



Newcastle Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership

One Minute Guide: Meeting held on 21st October 2025

1. Ready for Next Steps Priority: Improving School Attendance

In July this year, the Partnership agreed that a collective approach to improving school attendance would be one of 3 focussed pieces of work over the next 12-18 months.

Recent data on school attendance and some of the contributing factors were shared. This demonstrates **a stark link between deprivation and low school attendance, and a marked decline in school attendance for pupils from Year 8 onwards** (aged 13-14). Other factors which affect school attendance identified by young people themselves, include poor mental health and menstrual health (24% of female secondary pupils report being absent in the last month due to their period). Partners spent time reflecting on the issues and developing some early solutions, which will be collated for the next meeting to support action planning.

2. Update on Transformation of Children & Young People's Mental Health, Neurodevelopmental and Learning disability Pathways

Gail Balance (Integrated Care Board) provided an update on this ongoing work. Recent developments include aligning the transformation with the Families First Partnership work in Local Authorities, and investment into support for children and families awaiting assessment (early years and school age). This includes

- Young Person's Crisis Café – Launching early 2026
- Waiting Well Programme – EOI Opened 16th October 2025
- Young Person's Neurodevelopment Support – to launch in late 2025

Funding has also been provided to Newcastle Youth Council & Newcastle Youth Fund for to test out early intervention approaches to supporting mental health & wellbeing.

3. Real Living Wage

An update was provided on the Real Living Wage, the benefits it brings for employers and importance for working families, and in providing all employees with a decent standard of living. Where organisations not already signed up to be a Real Living Wage employer, they are urged to consider joining this movement. Further information can be found at <https://www.livingwage.org.uk/> . Please contact david.vandervelde@livingwage.org.uk if your organisation would like to become a Real Living Wage Employer.



4. Evry Christmas Campaign 2025

Information was shared on the annual Evry Christmas Campaign, led by Newcastle City Council and supported by a number of organisations, residents and businesses in the city. The campaign aims to bring warmth, dignity, and festive magic to those children and young people who need it most, by:

- Ensuring every Care Leaver and more children in need receives a thoughtful, wrapped Christmas gift
- Providing access to festive experiences that create lasting memories
- Showing our city's young people that they are seen, valued, and supported.

Partners and members of the public can support this by purchasing a gift from the **Young People's Christmas Wishlist**. Each item has been chosen to meet real needs and bring joy during the holiday season. If you would like to purchase a gift directly for a young person, this can be done using this link: [Amazon Wishlist](#)

Christmas Essentials Donations

To make every gift feel truly special, we're committed to wrapping each present with care and including festive treats for young people across Newcastle. Your organisation can help us deliver this magic by **donating essential Christmas items**. We're currently seeking donations of Christmas wrapping paper, gift bags and chocolate selection boxes.

Please contact voice@newcastle.gov.uk if your organisation would like to support the campaign.

For more information or to contact the Newcastle Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership, please email: kate.williams@newcastle.gov.uk