tuesday and gives all local areas until 19 June 2026 to complete a new SEND Reform Plan, despite the consultation not closing until May. This is an extremely demanding timeframe. Torbay faces a particular challenge because we remain midway through our Improvement Plan and expect a reinspection in December 2026, as well as the data required being different from that used under the Safety Valve. Future funding will be dependent on the Government approving the SEND Reform Plan. The Council will need to divert staff capacity across services to ensure compliance.
- The Support and Intervention Grant had been allocated by analysing need, including rates of EHCPs and SEND attendance. No school approached had declined support. Early feedback was positive, especially regarding teacher confidence in making classroom adjustments, and this aligns with future expectations under the forthcoming SEND Reform framework.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. that the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board note the contents of the submitted report; and
2. that the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board is assured that the appropriate monitoring and improvement processes are in place to address the findings and deliver the necessary positive changes for Torbay's children and young people with SEND and their families.

48. Child Exploitation and Missing Children Update

Members considered the submitted report and heard a voice note from the Team Manager Exploitation - Katie Buckley (as she was unable to attend the meeting) which outlined the key developments in respect of exploitation and missing children. The Cabinet Member for Children's Services - Councillor Bye reported a favourable judgement from Ofsted, noting that the complexity of cases continued to rise. Whilst the Council received favourable feedback from Ofsted, exploitation

remained dynamic. Examples were provided of recent interventions supporting vulnerable young people which illustrated how varied and rapidly evolving the situations were.

It was noted that the Police had carried out a national public campaign to help people identify exploitation and were working on further work to see where our local Police could help promote this further.

The Board welcomed the detailed operational examples and praised the quality of return-home interviews now offered to all missing children. It was acknowledged that the increasing staffing within the Team had strengthened and built trusted relationships with young people, enabling more effective identification of patterns and risks. Members were invited to shadow the Exploitation Team to see their work, and it was agreed that the Statutory Co-Opted Members would be invited to shadow the Exploitation Team as part of practice week.

Members were requested to email any further questions to the Clerk so that she could seek a written response.

49. Ofsted Report

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services – Councillor Bye and Director of Children's Services – Nancy Meehan outlined the submitted Ofsted Inspection report published on 26 February 2026 and responded to questions. Key updated included:

- Progress on housing and support for care experienced young people, including the opening of a Care Experienced Hub at Occombe.
- Improvements to ensure children were placed in regulated accommodation, and un-regulated accommodation only where it was in the best interest of the young person.
- Challenges around supervision standards and consistency with supervision rates recently risen from 70% to 96%.

The following questions were raised:

- While supervision frequency had improved to 96%, what were the current quality assurance findings?
- How were managers being supported to improve reflective practice?
- What criteria were used to determine when an unregistered placement was unavoidable? What steps were taken to minimise risk to young people placed in such settings?
- What timelines were anticipated for the new residential home, and what barriers remain regarding Ofsted registration?
- What strategies were being used to attract carers for the most complex young people?
- How will transport barriers to Occombe be addressed long-term?
- How many young people have engaged with the new Care Experienced Hub since opening?

A note on options to buy accommodation for care-experienced young people would be circulated to Members.

The following responses were received:

- The Council has relaunched both the supervision template and the supervision policy. While some supervision records were excellent, others have been limited to one or two lines. This inconsistency was highlighted in the recent and previous inspections. Having increased supervision levels, the next stage was to drive quality improvement.
- There were three children in unregistered provision at the time of the inspection; one has since moved, and one new admission was expected. These placements were only used when they safeguard the young person's welfare and allow them to access the training or support they need. Ofsted recognised that we know each case well and make informed decisions but were not able to support unregistered provision.
- Funding for the Residential Home becomes available by 2028, but the Council was seeking to access it earlier. Registration with Ofsted currently takes around 12 months, and the property that was previously identified was deemed unsuitable. The Council was now working with a senior Ofsted Inspector to refine our criteria and expedite the process.
- The Council has recruited foster carers over the last year, but this has been balanced by several retirements. The regional fostering hub was not currently meeting sufficiency for our most complex children, which was why local capacity building remains a core priority.
- The new care experience hub at Occombe was already benefiting young people, with two progressing into training opportunities. Transport was being supported through bus route 60 and familiarisation provided by personal assistants to get the young people used to travelling there. The Council was also working with Strategic Transport to ensure sustainable access.

Resolved (unanimously):

That the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board thank all those who are involved in delivering services to our young people and who have contributed to Torbay maintaining a 'Good' rating with Ofsted.

50. Best Start in life – Torbay's Local Plan

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services – Councillor Bye, Senior Early Years Advisory Teacher - Emma Kerridge and Public Health Specialist – Children and Families - Joanne Needham outlined the submitted report on the Best Start for Life – Torbay's Local Plan and responded to questions.

The following questions were raised:

- How would the Council improve the ability to track children transitioning from early years settings into school?
- Were there proposals for a centralised early years data system?

- Was the current early years workforce sufficient to meet the targets in the Plan?
- What support was available for training in speech, language and communication?
- How were schools supported to deliver consistent English as an Additional Language (EAL) approach given the variety of academy providers?
- Could schools access specialist advice without long referral waits?
- How was the three-year funding being allocated for Family Hubs, and what sustainability planning was in place beyond 2027?
- What was the role of Parent Connectors in engaging harder-to-reach families?
- How was "school readiness" being defined locally, and how would it be communicated to families?
- How would the new advisory teacher post support nurseries with pre-reception transition work?

