

The Birmingham

Commission for Children

Terms of Reference

A Commission to review, explore and compile a set of recommendations and findings which seek to answer the following:

- What does high aspiration and achievement look like for Birmingham's children?
- What role should Birmingham City Council play in supporting children and young people to live the best possible life in the city?
- Over the next 10 years, what systematic improvements and principles would the Commission like to see to improve children and young people's well being?
- How could the relationships be improved between organisations and institutions which provide services (with a particular focus on schools and early years providers) and the children, young people and communities that use them?

The Commission's work will draw on and support the Education Services Review and Early Years Review that are currently in progress within Birmingham City Council and will hear evidence from the officers and organisations involved in these reviews.

This work will support:

- i. An examination of the views gathered from young people across the city to ensure the voice of the child is central to the Commission's findings
- ii. An exploration of early years provision and how this supports the council's objectives to
 - a) improve educational and health outcomes
 - b) reduce child poverty and
 - c) address inequalities in educational and health outcomes
- iii. An exploration of the role of schools, and the council's relationship with schools to support children's well-being in Birmingham.



The Commission will want to hear from all agencies, parents and children in Birmingham and will be seeking a broad range of views and contributions to support its work, with young people's voices being placed at the heart of the Commission. The recommendations made will be relevant to a range of stakeholders beyond Birmingham City Council as the Commission will adopt a citywide approach to the issues affecting children.

The Commission will want to engage with many services, organisations and individuals with an interest in children. These engagements will include, but are not limited to, public conversation sessions and a citywide call for views. The Commission will also seek to draw on examples of best practice in other areas of the country. The Commission will ensure that it communicates clearly at all stages to ensure a transparent process.

The Commission will sit independently. It is entirely separate from the Department of Education investigation that has recommended the appointment of an independent Commissioner, Lord Norman Warner, to oversee children's social care, alongside a team of experts. This Commission will therefore not be considering the management and delivery of children's social care and safeguarding in the city. It will also not engage with those schools implicated by the 'Trojan Horse' allegations. These allegations are being investigated through a review led by

Ian Kershaw, who has been appointed as the independent Advisor. Any information received regarding this investigation will be sent directly to the council's dedicated email address:

trojanhorse@birmingham.gov.uk

Timescales

The Commission will sit for a minimum of seven sessions taking place between May and July 2014 and will report on its findings and recommendations in September 2014. The findings will be presented to Birmingham City Council and used to inform future decision making.

The role of The Children's Society

The Children's Society has been commissioned by Birmingham City Council to provide the secretariat for The Birmingham Commission for Children. This role includes supporting commissioners to hear a wide range of views, organising sessions, and coordinating a citywide call for views. The final report will be authored by the independent Chair of the Commission and will be independent of both Birmingham City Council and The Children's Society.

For further information go to our website:

**[www.childrenssociety.org.uk/
birminghamcommission](http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/birminghamcommission)**

or contact us on

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