



Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership

One Minute Guide: Meeting held in April 2026

The Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership brings together organisations across Newcastle to improve outcomes for children, young people and families. At the April 2026 meeting, partners shared progress across several important areas, including mental health services, tackling child poverty, young people's voice, community safety and work experience opportunities.

1. Happy and Healthy priority – Redesign of access into children and young people's mental health, neurodiversity and learning disability pathways.

In July 2025, the Partnership agreed that the redesign of the access point for children and young people's mental health, neurodiversity and learning disability pathways would be reviewed over the next 12-18 months, under the Happy and Healthy priority. An update was provided by CNTW on the work that has been taking place to progress this, which is also a system priority for the North East and North Cumbria ICB.

The suggested changes will take in to consideration the views of parents, children and potential referrers and aim to make it easier and clearer for children, young people and families to get the right support, especially for mental health, autism, ADHD and learning disabilities.

Whilst proposals are still being considered, it is anticipated that they will result in:

- Clearer referral routes so children can get help more quickly.
- Fair access for all: children who are not in school will still be able to access assessments and support.
- Better support for parents and carers: Families will be guided to advice and early help in their community before specialist services are needed.
- Smoother transitions for children with learning disabilities as they into adult services.

2. North East Combined Authority Child Poverty Reduction Unit update

An update was provided on progress since publication of the North East Child Poverty Action Plan 2025–2030. Alongside cost-of-living measures such as reduced transport costs, key initiatives underway include:

- Community-based money advice and benefits support.
- Development of the North East Child Trust Fund Campaign.
- A data-led campaign to ensure care-experienced young people access financial entitlements.
- Commissioning of a North East Childcare Strategy and continuation of the Mayor's childcare grant pilot.
- Investment in initiatives such as Together Through Sport/Home of Opportunity, Baby Boxes and Start for Life.

Future priorities include reducing education costs, developing a regional food strategy, tackling in-work poverty and holding the 2026 "Creating Real Opportunity" Child Poverty Summit.



3. Voice of children and young people

Newcastle continues to strengthen how children and young people influence decisions that affect them.

- **Over 5,800 children and young people took part in Newcastle’s Big Conversation, sharing what they value about the city and their priorities for the future.** A full analysis will be published soon.
- Following a city-wide election, **more than 10,000 young people voted to elect the next Newcastle Youth Council.** Eighteen young people were elected from diverse backgrounds across the city.

The top priorities identified by young people were:

- Mental health
- School education
- Youth voice and equality
- Environment
- Transport



4. Young People in the City Centre ‘Ride Outs’

Northumbria Police updated partners on action taken following three large “ride out” events in March, where groups of young people caused some damage in the city centre. A graded response was put in place, and further planned events over Easter were quickly dispersed without disruption. Partners continue to work together to balance safety, prevention and positive engagement with young people.

5. Evry Work Experience

Last year, Evry partner organisations worked together to offer 104 work experience placements to young people who might otherwise miss out. Plans are in place to grow this offer even further in 2026, and **employers are encouraged to take part. Support is available to employers in this process.**

“I’m proud of the way that everyone here has diversity and while we are all different, we are all yet the same. My school is a great community where we celebrate our differences, and the teachers are all very nice.”

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