Members received the following responses:

- The ability to track children across early years settings remains a concern nationally. There was no statutory requirement for early years providers to notify the local authority, which limits oversight. The new Plan aims to strengthen data collection and cross-agency connections, particularly for the most vulnerable children.
- The Council knows more support was required for early years staff, especially around speech, language and communication needs. Workforce development was a major strand of the Plan.
- Children with EAL were performing below national averages. One factor was that certain assessments require English to complete, even when children were otherwise meeting their developmental milestones. The Council recently funded EAL training for schools, 19 out of 29 had participated. The aim was to provide more consistent system-wide support.
- We have three years of Family Hub funding, which gives us time to plan sustainability beyond 2027. The hubs support early identification and engagement, including Parent Connectors and outreach following the 2.3 year and 1 year health reviews.
- The Council was developing a local child-development progression document and working with families on what school readiness means in practice. The advisory teacher funded through Family Hubs will focus on transition support, summer-holiday interventions, and reducing the drop-off seen when children start school.

Resolved (unanimously):

1. that the Cabinet be recommended to approve the draft Best Start for Life Plan set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report; and
2. that the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board monitors delivery against Best Start for Life Plan every six months.

51. Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board Action Tracker

The Sub-Board noted the contents of the submitted action tracker. The Clerk provided the following update:

The audit of attendance at Core Group meetings was circulated to Members on 10 March 2026 arising from minute 21/9/25, as well as the update on training for wider partners and those who have contact with young people for diabetes care arising from minute 37/1/26.

Chair

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Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Board

Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service (YDAS)

1. How is access to Young People's Drug and Alcohol Services promoted?

The Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service (YDAS) was launched on 1st October 2025 under Torbay Council's Family Help model, integrated within the Youth Hub to ensure early intervention and holistic support. Access is promoted through:

- **Communications plan:** Developed to ensure young people, families and professionals received relevant and targeted information about the service pre and post launch. An example of planned activity, a 'YDAS on tour' during launch week, reaching out to visit schools across Torbay. Introductory presentations at DSL / DSSL, Wellbeing and Personal Development Professionals Networks.
- **Centralised Referral System:** A single point of referral with an easy-to-complete e-form situated on a dedicated Family Hub webpage, ensures streamlined access. Referrers must obtain consent from the young person, reinforcing a collaborative approach. Current referral sources are from a broad range including 3 self-referrals. Most referrals have been received from education professionals. We have reached out to the paediatrics team at Torbay Hospital to raise awareness due to lack of referrals received. The number of referrals received have been steady and evenly spread – between 1 and 3 a week since the service launched.
- **Proactive and whole Children's approach:** We reviewed young people on red exploitation tool kits and reached out to lead practitioners with the referral link.
- **Traffic light pathway to reflect continuum of need:** This guides prioritisation based on risk and readiness for treatment. Early concerns are addressed through monitoring and relational practice, while problematic use triggers structured intervention.
- **Relationship Building:** Initial triage conversations focus on trust and consent, setting the foundation for engagement. The service emphasises flexibility, reviewing needs as circumstances change. The current conversion from triage conversation to assessment for those identified as on a green pathway is currently 92%, which shows the value of initial triage conversations.

2. How is drug safety taken into account?

Drug safety is embedded throughout YDAS processes:

- **Harm Reduction Advice:** For young people not ready for treatment, professionals provide harm reduction strategies and signpost to alternative

services. Relational focus supports us to 'keep the door' open if any risks increase.

- **Structured Interventions:** Up to 12 one-to-one sessions incorporate motivational interviewing, CBT techniques, and psycho-social support. These interventions aim to reduce harm and promote safer behaviours. Interventions take place in safe and accessible spaces for both young person and drug and alcohol worker. Current structured treatment session attendance is 88%.
- **Risk Assessment:** Conducted during triage and formal assessment stages, ensuring that any immediate risks are identified and managed. Treatment plans are developed to recognise and meet individual needs. We are responding to an identified link between problematic drug and alcohol use and SEND.
- **Recovery Planning:** Young person-led plans set achievable goals, recognising that recovery may involve reduced use or safer practices rather than complete abstinence.
- **Panel Oversight:** Weekly supervisory panels review caseloads and readiness, ensuring treatment aligns with safety priorities and capacity. We are learning and reflecting on cases together to better understand and define treatment readiness.
- **Attendance to Drug Harm Reduction Panel (DHRP) has commenced.** We continue to work closely with Public Health to identify any trends and new risks.
- **Supporting harm reduction education.** Over the next 12 months we aim to develop resources and training to support positive conversations between young people, parents and professionals regarding harm reduction.

3. How has this impacted on young people's health and wellbeing?

Although the service is newly launched (October 2025), early indicators suggest positive outcomes:

- **Improved Engagement:** The emphasis on consent and relationship building fosters trust, encouraging young people to articulate the impact of substance use on their lives. We have had a steady number of referrals each week since launching the service. The first quarter data shows 28 young people in treatment. The annual target is 130 young people accessing structured treatment, which will be more achievable with an additional team member joining in late June.
- **Holistic Support:** By considering wider factors such as housing and mental health, we support young people to address underlying issues that contribute

to substance misuse and help them prioritise the support they need with the right professionals. No one has waited more than 3 weeks for an introductory meeting with a practitioner.

We are currently developing the following key policies, procedures and protocols to support service governance and effectiveness. Draft policies due to be ready for review by the end of June.

- Injecting equipment provision (needle exchange).
- Opioid substitute treatment (OST) management. Reference to and compliance, with Drug misuse in over 16s: opioid detoxification Clinical guideline [CG52].
- Residential detoxification and rehabilitation.
- Onward referral to other services, including responding to when an individual does not want to be referred to other services.
- Retention and discharge responses to minimise unplanned departures from treatment.
- Transition to adult treatment.
- **Health and Wellbeing Gains:** Structured interventions and harm reduction strategies aim to reduce physical and psychological harm. Positive outcomes include decreased use, improved coping strategies, and enhanced resilience. We are keen to evidence impact with review data on completion of treatment and 6 months after leaving treatment when this becomes available.

