**Draft Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on**

**Services and Activities to Improve Young People’s Wellbeing**

**About this guidance**

1. This is statutory guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Education under Section 507B of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. It relates to local authorities’ duty to secure services and activities for young people aged 13 to 19, and those with learning difficulties to age 24, to improve their well-being, as defined in subsection 13.

**Rationale and scope of the duty**

1. All young people can benefit from access to high quality services and activities. Most young people receive sufficient opportunities and support from their families and friends, their school or college and their wider community to enable them to do well and prepare them for adult life. But some young people and their families, particularly the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, need additional and early help to address the challenges they face and to realise their potential.
2. The wide range of services and activities in scope of this duty that can help improve young people’s well-being and life chances include those that:
3. enable young people to contribute to society, including through volunteering, and have a voice in decisions which affect their lives;
4. provide safe environments in which young people can take part in a wide range of sports, arts and music activities and in which they can develop a strong sense of belonging, socialise safely with their peers, enjoy social mixing, experience spending time with older people, and develop relationships with adults they trust;
5. support young people to develop the personal and social skills and qualities they need for learning, work, and the transition to adulthood – including self-regulation, relationship-building, and decision-making;
6. improve young people’s physical and mental health and emotional well-being;
7. help those young people at risk of dropping out of learning or not achieving their full potential to engage and attain in education or training; and
8. raise young people’s aspirations, building their resilience, and informing their decisions – and thereby reducing teenage pregnancy, risky behaviours such as substance misuse, and involvement in crime and anti-social behaviour.

**Responsibilities of local authorities**

*Involving young people*

1. Local authorities must take steps to ascertain the views of young people and to take them into account in making decisions about services and activities for them. They should establish and maintain structured arrangements for doing so. To inform continuous improvement, these arrangements should enable young people to inspect and report on the quality and accessibility of provision. The young people involved in these arrangements should receive the support they need to engage in the process. Collectively, they should reflect the diversity of the local youth population and their experiences, and the views and needs of those who may not otherwise have a voice.

*Securing access to sufficient services and activities*

1. The Government will not prescribe which services and activities for young people local authorities should fund or deliver or to what level. Local authorities should work with young people, the voluntary sector, and agencies including health, police, schools and colleges to:
2. assess the needs of their local youth population, particularly the needs of the most disadvantaged and vulnerable young people;
3. support parents and communities to meet young people’s needs wherever possible, and encourage business and other employers to contribute funding and expertise to help enhance and sustain local provision;
4. consider how aspirational personal and social development programmes, including National Citizen Service, and youth work and youth workers can contribute to meeting the needs of young people;
5. consider the mix of, and relationship between, targeted and open access provision needed to meet local needs, and how to integrate all services around young people;
6. consider what facilities are needed and how to make these available and accessible, wherever possible maximising the utilisation and potential of all local partners’ assets including any Myplace centres and other high quality youth facilities;
7. determine which services and facilities need public funding and which can be secured through other means so that public funding is targeted primarily on young people at risk of poor outcomes;
8. consider how to grow the overall role of the voluntary, community and faith sector, including through the commissioning process, given the wider benefits the sector can bring to work with young people and their families;
9. agree priorities for publicly funded services and facilities with local partners and how these can be most effectively and efficiently delivered, including considering with their employees the options for them to set up and transfer into a public service mutual in line with their ‘Right to Provide’;
10. ensure providers have the capacity and skills to deliver effective services to young people, by learning from good practice and developing their workforce;
11. make publicly available feedback from young people on the quality of the local offer and use this to drive improvement; and
12. put in place actively-managed systems for assuring the quality of local services, and publish funding and performance data in a form that enables young people and others to hold them to account.
13. In so doing, local authorities must determine which services and facilities can be delivered by third parties so that the local authority delivers directly only where it is clearly best placed to do so; and publicise effectively to young people and their families the overall local offer of all services and activities available for young people locally.
14. Local authorities are responsible for securing, so far as is reasonably practicable, a local offer that is sufficient to improve young people’s well-being and personal and social development. A sufficient local offer will result in positive feedback from young people on the adequacy and quality of local provision, and positive trends in data that are indicative of local young people’s well-being and personal and social development.
15. The extent to which a local authority is doing all that is reasonably practicable to secure a sufficient local offer will be reflected in:
16. the extent to which it has given due consideration to this and other relevant statutory guidance;
17. its performance relative to other similar areas in improving the well-being and personal and social development of young people; and
18. the extent to which it has drawn on available support and challenge to drive continuous improvement in the quality and impact of local services, including from the local authority sector nationally.