We are already seeing Improvement in health and wellbeing measures in that most young people start from a poorer starting position but end up in a better end position than the national average.

Successful exits data including length of time in service is currently confounded by the data from the closedown of the previous service and therefore will only show an accurate picture in the following 6-9 months.

- **Empowerment and Choice:** Recovery planning is collaborative, promoting autonomy and optimism for the future. We are currently developing a training package for lead professional and an aftercare programme which will include peer mentoring to support sustainable outcomes.

Data highlights demonstrating current reach of service and areas for development.

- i. Referral Sources – this includes all referrals including young people that do not enter structured treatment and therefore not recorded on NDTMS data sets. Our conversion rate from referral into structured treatment is currently 33%

Children's Services	9	17%
Checkpoint	0	0%
Education	20	38%
Family Help	1	2%
GP / Health	2	4%
Paediatrics	0	0%
Parent / Guardian	0	0%
Self	3	6%
Youth Justice	11	21%

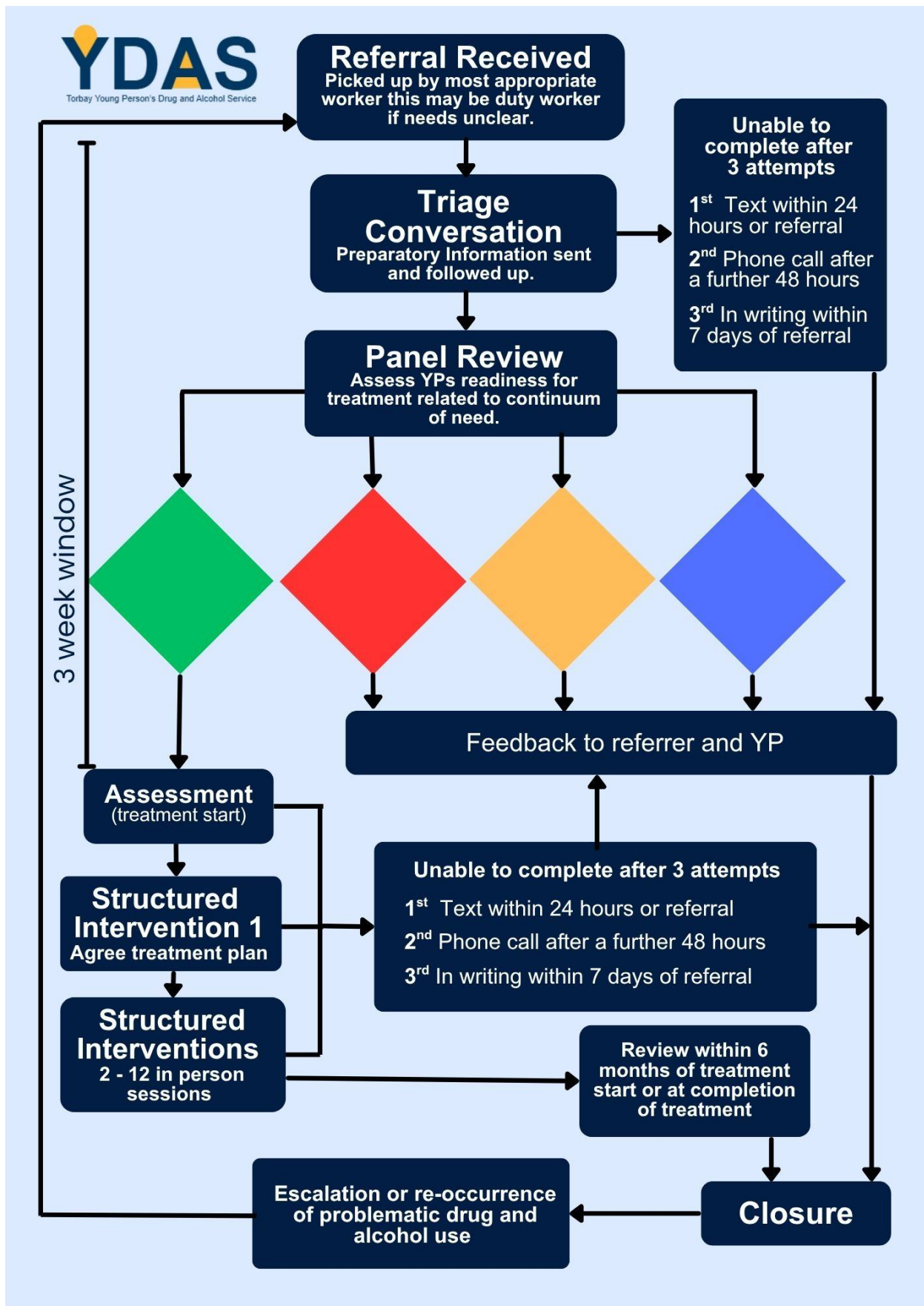
- ii. Age and Gender of YP in structured treatment.*

<u>AGE & GENDER (year to date)</u>	Local		Previous Q	Baseline	National	
	Apr - Dec				Apr - Dec	
	(n)	(%)			(n)	(%)
Under 13	0	0%	0%	0%	320	2%
Aged 13 to 14	1	6%	17%	31%	3460	27%
Aged 15	9	56%	50%	29%	3391	26%
Aged 16	5	31%	33%	24%	2953	23%
Aged 17	1	6%	0%	16%	2834	22%
Aged 18	0	0%	0%	0%	0	0%
Aged 19	0	0%	0%	0%	0	0%
Aged 20-21	0	0%	0%	0%	0	0%
Aged 22-24	0	0%	0%	0%	0	0%
Aged 25+	0	0%	0%	0%	0	0%
Female	8	50%	50%	27%	5177	40%
Male	8	50%	50%	73%	7781	60%
Total in treatment	16	100%			12958	100%

- iii. Substance of concern*

<u>SUBSTANCES (year to date)</u>	Local		Previous Q	Baseline	National	
	Apr - Dec				Apr - Dec	
	(n)	(%)			(n)	(%)
Cannabis	14	88%	100%	89%	10767	83%
Alcohol	6	38%	67%	56%	5014	39%
Amphetamines	1	6%	0%	2%	38	0%
Cocaine	1	6%	0%	2%	729	6%
Ecstasy	3	19%	17%	16%	875	7%
Solvents	0	0%	0%	9%	715	6%
Opiates	0	0%	0%	0%	268	2%
Crack	0	0%	0%	0%	48	0%
NPS	0	0%	0%	0%	427	3%
Nicotine	7	44%	17%	22%	2940	23%
Other	3	19%	33%	16%	1602	12%
Total in treatment	16	100%			12958	100%

Treatment Pathway



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1. What is the role of the Youth Service, what are they delivering for young people?

The Youth Service currently sits within the Youth Hub alongside Young Carers and Young Person's Drug and Alcohol Service. We are moving towards a single 'With Youth' approach where every young person receives seamless, strengths-based, relationship-centred support at the right time for them and in the right place that empowers them to thrive in education, employment, wellbeing, and community life.

We work alongside the Youth Homeless Prevention team to collaborate on projects and service development to encourage a proactive and preventative culture of support in line with the Families First Partnership.

Our work also compliments and is informed by the National Youth Strategy with high quality youth work at its core, providing flexible approaches, expanding capacity and sharing specialisms in the team to best meet the needs of young people.

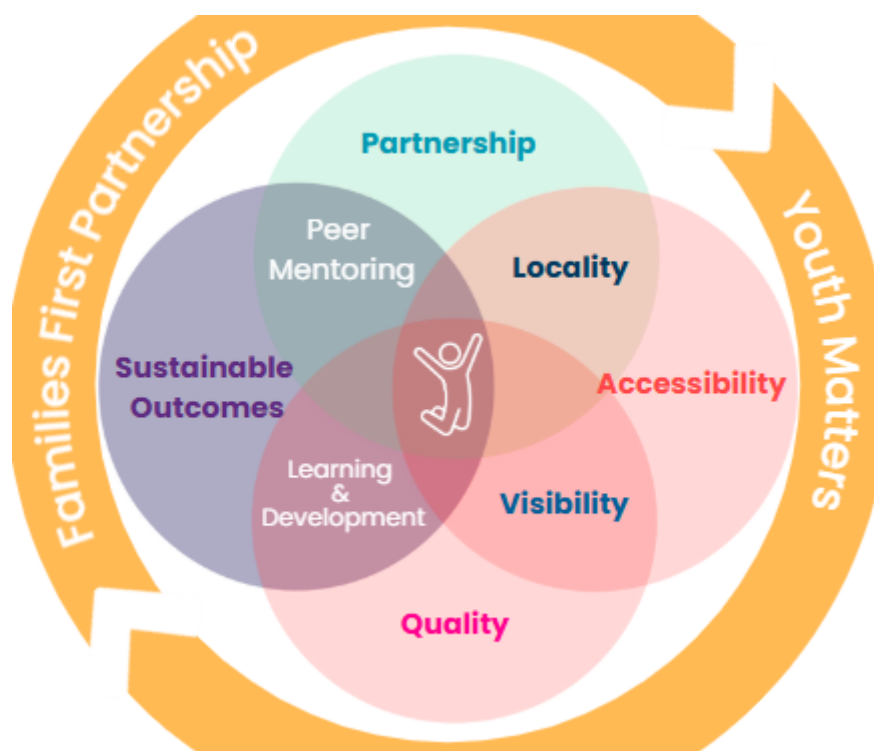


Figure 1- 'With Youth' Success Framework

Our work is predominately targeted, 1 to 1 and group work, referrals currently coming from schools and across Children's Services, with some open-access sessions where young people can just turn up. Delivery is rooted in voluntary engagement and mainly with 11- to 17-year-olds, with some extended provision for 8 –to 10-year-olds and 16 – to 19-year-olds. We are also exploring a play offer for our 6- to 8-year-old young carers as an identified gap.

We are developing fresh partnerships with VCSs and the Youth Service and Young Carer team have now separated into two locality teams to enhance these place-based relationships. We are also focusing on inclusion to ensure our work is accessible, this includes further training to be undertaken related to SEND, and growth of our offer with additional She and Us groups and currently planning a group for young people questioning and exploring their identity, designed to be discreet to compliment the work Proud to Be are already doing.

We are working with Sarah Dorsett from the Community Safety team to develop a peer mentoring programme to support sustainable outcomes by developing 'moral courage' for the young people we work with. We are keen to take the learning and impact from the Mentors in Violence Prevention model and develop a peer mentoring programme, which would support young people to keep themselves and each other safe, when there are no trusted adults around.

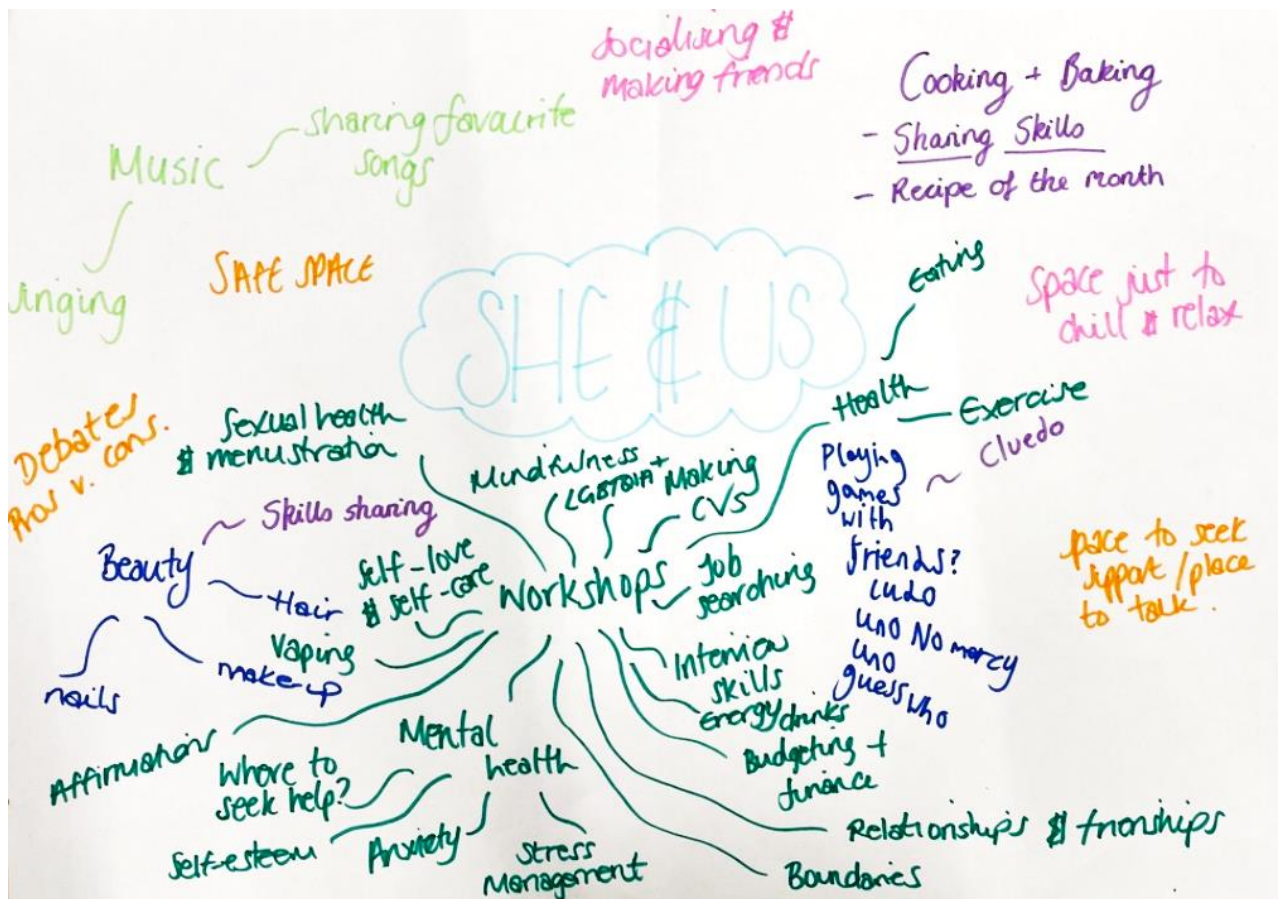


Figure 2 She and Us activities and themes young person led

We have listened to the feedback provided by young people at the Powered by Youth event in September 2025 and are focusing on delivering on some of the things they have requested to compliment and in collaboration with amazing partners as outlined below.

- **Safe places to go** – We have been successful in bidding for some Better Spaces funding. This has been used to improve Chilled Out our youth space in Torquay to make it more comfortable, accessible and inviting and to secure additional resources to support skills development including First Aid training equipment. We are hoping to re-launch this space mid-May. We are keen for our partners to provide direct work from this space so it can be well utilised all day / every day. We are also exploring the development of a youth club in Whiterock as a progression on from the assertive outreach work, Space have done to provide a 'soft landing' for the young people in that area and maintain the reduction in ASB.
- **Help to find work** – We are working on a potential project with Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Careers Hub and Imagine This exploring volunteering / work experience opportunities for young people in the VCS. We are delivering a Fair Futures Festival on Tuesday 9th June at the Town Hall supported by our partners and wider services including Adult Social Care and TSDFT. The aim of the event is to bring support and opportunities together under one roof for those young people who are unsure about their next best step. We are also supporting the 'Cradle to Career' project with local schools.
- **More things to do** – We are embracing 'active support planning' in our work, as identified as good practice in a recent Research in Practice study on Young Carers support this includes purposefully planning early on to accompany young people to experience activities offered by other providers. We are also involved in Torbay on the Move Outdoor Partnership and have suggested joining up on a combined Summer Programme. We have had feedback that the HAF programme needs to be adapted to support activities for young people, who don't want to engage in 4-hour sessions.
- **To know about what is going on** – We are exploring a range of methods to promote what we are doing directly to young people including the use of the SPOND app and Sound Communities Ocean Youth Radio and Imagine This's What's On page. We have also been updating our pages on the Family Hub website. We recognise there is not just 'one way' to share and communicate with young people.

Current number of young people working with us:

- 540 young carers on our register. An average of 168 young carers attend an activity each month.
- 175 young people in our Youth Service Community.
- 31 young people currently receiving 1 to 1 youth work with an allocated worker.
- 25 young people currently regularly attending groups.
- 50 young people a month on average attending open session at Parkfield. This is an increase of 11 from the previous quarterly average.

- 17 young people are currently in structured treatment and working with our substance misuse workers.

To support promotion and uptake of our groups we are currently working with South Devon College to provide a weekly lunch time drop in for open conversations and relationship building.

2. What open access youth provision is currently available to young people, not just via the Youth Service but on a wider scale?

The local authority outcomes framework states:

7.19.17 Participation in youth services in the last 12 months (including sports, music, art or youth clubs) – output metric placeholder:

'This placeholder metric will show the number of children in a local authority aged between 11 - 16 who have participated in out-of-school youth services over the prior 12 months, based on a new question in the Active Live Survey from September 2026. Potential youth services will likely include attending an out-of-school sports club or fitness class; art or music group, course or club or music lessons; uniformed youth group; youth club or centre; any other group or club. The 11 - 16 age range has been chosen, rather than the wider statutory age range of local authorities' duty for youth services, as it aligns with the existing Active Lives Survey design.'

Open-access youth provision in Torbay is delivered through a mixed economy model, combining Torbay Youth Service delivery with a strong voluntary and community sector offer.

This list refers to open access where no referral is required, it is free or low-cost and young people can choose to attend.

- Ripples Youth Club (Paignton/Gerston) – town-centre drop-in with games, sports and IT access.
- Great Parks – Youth Club (Paignton)
- St Paul's Youth Club (Torquay) – indoor and outdoor activities, social space
- Windmill Youth Provision (Torquay) – weekly open-access, youth-led sessions focusing on life skills, wellbeing and social connection
- Mad Moos Milkshake Bar (Paignton) – after-school open drop-in café provision in partnership with a local church
- The Zone Youth Nights – physical activity-focused youth sessions including parkour and creative activities.
- Brixham Youth Group – Fuel Youth

Children's Overview and Scrutiny Board

18th May 2026

Youth Service Lines of Enquiry

- Sound Communities – Ocean Youth Radio Saturday Sessions – managed open access in Paignton.
- YMCA South Devon – Open Youth Sessions (Paignton)

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Meeting: Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board

Date: 18 May 2026

Wards affected: All

Report Title: Early Years Sufficiency Update

When does the decision need to be implemented? n/a

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1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report has been prepared to provide a review of Early Years Sufficiency

2. Background

2.1 The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on local authorities to secure, so far as is reasonably practicable, sufficient childcare for working parents, or parents who are studying or training for employment.

2.2 For this update the following key lines of enquiry have been listed:

- What action is being taken by the Council to influence the market and ensure there are sufficient early years places available to meet the demands across the whole of Torbay?
- What has happened regarding preparedness for the new requirements that came in for September 2025?
- Do we have over capacity of placements with the falling birth population?

3. Progress

3.1 What action is being taken by the Council to influence the market and ensure there are sufficient early years places available to meet the demands across the whole of Torbay?

- Sufficiency monitoring and engagement with the early years sector allow us to monitor capacity, occupancy and any emerging pressures. Overall occupancy across Torbay is at 94%. As a service we are proposing to move to firmly data collection from both early years

providers and parents/careers to support our ongoing analysis of the childcare market and ensure we are responsive to the changing market and needs of families term on term. This will start for the Summer Term 2026.

- Current validation data for the expanded working parent entitlements for 30 hours funding indicate that:
 - Under 2's – 93% validated codes
 - 2 Year Olds – 95% validated
 - 3&4 Year Olds -96% validated

These high figures show that most parents who have applied for a code to access the entitlements have been able to secure a place in an early year setting.

- Ongoing provider engagement through visits, networks, finance system support and workforce development, contributes to provider sustainability helping settings remain open and viable therefore meeting the requirements form high quality accessible early years provision for children and families.
- Recruitment and retention continue to provider some barriers for providers when offering additional places for children. To address this, we have been working with South Devon College and local Secondary Schools to attend recruitment fayres, promote working in early years and engage young people, sharing career opportunities and pathways for progression.
- Working alongside a national organisation, Coram Pacey, we are developing our offer for Childminders. This will include localised campaigns on the 'Magic of Childminding' developing our website and support materials for new and prospective childminders and facilitating a local 'Buddy' system to encourage retention. In the last 6 months we have had 7 new childminders begun working in Torbay.

3.2 What has happened regarding preparedness for the new requirements that came in for September 2025?

- In the lead up to the full expansion of 30 hours funded childcare for working parents, providers received termly updates on funding and statutory changes, alongside direct practice and finance support, ensuring they were operationally ready for expanded entitlements. This support continues as the offer is embedded.
- Through both the School Based Nursery Grant and the Early Years Capital Expansion, 12 projects have been supported locally. Once all are completed this will generate approximately 110 additional places.
- Ongoing engagement with the School Based Nursery Programme has resulted in an additional bid for Phase 2 being approved by the Department for Education. This new expansion will increase sufficiency of places for 2-year-old children in an area of high disadvantage.

3.3 Do we have over capacity of placements with the falling birth population?

- Current data and information does not suggest an oversupply of places due to the falling birth rate with the average occupancy rate at 94%. The increase in hours from the

expanded entitlements has resulted in families being able to access an increased offer which has resulted in high occupancy rates.

- However local data and intelligence does suggest that some providers are reporting lower occupancy levels, whilst others are operating a wait list. There are two key factors which potentially impact this, parental choice and delivery models of provision. Whilst it is difficult to influence parental choice, we are actively working with some providers on their delivery models (particularly those who operate within traditional school hours, term time only) to support the increase in capacity and/or look at different options to ensure financial sustainability.

4. Recommendation(s)

- 4.1. That members note the content of the report

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Interim Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board Work Programme 2026/2027

Items to be scheduled:

Date	Meeting	Issue	Outcomes and Objectives
To be confirmed	Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Adopt South West Annual Report	To receive the Adopt South West Annual Report
TBC	Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Review of End to End Fostering	To review end to end fostering including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the success of the Mockingbird Pilot and next steps; • the impact of Regional Fostering Hubs
TBC	Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	RISE	To receive an update from the Department for Education on the details the governance and key performance indicators (KPI’s) of the projects covered by RISE.

Date	Meeting	Issue	Outcomes and Objectives
TBC	Spotlight Review	Young People's Voice	To undertake a spotlight review to hear the voice of young people. Detailed scope to be developed.
TBC	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Children's Services Self-Assessment	To review the draft Children's Services Self-Assessment which provides an annual position on performance of Children's Services Note: this report is exempt as it is in draft format.
TBC by NM	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Children's Continuous Improvement Board Update	To receive an update on the Children's Continuous Improvement Plan and Children's Reforms

Timetable of Meetings

Date	Meeting	Issue	Outcomes and Objectives
18 May 2026	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Young People's Drug and Alcohol Services	<p>To review access to Young People's Drug and Alcohol Services</p> <p>Key lines of enquiry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is access to Young People's Drug and Alcohol Services Promoted? • How is drug safety taken into account? • How has this impacted on young people's health and wellbeing?
18 May 2026	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Early Years Sufficiency (six monthly)	<p>To review the sufficiency of Early Years placements</p> <p>Key line of enquiry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What action is being taken by the Council to influence the market and ensure that there are sufficient early years places available to meet the demands across the whole of Torbay? • What is happening regarding preparedness for the new requirements coming into force in September? • Do we have over capacity of placements with the falling birth population? <p>(Requested at meeting 18 November 2024)</p>
18 May 2026	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Youth Justice Service Annual Plan	<p>To receive an update on the Youth Justice Service and consider the Youth Justice Service Annual Plan and make recommendations to the Cabinet.</p> <p>Key lines of enquiry for Youth Justice Service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What work or activities are being undertaken to reduce anti-social behaviour?

Date	Meeting	Issue	Outcomes and Objectives
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the current situation with the premises? • What is the number of first time entrance to the service and what is being done to reduce this? • What diversionary work is planned for the Summer holidays? <p>Key lines of enquiry for Youth Hub:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the role of the Youth Service what they are delivering for young people? • What open access youth provision is currently available to young people, not just via the Youth Services but on a wider scale? <p>(Note: The Youth Justice Service Annual Plan must be submitted in June each year – This is then monitored every six months.)</p>
18 May 2026	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Child Friendly Programme Update	<p>To receive a verbal update from the Corporate Parenting Lead on the Child Friendly Programme.</p> <p>(Added at request of Councillor Law 16.4.26)</p>
18 May 2026	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board Work Programme 2026/2027	<p>To approve the initial Work Programme for the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board for 2026/2027 – Teresa Buckley/Councillor Law</p>

Date	Meeting	Issue	Outcomes and Objectives
27 July 2026	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Fuel Poverty Pilot	Results of Fuel Poverty Pilot be presented to a future meeting (requested 19 January 2026)
28 September 2026	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Torbay Local Area Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) (six monthly)	<p>To receive update on Torbay Local Area Special Educational Needs (SEND) Joint Inspection Improvement Notice.</p> <p>Key lines of enquiry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the action plan arising from the SEND Inspection Update carried out in March 2025. • To consider the impact of the review of home to school transport and how children with SEND are being supported to travel to and from school. <p>(Agreed at Overview and Scrutiny Board 13 August 2025 (Note: Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board to be invited to the meeting for this item – requested at monthly O&S meeting on 3.9.25)</p>
28 September 2026	Children and Young People's Overview and	Exploitation and Children Missing (six monthly)	<p>To receive an update on Exploitation and children missing</p> <p>The report to includes a case study to show the difference that has been made to children and their families and provides an update on the move of the Exploitation Team within the communities. (requested at meeting on 29.9.25)</p>

Date	Meeting	Issue	Outcomes and Objectives
	Scrutiny Sub-Board		
28 September 2026	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Exclusions and Absence (six monthly)	<p>To review exclusions and absence.</p> <p>Key lines of enquiry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive the latest qualified exclusion data and the views of those children who have been excluded. • To receive an update on the new Local Authority Attendance Duties and Home Education. • To receive an update on children on a part time timetable (including the numbers coming off a part time timetable) or on roll but not attending children, children educated other than at school (EOTAS) and children educated through Alternative Provision. <p>The following were requested at the meeting on 29.9.25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • breakdown by gender and age of primary school children Elected Home Educated (EHE); • identification of children who have not started school in EHE; • number of pupils on free school meals who are excluded or suspended; • number of suspensions due to uniform issues; • support available during exclusions/suspensions and whether children are actually at home; • detailed information on Year 11 pupils and actions to reduce school changes; and • whether EHE children are known to the Exploitation Team. • what support is given to early years providers, primary and secondary schools where English is a second language? How is the effectiveness of the support being monitored?

Date	Meeting	Issue	Outcomes and Objectives
28 September 2026	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report	To consider the Torbay Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report To include feedback on the June repeated safeguarding dip sampling from the Core Groups e.g. around long term neglect.
23 November 2026 (TBC)	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Youth Justice Service (six monthly)	To receive an update on the Youth Justice Service and consider the Youth Justice Service Annual Plan and make recommendations to the Cabinet. Key lines of enquiry: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What work or activities are being undertaken to reduce anti-social behaviour? • What is the current situation with the premises? • What is the number of first time entrance to the service and what is being done to reduce this? • What diversionary work is planned for the Summer holidays?
23 November 2026	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Best Start in Life Plan (six monthly)	To receive an update on the implementation of the Best Start in Life Plan. (requested 16.3.26)
23 November	Children and Young	Early Years Sufficiency (six monthly)	To review the sufficiency of Early Years placements

Date	Meeting	Issue	Outcomes and Objectives
2026	People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board		<p>Key line of enquiry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What action is being taken by the Council to influence the market and ensure that there are sufficient early years places available to meet the demands across the whole of Torbay? • What is happening regarding preparedness for the new requirements coming into force in September? • Do we have over capacity of placements with the falling birth population? <p>(Requested at meeting 18 November 2024)</p>
23 November 2026	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Children's Emotional Wellbeing and Support with a Focus on SEND	<p>To review the support for children's emotional wellbeing with a focus on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including the NHS Devon Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy and Plan.</p> <p>Key lines of enquiry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To review the outcomes framework for mental health in schools (Torbay Lead for Mental Health Team to be invited). • To consider access to mental health services for children and young people diagnosed with autism. • To consider how the community and voluntary sector is being supported to assist families when young people are on waiting lists for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or who don't meet the threshold. • How has access to CAMHS improved? • When is it expected to take less than 18 weeks to receive an CAMHS assessment?

Date	Meeting	Issue	Outcomes and Objectives
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What action is being taken to reduce waiting lists to ensure young people get access to support sooner? • How has access to the Schools Mental Health Programme been improving outcomes for young people? <p>Invite member(s) from Schools Mental Health Team to future meeting when discussing CAHMS (requested 17 November 2025 meeting).</p>
23 November 2026	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Regional Adoption Agency Joint Scrutiny Group Annual Report	To receive the Report of the Regional Adoption Agency Joint Scrutiny Group – Councillor Law
23 November 2026 (TBC)	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Fostering Annual Report	To consider the Fostering Children Annual Report and make recommendations to the Cabinet.
18 January 2027	Children and Young People's Overview and	One Devon's Children's Strategic Approach and Action Plan	To receive an annual update on the implementation of the One Devon's Children's Strategic Approach and Action Plan (added Sub-Board 29 January 2026)

Date	Meeting	Issue	Outcomes and Objectives
	Scrutiny Sub-Board		
18 January 2027	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	One Devon's annual update on long term conditions for children and young people	<p>To receive an annual update from One Devon on long term conditions for children and young people (requested Sub-Board 29 January 2026).</p> <p>Key line of enquiry: What is the current position regarding neurodiversity support?</p>
18 January 2027	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Ofsted Report	To receive the Ofsted Report
15 March 2027	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Torbay Local Area Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) (six monthly)	<p>To receive update on Torbay Local Area Special Educational Needs (SEND) Joint Inspection Improvement Notice.</p> <p>Key lines of enquiry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the action plan arising from the SEND Inspection Update carried out in March 2025. • To consider the impact of the review of home to school transport and how children with SEND are being supported to travel to and from school. • What are the expectations on Torbay Council following the Government's changes to SEND?

Date	Meeting	Issue	Outcomes and Objectives
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive an update on the SEND Reform Plan? (Agreed at Overview and Scrutiny Board 13 August 2025) (Note: Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board to be invited to the meeting for this item – requested at monthly O&S meeting on 3.9.25)
15 March 2027	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Exclusions and Absence (six monthly)	<p>To review exclusions and absence.</p> <p>Key lines of enquiry:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To receive the latest qualified exclusion data and the views of those children who have been excluded. • To receive an update on the new Local Authority Attendance Duties and Home Education. • To receive an update on children on a part time timetable (including the numbers coming off a part time timetable) or on roll but not attending children, children educated other than at school (EOTAS) and children educated through Alternative Provision. <p>The following were requested at the meeting on 29.9.25:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • breakdown by gender and age of primary school children in EHE; • identification of children who have not started school in EHE; • number of pupils on free school meals who are excluded or suspended; • number of suspensions due to uniform issues; • support available during exclusions/suspensions and whether children are actually at home; • detailed information on Year 11 pupils and actions to reduce school changes; and • whether EHE children are known to the Exploitation Team.

Date	Meeting	Issue	Outcomes and Objectives
15 March 2027	Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board	Exploitation and Children Missing (six monthly)	<p>To receive an update on Exploitation and children missing</p> <p>The report to includes a case study to show the difference that has been made to children and their families and provides an update on the move of the Exploitation Team within the communities. (requested at meeting on 29.9.25)</p>

Annual reports to Cabinet to be circulated to Sub-Board as useful background documents:

- Local Authority Designated Officer Annual Report
- Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report

Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board Action Tracker

Date of meeting	Minute No.	Action	Comments
17.11.25	31	3. that the Director of Children's Services be requested to explore options to incentivise foster carers, particularly those who take on older children to ensure that they can remain in placements longer;	3. Teresa emailed Nancy Meehan 26.11.25 – chased 6.1.26 – Director to provide an update
9.2.26	43	<p>2. that the Senior Democratic and Overview and Scrutiny Officer circulate the National Readiness School Survey to all Board Members;</p> <p>3. that the Director of Children Services arrange a visit to Mayfield School at Parkfield for Members of the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board;</p> <p>4. that the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Board request the Cabinet to source alternative funding to replace the NTDI grant (ends in March 2026) for the SEND employment forum; and</p> <p>5. that the Cabinet be requested to consider options for amending the start time of concessionary bus fares for disabled people to enable them to engage in work.</p>	<p>2. complete circulated on 31.3.26.</p> <p>3. Director to provide an update. Members of the main Overview and Scrutiny Board to also be invited to the visit (requested at Overview and Scrutiny Board on 6 May 2026..</p> <p>4 and 5 – Report submitted to Cabinet on 17 March 2026 – see Cabinet Response to Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations - Spotlight on Education.pdf</p>
16.3.26	47	1. that the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board note the contents of the submitted report; and	1. and 2. complete

Date of meeting	Minute No.	Action	Comments
		2. that the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board is assured that the appropriate monitoring and improvement processes are in place to address the findings and deliver the necessary positive changes for Torbay's children and young people with SEND and their families.	
16.3.26	48	Exploitation and children missing - Members were requested to email any further questions to the Clerk so that she could seek a written response.	Complete
16.3.26	49	That the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board thank all those who are involved in delivering services to our young people and who have contributed to Torbay maintaining a 'Good' rating with Ofsted.	Complete
16.3.26	50	1. that the Cabinet be recommended to approve the draft Best Start for Life Plan set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report; and 2. that the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Board monitors delivery against Best Start for Life Plan every six months.	1 complete 2. complete added to the Work Programme for 2026/2027